



Call for Papers International Symposium and PhD course
Beyond Boundaries:
Exploring the Concepts of Liminality and Alterity
Dates: 9-11 November 2011
University of Tromsø, Tromsø, Norway

This symposium sets out to explore two contested concepts – alterity and liminality. It will do so from the perspective of the social sciences and the humanities. Keynote speakers are well-known international researchers, whose approaches have set the standard for innovative work in both fields. They will present a broad overview of the two concepts in their own work, and within the disciplines with which they are associated.

The symposium will examine the concepts of alterity (otherness) and liminality (being on the threshold) from a humanities' and social sciences' perspective. Concepts of liminality and alterity have developed differently in different disciplinary traditions, and our present understanding of borders, identity and space in a world of global postcolonial differences and religious, cultural, ethnic or other divisions will be enhanced through the bringing together of these different conceptualizations in critical dialogue. Just as liminal settings bring together disparate aspects and entities, we are soliciting submissions that use material, artistic, historical, literary, and ethnographic types of evidence to address situations exhibiting ambiguity, transcendence, and transgression. Moreover, interventions may discuss forms of liminality/alterity arising in both abstract and concrete spheres. To the former end, participants are encouraged to reflect upon subjects that appear to blur or erode traditional conceptual demarcations and theoretical distinctions.

Such issues may evoke conditions in which normally accepted intellectual categories or social conventions begin to dissolve, or circumstances in which people straddle lines (real or figurative) between existential or experiential states (e.g. along lines of gender, sexuality, pure or mixed indigenous status, nationality, race, ethnicity, social status, religion, culture, or class). Papers may consider figurative boundaries such as those associated with rites of passage, the dynamic interactions between author (or performer) and audience, presentations of conflict between local, indigenous, national, or international communities or groups, or figures (literary, contemporary or historical) who function as intermediaries. One may also choose to investigate more tangible expressions of liminality and alterity by exploring the actual borders, crossroads, and geo-political frontiers in which these two concepts manifest themselves, including margins or limits within states, cities, the home, and other spheres. Papers, which have a comparative perspective on indigenous groups and their encounter with borders are welcome. Whether looking at future possibilities or current definitions, both literal, figurative, and anthropological approaches to the topic should encompass themes dealing with boundaries, limitations, transitions, fluidity, change, dichotomy, indeterminacy, and syncretism.

The interdisciplinary symposium addresses researchers and scholars working within a variety of fields connected to borders, frontiers, liminal spaces and places, as well as to their effect on individual and group identities. The symposium will explore different disciplinary approaches to both these useful theoretical concepts while also considering what happens when they are placed side by side in shared conversation.

Papers Might Consider:

presentations of alterity and liminality at the threshold of medial presentations of conflict between local, national, or international communities or groups,

investigations of more tangible expressions of liminality and alterity at actual borders, crossroads, and geo-political frontiers in which these two concepts manifest themselves, including margins or limits within states, cities, the home, and other spheres,

how boundaries positively or negatively affect the fates of indigenous people, ethnic minorities and/or mainstream populations within or outside of those boundaries; understanding how the relational quality of boundaries define both the person as well as social imaginaries

figurative boundaries such as those associated with rites of passage,

dynamic interactions between author (or performer) and audience,

how might alterity or liminality be represented within the realm of ideas, languages, cultures conceived from a particular medial perspective such as film, literature, theatre, etc ?

Two faculty research groups within the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education are sponsoring the symposium: Border Culture and Comparative Indigeneity (KURF), with the additional participation of students and staff from the CEPIN research school. These research groups have strong competences in the different conceptualizations of alterity and liminality in a wider, transdisciplinary field. For past research efforts, courses and symposia of the involved research groups see <http://www.uit.no/borderpoetics/> and <http://uit.no/hsl/kurf>.

Invited Speakers for Ph.D Course and Symposium

Prof. Manuel Aguirre (Madrid) English Literature

Prof. Marcus Banks (Oxford) Social and Cultural Anthropology

Peter Hervig. (Aalborg) Social Anthropology.

Prof. Tim Ingold (Aberdeen) Social Anthropology

Prof. Sissel Læg Reid (Bergen) German Literature and Culture

Prof. Jean H. Duffy (Aberdeen) Theatre and French

There will be a Ph.D. course running simultaneously with the Symposium. The title of this course is *Indigeneity Beyond Boundaries*, and it is expected that the presentations at this course and the speakers at the symposium will enhance a debate on themes of mutual interests. The PhD course starts on Wednesday Morning, 9 November. Banks, Ingold and Hervik will give presentations, along with local staff. Members of the course are required to participate in the Thursday programme of the Symposium and are encouraged to join the plenary talks and paper presentations of the entire symposium and course. A complete schedule of the course and symposium will be available in June. For further information see the link on <http://site.uit.no/kurf/>.

We are seeking proposals for 20-minute papers in English. Please include the following information in your proposal:

1. Provisional title.
2. 5 keywords
3. A 700-word abstract, including an account of the subject matter and methodology of research
4. Brief CV (maximum 200 words)

Proposals will be accepted between 1 May 2011 and 1 September 2011. Send as an email attachment to Stephen Wolfe, stephen.wolfe@uit.no and David Anderson david.anderson@uit.no

The symposium committee from Border Culture: Stephen Wolfe stephen.wolfe@uit.no; Holger Pötzsch, holger.potzsch@uit.no; and Johan Schimanski johan.schimanski@uit.no. The symposium committee from Comparative Indigeneity: David Anderson david.anderson@uit.no; Sissel Saugestad sissel.saugestad@uit.no; and Jorun Bræck Ramstad jorun.braeck.ramstad@uit.no.