

# Trading Places?

## Empathy in Material Culture and Critical Methodologies

CCLPS Postgraduate Conference 2018  
SOAS, University of London  
18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> June 2018

### Day 1 Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Room B102, Brunei Gallery, SOAS, University of London

**9:30am-9:45am**      **Registration, tea and coffee**

**9:45am-10:00am**      **Welcome remarks**

Professor Francesca Orsini (SOAS), chair of CCLPS

**10:00am-11:30am**      **Keynote address**

**Dr Carolyn Pedwell (University of Kent): *Decolonising Empathy: Thinking Affect Transnationally***

**Chair: Annie Webster (SOAS)**

Dr Carolyn Pedwell is Associate Professor in Cultural Studies at the University of Kent. She is the author of two research monographs: *Affective Relations: The Transnational Politics of Empathy* (Palgrave: 2014) and *Feminism, Culture and Embodied Practice: The Rhetorics of Comparison* (Routledge: 2010). Her third monograph, *Transforming Habit: Revolution, Routine and Social Change*, is under contract with McGill-Queens University Press.

**11:30am-11:45am**      **Break**

**11:45am-1:15pm**      **Panel 1: Trading Stories**

**Chair: Dr Sara Marzagora (SOAS)**

Lida Amiri (University of Liverpool): *Stripping the reader of his/her prejudice: How to empathise with the anonymous fundamentalist in Atiq Rahimi's Syngué Sabour. Pierre de patience*

Christie Cheng (SOAS, University of London): *Empathetic morality for Singapore's working class in Jack Neo's Money No Enough*

Walaa Said (University of Marburg): *Negotiating Empathy in Dystopian Worlds: JM Coetzee's Waiting for the Barbarian (1980) and Ahmad Khaled Towfeek's Utopia (2008)*

**1:15pm-2:00pm**      **Lunch**

A sandwich buffet will be provided for conference participants; tea and coffee

**2:00pm-3:30pm Panel 2: (Re)Cognising Empathy**

**Chair: James Rakoczi (King's College London)**

Xi Liu (University of Sheffield): *Schizoanalysis: Charting Empathy in Filmic Affects*

Mary Goody (Goldsmiths, University of London): *Lending one's body to the other? Figurative sculpture, mirror-touch synaesthesia and physical empathy*

Alexander Aston (University of Oxford): *Where the Rising Ape Meets the Falling Angel: An Archaeology of Empathy*

**3:30pm-4:00pm Break**

**4:00pm-5:30pm Panel 3: Beyond the Human**

**Chair: TBC**

Cathryn Ladd (University of Sheffield): *Sensing the Feminist Empathetic Researcher*

Aya ElBably (British University in Egypt): *An Ecocritical Reading of Nature's Empathetic Representation in Popular Culture*

Hira Nabi (independent filmmaker): *All That Perishes on the Edge of Land*

**5:30pm-7:00pm Conference reception**

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**Day 2 Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

Room B102, Brunei Gallery, SOAS, University of London

**9:30am-10:00am Registration, tea and coffee**

**10:00am-11:30am Keynote panel: Empathy in Practice**

**Chair: Jack Clift (SOAS)**

The keynote panel brings together representatives from the worlds of activism and the arts to discuss the practical uses – and limitations – of empathy in their work. Speakers will include:

Patrick Page (Public Law Caseworker, [Duncan Lewis Solicitors](#))

Juliet Mabey (Founder, [Oneworld Publications](#))

David Francis (PhD candidate, [University College London](#) & [British Museum](#))

**11:30am-11:45am Break**

**11:45am-1:15pm Panel 4: Curating Empathy**

**Chair: Fuchsia Hart (University of Oxford, Victoria & Albert Museum)**

Katherine Quinn (University of Warwick): *The body in the library: capturing ordinary empathy through doodling library space*

Benny Nemerofsky Ramsay (Edinburgh College of Art): *The museum audioguide as a tool for empathies and opacities*

Rakesh Sengupta (SOAS, University of London): *The Death of the Author in Pyaasa*

**1:15pm-2:00pm Lunch**

A sandwich buffet will be provided for conference participants; tea and coffee

**2:00pm-3:45pm Panel 5: Memory, Mourning and Materiality**

**Chair: Hana Sandhu (SOAS)**

Tristram Vivian Adams (Goldsmiths, University of London): *Selfish Altruism: Exploring the Moral Status of Empathic Reaction*

Allison Needels (SOAS, University of London): *Expressions of Postmemory in Contemporary Korean Literature*

Aman Gupta (University of Oxford): *The Commemoration of Slavery: Dominant and Counter-Narratives in Bristol*

Pau Cata (University of Edinburgh): *BQT\_Beyond Qafila Thania: On empathy, embodiment and curatorial phenomenology*

**3:45pm-4:00pm Break**

**4:00pm-5:00pm Plenary: Empathy in the (Cultural) Institution**

**Chairs: Annie Webster (SOAS) & Jack Clift (SOAS)**

In the plenary panel, we will explore how empathy manifests itself in cultural institutions, and debate the uses and limits of empathy in attempts at liberation and decolonisation in universities such as SOAS. Discussants will include:

Halimo Hussain – SOAS Student Union, *Co-President for Equality and Liberation*

Frances Grahl – SOAS, University of London; co-organiser, *Decolonising the Cultural Institution? A Critical Intervention into Discourses of Decolonisation in the Cultural Sphere*, CCLPS Postgraduate Conference 2017

*Other discussants TBA*

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For more information on the CCLPS Postgraduate Conference 2018, visit our website:

<https://empathysoas.wixsite.com/2018>.

Follow us on Twitter ([@Empathy\\_SOAS](#)) and Facebook ([EmpathySOAS](#)) for frequent updates about the conference and our featured speakers.

We are grateful for the support of the following partners in organising this conference:

SOAS Centre for Cultural, Literary and Postcolonial Studies (CCLPS)

SOAS Doctoral School

SOAS Student Union