

**CALL FOR PAPERS
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**



**UNIVERSITATEA
BABEȘ-BOLYAI**

THE NEW SUBJECTIVITIES OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM: SPIRITUALITY, PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE WORLD OF WORK

Guest speakers:

Emma BELL (The Open University, UK)

Ekaterina CHERTKOVSKAYA (Lund University, Sweden)

François GAUTHIER (University of Fribourg, Switzerland)

Scott TAYLOR (University of Birmingham, UK)

Conference organized by the Sociology Department of Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania¹

Conference Dates: 18th – 20th of September, 2017

Venue: Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Sociology Department, BBU

Deadline for abstract submission: 7th of August 2017

Notification for acceptance: 15th of August, 2017

Abstracts of papers should be submitted to the following email addresses: Sorin Gog (soringog@yahoo.com) or Anca Simionca (ancasimionca@gmail.com)

The current neo-liberal transformations of global capitalism have produced throughout the world lasting and significant changes. At the same time, they have generated new cultural ontologies, institutions and social practices which are embedded, appropriated and sometimes resisted in local political, religious and social contexts. This conference focuses on the emergence of new forms of subjectivities that encourages individuals to govern themselves by becoming more creative, competitive and entrepreneurial. An important

¹ This conference is supported by a grant of the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research and Innovation, CNCS - UEFISCDI, project number PN-II-RU-TE-2014-4-2515

aspect of the contemporary neo-liberal governmentality is represented by the role played by the various embodiments of a new spirit of capitalism based on an ethic of self-transformations that instills in its subjects a sense of responsibility, autonomy and most of all an immanent desire for authenticity. In this context we have witnessed in the past decade the emergence of new alternative religions and spiritualities, workshops for personal development, integrative and trans-personal psychologies, popular therapeutic expertise on management of the self; these new technologies of care for human resources that aim at socializing new subjectivities have spread not only in work environments and governmental agencies but also in educational establishments, healthcare and social work programs.

The aim of this conference is to explore on one hand the religious changes in contemporary society and the way these new spiritualities (yoga, theta healing, meditation, holotropic breathing, familial constellations, reiki. etc.) are becoming an important component not only of popular culture but of various professional fields (management, psychology, psychotherapy, medicine, sport, etc.) and shape a culture of neo-liberal subjectivities. On the other hand we want to analyze the transformative changes of the neo-liberal economic environment, especially those sectors that experiment with a new spirit of capitalism through innovative forms of management of individuals and creative policies for developing human resources.

This conference aims to bring together scholars from a broad field of social sciences (anthropology, sociology, religious studies, political science, critical management studies) that are interested in the contemporary flourishing of new forms of subjectivities and in the role they play in contemporary capitalist societies. The goal of the conference is to discuss local instances of how neo-liberalism is reproduced through what appears as transformative ethics of self-realization and to analyze the mechanisms of generating 'enterprising' and 'competitive' subjectivities that are engaged in transforming their inner selves and their social environments in accordance with the prevailing economic rationalities.

We welcome papers that:

- explore the new landscapes of religion and spirituality and ways in which these new cultural ontologies are appropriated by global capitalism;
- explore the role played by the spiritual and personal development programs in shaping a new sense of self that is adapted to the contemporary social and economic conditions;

- explore how the neoliberal economic transformations are contested and resisted by traditional religions and the way moral communities are creatively reframed in order to engage with these vast social and economic transformations.
- explore the transformations within the psy-disciplines and the role they have played in the implementation of technologies of intervention and in the popularization of devices self-production through the mass consumption of psychological expertise (therapies, clinical mediation, self-help literature);
- explore the role played by the spiritual and personal development sector in further legitimizing the understanding of individuals as fully responsible for their employability and the outcome of their attempts to better position themselves within organizations or in the labor market.
- explore changes in the world of work through recent processes like de-proletarianisation or re-proletarianisation and the subsequent transformations of the workers' sense of the self; analyze how the reconfiguration of regions as economic units transform the nature and experience of work.
- any other topic related to neoliberal subjectivities in religions, organizations, work environments and popular culture.

Participation, abstracts and registration

The conference is open to all academics, researchers and MA/PhD Students working on related topics. Please submit an abstract of no more than 200 words before **7th of August 2017** to the following email addresses: Sorin Gog (soringog@yahoo.com) or Anca Simionca (ancasimionca@gmail.com). The authors will be notified about the acceptance of their abstracts before 15th of August 2017. There is no registration fee for this conference. Participants are expected however to cover for their travel to Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Upon request, the organizers can provide accommodation for a limited number of participants.