

## Call for papers

Interdisciplinary conference "Interdiscursive Migrations. **Shifting ideas: a Reflection**"

Montreal, October 22-23, 2020

Université du Québec à Montréal

Due to their plasticity, certain ideas have been exposed to conceptual shifts which have shed light upon the dynamics of discourses (understood as systems of concepts through which we claim to express and exercise knowledge about a real object), and how they interact or oppose each other to define their own object. The idea that transfers from one discursive domain to another conveys associations, connotations, images and values which encourages growth within each area of expertise and thought which makes it its own. The notion of trace from the domain of origin is essential in this regard. It implies the thought that there could be "interference" between discourses when the idea or notion that has migrated carries its earlier meanings, that may always resurface when used in a new discourse. It is therefore important to understand how a notion or a set of notions can de-territorialize itself from its original context to re-territorialize in another.

During this conference, we invite you to reflect on this discursive phenomenon, which has widely spread in ancient and modern thought (see Bercot and Erman, *Transferts de concepts: d'un savoir à l'autre*, 2006), and that could be termed *interdiscursive migration*. The purpose of the conference is to reflect on the permeability between the borders that separate the different fields of expertise, more specifically by asking where an idea originated, where it belongs in a field of expertise, when transference of an idea begins and where its journey ends. To this end, we wish to consider what authorizes and warrants the transfer of ideas, and then consider how this affects the welcoming discourse, and how this migration is likely to transform the very object of the discourse in which the idea is found. To put it plainly, we wish to reflect on the circulation of ideas.

For example, the notion of autopsy goes back at least to Dioscorides (*De materia medica*, 50-70), in which the term refers to direct observation, however it is already found in the form *autoptes* in Herodotus (*Histoires*, book 8, chapter 79 *et passim*, 5<sup>th</sup> century BC) to designate an "eyewitness". How can we explain that the word refers to not only the subject of an initiation that sees his god at the end of the process, but, also, is used as the very subject of *Revelation* in the texts of later religion historians? Perhaps this can reflect the fact that the heritage of the term is such that the idea of autopsy stands at a crossroads between the historical and religious fields. Indeed, in the three major areas of the ancient tradition (historiography, religion and medicine), this specific idea serves to articulate each epistemological regime and, in addition, the manner in which this idea was able to assert itself as a method of validation of truths. Of course, in each domain truths are observed from a personal gaze, but distanced from it they produce a truth of general value: historical certainty is based on first-hand testimony; the spiritual truth of the initiate, considered by others to be indisputable though esoteric, and the knowledge of doctors works to eliminate all mediation.

Therefore, we would like for this conference to be an open space. It could serve to accommodate theoretical reflections on the phenomenon of the migration of ideas or case studies, as the one proposed as an example. We aim to provide a space for interdisciplinary collaboration, bringing together specialists from fields such as history, art history, medicine and philosophy as well as letters.

Submissions, from 20 to 25 minutes, must be original and in French or English. Please note that a publication of selected papers from the conference is anticipated. We can also offer financial support for participants travelling from abroad, if necessary.

Proposals (title and abstract of 250 words, accompanied by a short academic biography mentioning the individual's home university) are to be submitted to [migrationsinterdiscursives@gmail.com](mailto:migrationsinterdiscursives@gmail.com) by June 30, 2020. Please mention: Surname, Name and proposal title in the email's subject.

#### ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

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