

CALL FOR PAPERS

International conference, Saint Petersburg, 23-24 June 2017

The Industrialization of Creativity and its Limits: Value, Self-expression and the Economy of Culture in Times of Crisis

National Research University Higher School of Economics

(St. Petersburg Branch and Faculty of Communication, Media and Design, Moscow)

If the 2000s could be called a creative decade in terms of policy directives, urban development, educative reforms and the hopes placed on culture to transform both the economy and our daily lives, then in the 2010s this enthusiasm seems to be largely stagnating as a result of the global economic crisis and its social and political consequences. In policy-orientated engagements, creativity is usually connected with broader aspirations of economic growth in societies engaging with a turn towards the so called post-industrial paradigm. In turn, the feverous engagements of the 2000s with term creativity and its offshoots, such as ‘creative class’ and ‘creative labour’, in critical academic discourse brought to the fore the ideological substratum of calls to industrialize creativity as well as possibilities to perceive it outside of an explicitly market-oriented framework. Here, the term creativity loosely refers to those activities taking place under the label of visual arts, music, design, film and performance, and which primarily aim and are evaluated in their capacity to produce forms of affect and social meaning.

In this context, we observed the huge transformation of the media market and the economy of cultural and communication industries. The rise of social media, search and aggregators markets, omnipresence of mobile devices and active prosumerism are considerably changing the business models of media companies and cultural industries, creating new industrial chains. Such changes are considered either as empowering to consumers (obtaining more power than in the classic model of vertical mass communication) or as new forms of capitalist exploitation.

This conference seeks to turn light to the current condition in which the dreams that creative economy bolstered are largely questioned (even by policy makers) while the modes of subjectivation and lifestyles that it activated remain still. This is the conflict of a larger (geo) political disturbance versus the emergence of a creative lifestyle of fashion, selfie-culture, DIY experimentation, slow and organic food movements and digital intimacies. This contrast predicts a creative lifestyle in limbo, where the promise of self-expression is put at stake by the expectation of precarious futures. Furthermore, while particular forms of self-expression (digital publishing, health, gastronomy and tourism mediatisation etc.) give birth to new technologies, devices and forms of content production, the media and communication industries seem less sufficient to find mature business models for them. To gauge the political economy of creativity in relation to the current situation we propose to explore the shifts and transformations of the creative imaginary, practices and business models taking shape as a result of the crisis.

We seek contributions addressing issues related to the economic, political and socio-cultural dimensions of creativity and encourage a variety of approaches on the matter.

Proposed topics include the following:

- Creativity and class
- Peer production, cinema and music
- Media piracy
- Self-media production and social media practices
- Creativity and grassroots activism
- Fashion and lifestyle cultures
- DIY cultures and self-fashioning
- Gender and ethnicity in the creative industries
- Crisis, austerity and creativity
- Big data, reflexive branding, marketing
- Governmentality of creativity
- Slow food cultures
- Urban regeneration

Expected keynote speakers of the conference:

- David Hesmondhalgh, Professor of University of Leeds, UK
- Bernard Miegue, Professor Emeritus University Grenoble Alpes, France
- Angela McRobbie, Professor of Goldsmiths, University of London, UK

The conference is organized within the framework of the four-day festival 'Creativity, Innovation and the City' in which producers from the local creative industries will present projects ranging from creative spaces to gastronomy. During the festival students from HSE will exhibit creative works in the fields of media, design and fashion. We invite all participants of the conference to take part in these festival events that would include on-site visits to creative spaces and assessment of projects and students' works.

Paper Submission:

Submissions should include the name (s) and institutional affiliations of the applicant (s), email address and abstracts no longer than 500 words (including references) in English or in Russian.

Abstracts must be submitted before February 15, 2017 at: creativityanditslimits@gmail.com

Participants will be notified about acceptance by February 28, 2017.

Full papers must be in English and submitted before June 1, 2017.

For any further information, please contact us at: creativityanditslimits@gmail.com

Key Dates:

Deadline for abstract submission: February 15, 2017

Notification of abstract acceptance: February 28, 2017

Deadline for full papers submission: June 1, 2017

Start of registration: May 15, 2017

Conference: June 23-24, 2017

Organizing committee:

Ilya Kiriya, Professor of Media Department, Chair of Media Department at National Research University Higher School of Economics (Moscow) (chair)

Valery Gordin, Professor National Research University Higher School of Economics and Head of the Laboratory of Economy of Culture (Saint Petersburg)

Yiannis Mylonas, Ass. Professor of Media, National Research University Higher School of Economics (Moscow)

Panos Kompatsiaris, Ass. Professor of Art and Media, National Research University Higher School of Economics (Moscow)