



AFRICA IN MOVIMENTO / AFRICA ON THE MOVE

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TITLE: WHAT IS AFROPOLITANISM? POST-DIASPORIC IDENTITIES IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

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ABSTRACT: The aim of the panel is to unpack the concept of “Afropolitanism” as it has emerged in recent years in numerous researches concerning Africa and the African continent.

Afropolitanism complicates ideas about subjectivity based in belonging and authenticity, offering a post-diasporic reading of contemporary identity. Achille Mbembe, which first proposed this approach in a study of the rapid transformations affecting Johannesburg, maintains that Afropolitanism is a counter-discourse that relativises the primacy of roots and race solidarity, to make way for new forms of “cultural hybridity” and “vernacularisation”. Similarly, the figure of the “cultural mutt” emerges in the writing of Taye Tuakli-Wosornu. The author describes the tensions experienced by subjects which, in spite of their claiming some form of African genealogy, live in multiple worlds, bearing on themselves the complicated promise of a new and more inclusive identity politics. In such a reading, movement is more than a physical experience: it is a hermeneutic and ontological one. Simon Gikandi refers, in fact, to a “new phenomenology of African identity,” whereas Chielozone Eze writes about an experience of the self based in “complementarity,” rather than exclusion.

In light of these arguments, the panel will bring together contributions focusing on multiple cultural aspects, giving precedence to audiovisual analyses. The panel will aim at creating a lively exchange among the many takes on Afropolitanism deriving from literature, cinema, music, the arts focusing, where possible, on the breaks as well as continuities running through these encounters in the hope to offer a preliminary map of a still-emerging concept.