

Violence in the Postcolonial and Neocolonial World: An Interdisciplinary Conference

University of Liège, Belgium, 15-16 February 2018

In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon describes the colonial world as a divided world in which absolute violence and physical force function to uphold the dividing line and where, inevitably, violence from the “natives” will eventually challenge this rule. He describes the capitalist western world as also being divided, but, in contrast, the exploited are kept in their place by systems of education that create “an atmosphere of submission and of inhibition.”

This conference will question the ways in which different forms of violence function in the postcolonial and neocolonial era to uphold divisions in societies and to ensure that previously colonized countries remain economically disadvantaged and under the control of their former colonizers and/or other countries. It will also question whether absolute violence from the oppressed is still inevitable and whether it is desirable. Can violence help to heal the wounds of violence, or is there another way to achieve such ends?

This conference will also seek to link the above issues to manifestations of individual violence in postcolonial and neocolonial contexts, and to question the nature of violence: how and why does an individual become violent? Is violence innate or learnt? Is violence “thing-like” with a specific nature, or is it rather, as Carolyn Nordstrom suggests, a cultural construct that is fluid? Does non-violence exist?

Papers are accepted from all fields. We warmly welcome contributions that explore the way in which the arts (including creative writing) help to illuminate how forms of violence function in societies and impact on individuals, as well as how they help us to reflect on possible responses to violence and ways to heal it.

Possible topics include:

State, structural, or systemic violence

Psychological violence

Gang violence

Armed struggle and revolution

Gender-based violence

Race and ethnicity

Sexuality

Identity

Religion

Language

Education

Children

Globalization

Ecology

250-word abstracts for 20-minute papers should be sent to Rebecca Romdhani at poco_violence@yahoo.com by 31 July 2017.

This conference is organized by the postcolonial research centre CEREP based at the University of Liège, Belgium (<http://www.cerep.ulg.ac.be>). More information about the event is available on the conference website at <http://www.pocoviolenec.ulg.ac.be>. The event also has a Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/events/1867909540150744>