



CEFRÉS

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CEFRÉS'S RESEARCH AREAS

CEFRÉS's scientific policy revolves around three cross-cutting research areas. Each calls for a conceptual approach, both methodological and topical, without restriction to a specific cultural region. These research priorities originate from the discussions, which unfolded at the Research Forum in the Czech Republic organized by the CEFRÉS Platform in April-May 2015. A series of eight interdisciplinary meetings gathered researchers from every field in the humanities and the social sciences, who wished to present their research topics, to develop possible collaborations with the CEFRÉS and to be involved on its future scientific policy.

In each research area interdisciplinary dialogues may emerge between jurists, political scholars, historians, sociologists, anthropologists, theologians, literary historians, geographers, art historians, musicologists and philosophers. Specific programs revolving around these various research areas will be settled upon as the CEFRÉS researchers commit to precise projects, whether individual or collective. We intend to support European and international research projects that include digital humanities (digital resources, mapping, publishing). Individual research and cooperative projects may fit in one or several areas.

[Research Area 1 – Displacements, *Dépaysements* and Discrepancies: People, Knowledge and Practices](#)

[Research Area 2 – Norms & Transgressions](#)

[Research Area 3 – Objects, Traces, Mapping: Everyday Experience of Spaces](#)

RESEARCH AREA 1 – DISPLACEMENTS, DÉPAYSEMENTS AND DISCREPANCIES: PEOPLE, KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES

Research in this area aims at further developing understandings of displacements that impact people, knowledge and practices by exploring the ways they are transformed as they pass through space and time. The term ‘displacement’ covers the whole scope of mobilities, flows and circulations related to people, to material and cultural goods and to ideas. Displacement entails renegotiating and reshaping the content it affects. Indeed, it involves crossing borders, whether symbolic or concrete, where interactions, exchanges, contacts and frictions can occur.

Therefore *dépaysement* and “discrepancy” seem key notions for the analysis of this phenomenon. *Dépaysement* (which the English phrase ‘change of landscape’ poorly translates) is understood as both a move elsewhere and as an intellectual approach. It implies a survey of adaptations, cultural translations and the analysis of contexts of reception.

The discrepancies inherent to the different forms of displacements shall be explored through their diverse and intersecting chronologies as well as with respect to the modifications of the contents themselves. To take an example from the history of ideas, the term ‘naturalism’ refers to different meanings in France and in Central Europe that cannot be grasped without examining its refashioning.

This focus of this research theme puts it at the crossroads between several disciplines, including: philosophy, anthropology, economy, geography, political science, sociology, history, the history of literature and sciences, art history and musicology.

Potential research topics may include:

- displacements of persons: travels, migratory flows and tourism, professional trajectories, commuter displacements, wanderings, and so forth.
- circulations of intellectual and cultural practices: writings, cultural and/or economical, scientific goods, concepts and so forth.
- networks: institutional, commercial networks, sociabilities (such as learned societies, artistic networks, diasporas, and so forth).
- reception contexts and the discrepancies between social representations impacting the various modes of appropriation, translation, adaptation.

RESEARCH AREA 2 – NORMS & TRANSGRESSIONS

Contemporary discourses on freedom of expression, multiculturalism, emigration or sexuality persistently toy with the notion of transgression. Transgression can be viewed as a strategy adopted by various actors—be they religious, cultural, social—to claim and legitimate such norms they deem alternative to the established hierarchies, conventions, traditions, canons and laws. As a discourse, transgression contests the absolute authority of the existing norms, and questions their performative power with its own. As a practice though, it leans on a repertoire of actions (violence, humour, silence, and so forth), which do not necessarily imply any assertion nor self-awareness, for social practices of transgression cannot be reduced to their moral comment.

The purpose of this research is to understand the relationship between norm and transgression, and to question the overlaps and interactions between competing spaces and actors, as well as the inclusion of anti-canonical aspects into mainstream discourses and customs.

Agents of transgressions and enforcers of norms do not merely engage in dynamics of competition and antagonism. They can also demonstrate ties of complicity and coproduction. Our hunch is that there are enough points of contact between these agencies. The relation between norm, transgression and the law should therefore be taken into account. Based on an interdisciplinary approach (law, politics, theology, philosophy, sociology, psychology, anthropology, history, art history, literary history), this research focus endeavors to study:

- strategies of monopoly and competition in norm assertion—the analysis of controversies can be a port of entry, as well as security discourses and practices;
- social practices of transgressions (such as marginality, commitment, resistance, and so forth) and their management (through violence, negotiation, inclusiveness, and so forth);
- agents at the core of such phenomena (minorities, outcasts, and so forth)—with particular attention to the variety of sociological profiles and life trajectories in the case of individual actors.

Last but not least, we would like to open within this research a reflection on a practice both transgressive and canonical: interdisciplinarity.

RESEARCH AREA 3 – OBJECTS, TRACES, MAPPING: EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE OF SPACES

This research focus is based on a both empirical and symbolic definition of space (social, geographical, historiographical), considered as a construction prompted by practices and experiences.

Experiencing space is framed by the layout imposed by objects—be these architectural, instrumental, or common—as demonstrated by current research on the social life of objects, which grasps them in their interactions with individuals and groups. Such an everyday experience of objects is intertwined with a range of symbolical structures: mental mapping, through which space is both surveyed and imagined; traces of a presence/absence, which are open to an archeology of events both gone and surviving; palimpsests, with their time layers; and boundaries, both concrete and symbolical, through which space is defined, classified, organized and made one's own.

The goal is here to overcome the opposition between microscopic and macroscopic levels in the study of spaces so to combine various scales of observation. It aims to reflect upon the incorporation of space and local representations into the current paradigms in the human and social sciences. Each study is embedded in a context of knowledge production, whose dominant or lesser part within the economy of sciences plays an important role. The weight and efficiency of such representations remain important for Central Europe, still marked by the everlasting tension between the fragmentation and re-composition of its borders and territories, but also by multiple feelings of belonging.

This research area is open to sociologists, geographers, art and architecture historians, political scholars, historians and literary historians interested in assessing material and symbolical everyday spaces—be they concrete, palimpsest or ghost spaces. It includes works dealing with the experience of urban and rural spaces, where public and private, indoors and outdoors spaces are built and confronted. Topics revolving around spatial scales can benefit from the impulse given by microhistory to global studies, connecting irreducible situated cases to *longue durée*.