

Call for Papers

Island Studies: critique beyond the relational turn

International Geographical Union Congress, 24-30 August 2024, Dublin, Ireland.

<https://igc2024dublin.org/>

Please email your 200 word abstract by **September 4th 2023** to Jonathan.Pugh@ncl.ac.uk and sarah.nimfuehr@kunstuni-linz.at

Island Studies: critique beyond the relational turn [1]. Islands of Negation

In recent decades much island scholarship has been dominated by the relational turn which has sought to generatively think with islands as sites for developing relational ways of being and knowing, aiming to challenge the violent hubris of top-down modern and colonial reasoning, the human/nature divide, and a telos of linear progress. These two sessions aim to examine the limitations of this turn at the current juncture of debate in island scholarship. The first session asks, as discussion heightens around colonisation, problematising the appropriative hand in its many manifestations, what does this do today to challenge the relational turn? Are relational ontologies and epistemologies increasingly being understood as too productivist, framing the island and islander as all-too-available, whether for instrumentalization or for a well-meaning ethics of care for the Other? It would seem that a range of discontents are emerging: from developments around opacity, fugitivity and marronage on islands, to understandings of island cultures as desedimenting the delineations of projected ontological framings, to re-readings of how the figure of island in Western philosophy, from Nietzsche to Heidegger, Derrida and Deleuze, has long strained against the projection of human concepts over the world. This session seeks to explore the possibilities of a contemporary development and we welcome both conceptual and empirical papers which engage islands through such tropes as negation, opacity, refusal, the non-generative, non-relation, and withdrawal.

Island Studies: critique beyond the relational turn [2]. Islands and Time: Caribbean Temporalities of Refusal

The second session continues to explore critique beyond the relational turn by foregrounding how, whilst the spatial has been frequently opened-up and interrogated in relational approaches, islands and islanders often still tend to be understood as available through a modern, linear notion of time. Thus, whilst Caribbean islands are often observed to have preserved linguistic elements and cultures (e.g., archaic dialects, customs and religious traditions, gender roles, etc.), these are frequently anchored in a modern chronology. Recent work in Black Studies turning to the Caribbean has foregrounded a multitude of different ways of thinking about time, not as linear, but through such tropes as the 'hold' of the slave ship (Spillers, 2003; Harney and Moten, 2013), 'suspended' time (Philip, 2021) and the 'quantum' (Da Silva, 2022), which all work to problematise and refuse modern time. Saliently, this raises the further question as to how to engage the Caribbean in terms of a place where multiple understandings of time itself meet. What work do different understandings of time, of recall, memory, futurity, the temporal's relationship to ontology, materiality, and spirituality, or otherwise, do? In raising these questions, we welcome papers which engage how different notions of time are framed in contemporary work on the Caribbean, how they problematise and refuse islands understood through a modern, universalistic, linear temporality.