

CONFERENCE CALL FOR PAPERS

Belonging: Cultural Topographies of Identity

University College Dublin

8-9th June 2012

If, in the first decades of the twenty first century, belonging is firmly 'back on the agenda' (Antonsich: 2010, 652) then this is not only due to increased mobility, in both its territorialized and deterritorialized aspects, but also the growing need for a more semantically complex way of understanding and exploring who, what and where we are. As Vikki Bell puts it, '[...] one does not simply or ontologically belong to the world or any group within it. Belonging is an achievement at several levels of abstraction.' (1999: 3). Incorporating at once notions of citizenship, emotional and psychological attachment, emplacement and deterritorialization, the legal-material and the imaginary-symbolic, the concept of belonging suggests a fruitful point of departure for understanding the complexities of space, place and identity in the twenty-first century.

This two-day conference will focus on the ways in which belonging is produced, maintained and transposed across a wide range of cultural and intellectual discourses and creative modes. This includes but is not limited to, architecture, archaeology and anthropology, visual art, literature and life-writing, intellectual history and critical theory and discourse analysis. Papers will engage with the general question of how concepts of belonging are instrumentalized in the creation of topographies of identity. Key issues for discussion may include:

- Which metaphors predominate in narratives of belonging and how do these metaphors relate to empirical discourses (e.g. natural science)?
- How do these tropes migrate across time and space, across geographic, social and political boundaries?
- In what ways do different perceptions of belonging intersect and interact culturally, socially, politically, legally?
- How is the material environment instrumentalized in performances and daily practices of belonging (architecture, public space, personal belongings, objects)?
- What role does emotion and/or affect play in perceptions and conceptions of belonging?

250-word proposals for papers, along with a brief bioblurb, should be sent by **14 March 2012** to either of the conference organizers, **Dr Gillian Pye** (gillian.pye@ucd.ie) or **Dr Alison Ribeiro de Menezes** (alison.menezes@ucd.ie). A number of modest bursaries towards travel expenses will be available for postgraduates and postdoctoral scholars who present a paper. For further details, please contact the conference organizers.