

Call for Papers: PS[L]S 3 - The Limen: (In)stability and Process

We are pleased to announce the third edition of the Postgraduate Seminar in Liminality Studies: The Limen: (In)stability and Process, to be held at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid the 29th and 30th of April, 2020.

In the wake of our [second seminar's](#) discussion on the (im)possibility of inhabiting the threshold, the focus this year will be on the often seemingly contradictory nature of the limen, which has been demonstrated to paradoxically function in various ways during processes of transition, as well as open onto new and (temporarily) stable possibilities for being.

The threshold has been discussed as the place (or the non-place) where we acknowledge the problematization of apparently fixed categories. Established standards collide and result in completely new entities, which both incorporate parts from their encompassing systems and are at the same time also fundamentally distinct from them. The threshold is the space which allows these disparate elements to display their particular characteristics either in harmony or in confrontation with each other. It's a place that permits the examination and re-creation of new phenomena – or, alternatively, the place where these various elements come to be superfluous and perish.

Moreover, the discussion of the processual nature of the limen attests to the contradictory and therefore problematic notion of a stable threshold. Even in those instances in which this limen seems to acquire a certain continuity, the process of transformation never ceases; it is this (in)stability, or continuous change, which gives birth to the liminal as an in-between stage or attribute, developing and possibly inhabiting for a variable but always limited amount of time on the margins of two or more established systems. This will never imply the end of the threshold, but rather its ever-reshaping, transitional nature.

Further, if - as often comes up in such conversations - all can be defined in terms of a constant flux (from individual subjectivity to collective identity to artistic genre to textual dynamics) then the suggestion arises that such conversations must be focused through the

notion of a *spectrum*, rather than on fixed dichotomies. The door is then opened to a discussion which is inherently opposed to binaries, which denial we point towards with the (in)stability signaled in the title. The liminal is at the same time both an inherently unstable place or position, but one which can also lead *towards* stability (as far as that is possible), as is made clear in its anthropological application via Victor Turner, who demonstrated the limen's role in reinforcing the existing social structure of a given society.

In this vein, we would like to invite participants to reflect within the broad category of text on the transitional nature of the limen, exploring the ways in which the fluid dynamics of the threshold manifest, from its (apparent) stability to its inherent instability, including the variety of processes that take part in this process.

We therefore invite postgraduate (MA and PhD candidates) contributions in the general vein of liminality studies which explore notions of process, transition and (in)stability in a variety of contexts. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Textual genres
- Liminal subjectivities and identities
- Gender and queer studies
- Myth and folklore
- Popular fiction and the margin/canon divide
- Children's literature
- Postcolonial literature and the texts of marginalized voices
- Philosophies of becoming
- Intertextuality
- Textual interfaces
- Digital texts
- Image and text: graphic novels, film, etc.

We ask interested postgraduate participants to please send a document including a 300-word abstract, university affiliation, and a short bio of 100 words to postgradliminality@gmail.com before the 31st of January. Talks will be 20 minutes long and, depending on the number of participants, may be limited in number. Acceptance of proposals will be notified by February 29th.

For more information about the PS[L]S project, see: <http://janusgateliterature.com/research-seminars/psls/>