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*Call for papers*

## **International colloquium**

# **Epistemologies of the South: South-South, South-North and North-South global learning**

**Coimbra – 10, 11, 12 July 2014**

A sense of exhaustion looms over Europe. It would appear that the old world is no longer capable of rethinking its past and future. Over centuries, European and Western political, economic and cultural hegemony has eliminated all possibilities of reciprocal learning involving other regions, cultures and traditions in the world. It has prevented any contextualisation of scientific knowledge or critical dialogue with non-Western epistemologies and ways of life, many of which respect nature and human beings as a spiritual, religious and political whole. Today Europe stands at a crossroads, requiring it to deconstruct a past that was built on the myth of exception and to emerge with the opportunity to formulate new possibilities for global transformation and emancipation. In other words, the world as a whole is nowadays more free and open to reflection on the different forms, areas and processes of knowledge and action that represent its infinite diversity. This is the opportunity and the challenge to which this colloquium aims to respond.



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### **The colloquium is based on two ideas:**

1. The possible final crisis in European and Western hegemony provides an opportunity to open up new paths for social transformation and emancipation, constructed on the basis of more plural and reciprocal forms of learning;
2. This possibility will only be realised on the basis of epistemologies that are very different from those which have formed the foundations and legitimisation for European and Western hegemony. They are the epistemologies of the South or, in other words, a set of initiatives for the production and validation of knowledge and understanding based on the experience of the vast majority of the world's population, which has endured the systematic injustices caused by capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy.

**This colloquium challenges participants** to consider that an understanding of the world is much broader than a Western understanding and that therefore the possibilities for social emancipation may be different from those legitimised by the Western canon. This is the essential challenge: we do not need alternatives, but an alternative way of thinking about alternatives.

We believe that on the basis of these premises it will be possible to engage in a deeper and more empowering form of reflection on the emancipatory experiences of the global South and the global North, led by social movements and intellectual activists.

**Can the anti-imperialist South teach anything to the global North?**

**Can the global North teach anything that is not defined by centuries of colonialism and neo-colonialism, imperialism and ethno-racial supremacy?**

**Can both learn in such a way that one day there will be no South or North?**





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The answers to these questions will enable proposals for theory and action to be constructed which effectively confront the logic of global exploitation, oppression and exclusion.

The "Epistemologies of the South: South-South, South-North and North-South Global Learning" international colloquium is an event dedicated to joint reflection and the sharing of alternative and emancipatory experiences and perspectives.

### Main themes

The colloquium is structured around the following **four main themes**, involving the participation of scholars and activists in the global North and and the global South:

- a) **Democratising democracy:** new forms of "high intensity democracy" and links between different forms of democratic decision-making within the horizons of interculturality and demodiversity.
- b) **Transformative constitutionalism, interculturality and the reform of the state:** experimental and post-colonial constitutionalism based on popular struggles, marking a break with presuppositions concerning the unity, uniformity and homogeneity of the modern Eurocentric state.
- c) **Other economies:** new forms of non-capitalist economic organisation within the horizons of a plural economy based on a new relationship between human beings and between humans and nature.
- d) **Human rights and other grammars of human dignity:** rights and obligations involving humans and between humans and non-human life, from an intercultural perspective which extends beyond the conventional dichotomies of universalism and cultural relativism, between collectivism and individualism, between society and nature.



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**Paper proposals:**

Abstracts: maximum 250 words

Accepted languages: English, Portuguese and Spanish

Closing date for submission: 28 February 2014

Deadline for notification of acceptance: 31 March 2014

Registration fee:

- 150 euros before 30 April 2014 (250 after 30 April 2014);
- Students: 75 euros before 30 April 2014 (100 euros after 30 April 2014)

**To submit a proposal, please follow the link:**

[http://www.ces.uc.pt/eventos/alice\\_coloquio/?lang=en](http://www.ces.uc.pt/eventos/alice_coloquio/?lang=en)

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**ALICE project website: [alice.ces.uc.pt](http://alice.ces.uc.pt)**



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