

SEPHIS



The South-South exchange
programme for research on the
history of development

Council for the Development of
Social Science Research in Africa

Conseil pour le développement de la
recherche en sciences sociales en Afrique

VISUAL SOUTH: USING VISUAL SOURCES AS ALTERNATIVE HISTORY

Maputo, 13 – 19 September 2004

CALL FOR PAPERS

Training Workshop on Alternative Historical Sources

From 13th to 19th September 2004, the first workshop on “*Visual South: using visual sources as alternative history*” will be organized by the SEPHIS/CODESRIA programme.

Over the past few decades, visual sources have emerged as a powerful means of gaining access to alternative histories. It is increasingly acknowledged that visual traces and records, whether art or documentary, offer new routes to the past – especially where the life experiences and expression of people of the South have been marginalized in external or dominant literary sources. We need to explore how far visual sources (as opposed to conventionally-accepted written and oral sources) might enable us to produce a new range of inclusive and localized histories that take into account these traditionally marginalized groups.

The immediate goal of this South/South workshop is to contribute to the training of researchers dealing with alternative historical sources. Researchers from Latin America, Africa, Southern Asia and the Caribbean will gather together for a period of one week, with a view to exchanging experiences, theories and methodologies on the visual. The ultimate aim of this workshop is to unsettle the unquestioned hegemony of the written word, by collecting and building knowledge based on visual material and demonstrating its relevance to the study of groups marginalized in textual sources. The programme will include historical, theoretical and interpretive frameworks, to provide a critical vocabulary for reading the visual and to open up methods of constituting visual ‘evidence’ that illuminate new histories of the South. The contexts and processes through which visual materials and performances are made offer additional practical insights. The complementary dynamics of the visual, oral and textual sources will also be taken into account.

The interdisciplinary workshop will gather a palette of junior and senior scholars, drawn from a diversity of intellectual backgrounds. The 7-day workshop to be held in Maputo (Mozambique) will be limited to about 15 participants. It is CODESRIA’s mandate to provide a stimulating intellectual environment and to arrange for the travel and living expenses of the participants.

► Themes and Contents of the Workshop

The programme, which will include lectures and workshop sessions, combines both theoretical and practical specialisations on visual sources. The course will involve the following: historical and contemporary forms of visual events, such as ritual, spectacle, performance, rally, etc.; visual objects, such as art, architecture, clothing, the body, etc.; media, such as television and various forms of indigenous media; and visual communication

through photography, posters, video, film. Philosophical questions concerning the nature of the image, visibility and invisibility (especially in relation to gender), and the distinction/overlap between the categories of public and visual, will be given space; as will the problem of the archive (for example in the lack of importance attributed to photographs, and the accompanying questions of discovery and conservation).

Sessions will promote full participation and debate, with the Director helping to direct, facilitate, and moderate discussions. The workshop will be led by Dr Patricia Hayes, who is Associate Professor in the Department of History at University of the Western Cape. She has published on the relationship between colonial photography and administration. Dr Hayes also explored other teaching frameworks and expertise that contribute to the program's concerns with visualization of the past, the relationship between texts and visuals, and how visual materials relate to questions of memory and history.

Two resource persons will give lectures focussing on case studies using visual sources. The laureates will attend theoretical and methodological courses given by the Director and the two resource persons, and contribute on the basis of their own research. Laureates will be required to present and submit a paper, which should directly engage with the current theoretical issues and problems around visibility. The workshop will also include an open forum. English is the working language of the workshop.

► **Eligibility**

Those fulfilling the following conditions can apply for this programme: senior and junior historians, anthropologists, museum professionals, sociologist and others. These scholars should be carrying out research activities. Those young researchers will need to be affiliated to a university, institute, museum or research body in the South. Senior scholars or scholars in their mid-career with a solid reputation in these fields are encouraged to apply for the position of resource persons.

► **Admission Procedures**

The application should include a three page academic CV, the proposed paper (maximum of 5 pages), including its summary (500 words) and a recommendation letter. The paper should be based on well-defined theoretical, conceptual and methodological elements and an analysis of the current status of research on this specific issue. The paper should also indicate the methodology used or developed throughout the research. Applications for the position of a resource person should include an application letter, a CV and a one-page abstract of their proposed lectures.

Applications must be written in English. The deadline for the submission of applications is **15 June 2004**. An international scientific committee will select the candidates by **15 July 2004**. Successful applicants will be notified immediately after the completion of the selection process. Incomplete and unnecessarily lengthy applications will not be taken into consideration. All faxed and e-mailed applications must also be accompanied by a hard copy original version sent by post if they are to be considered.

Additional information about the Workshop can be obtained via:

- ◆ the CODESRIA web site: <http://www.codesria.org>
- ◆ the SEPHIS web site: <http://www.sephis.org>

Applications and requests for more information should be sent to:

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