

home is where the heart is

In the present context of shifting borders and cultures clashing the terms, origin and dispersal, are gaining new meanings. Concepts such as 'home' and 'identity' are here significant.

How is identity constructed? By whom? Under which conditions? Where? Who has the right to claim certain identities? (Rosi Braidotti. Lecture: Difference, Diversity and Nomadic Subjectivity, Utrecht 1999) Connections to others and cultural exchanges provide the backdrop for identity in permanent reformation. Identity is never fixed once and for all, never completed. Identity should be analyzed as a process, multiplicitous, contradictory and unstable, lacking coherence even. It is understood as the interplay between our subjective experience of the world and the cultural and historical settings in which shifting subjectivities are formed.

"Where is the home? On the one hand, 'home' is a mythic place of desire in the diasporic imagination. In this sense it is a place of no return, even if it is possible to visit the geographical territory that is seen as the place of 'origin'. On the other hand, home is the lived experience of a locality. Its sounds and smells, its heat and dust, balmy summer evenings, or the excitement of the first snowfall, shivering winter evenings, sombre grey skies in the middle of the day...all this, as mediated by the historically specific everyday of social relations. In other words, the varying experience of the pains and pleasures, the terrors and contentments, or the highs and humdrum of the everyday lived culture that marks how, for example, a cold winter night might be differently experienced sitting by a crackling fireside mansion as compared with huddled around a makeshift fire on the streets of nineteenth-century England." (Avtar Brah, *Diaspora border and transnational identities*. In: "Cartographies of Diaspora." *Contesting Identities*. London 1996, p. 178 - 210)

The historical experience of diaspora implies a forced migration of collectives. Here we use it as diasporic discourses as a theoretical tool. Although separation or dislocation is to be experienced, we can still use diasporic discourses as a theoretical tool. (Avtar Brah 1996)

Diaspora offers a critique of discourses of fixed origins, while taking account of a homing desire which is not the same thing as desire for a homeland. Yet not all diasporas sustain an ideology of return. The concept of diaspora places the discourse of 'home' and 'dispersion' in creative tension, inscribing a homing desire while simultaneously critiquing discourse of fixed origins."

It is exactly this tension surrounding the discourse of 'home' is what I find interesting. A yearning to be located yet being critical of it. Here cultural differences collide and are forced to reassemble and reconfigure thus offering new beginnings and hope.

home exhibitions 2005:

The first planned exhibition titled 'home is where the heart is' implies an idealistic understanding of what home is or could be. The feeling of being at home as an experience of the senses as if the essence of 'home' could be captured in full or revealed in an individual created system of meaning. The physical state of 'being at home' is located in a house, structure, or specific location.

The following exhibit titled 'home is where the hurt is' will look at the individual within the context of society in respect to concepts of identity and home. Friction causing social and cultural exclusions and tensions based on one's identity will be of focus. What does society expect of us? How does my self-image coincide with society at large?

The final exhibition for 2005 will be a retrospective of the first two and will focus specifically on the concept of 'homing desire' (Avtar Brah). The desire and drive to be located, centered, anchored will be critically investigated and questioned. Identity again entails fluid transitions, exchanges, and interconnectedness. The subject may find itself beyond desire or nostalgia for fixity. Yet fixed routes exist, such as repetition, cyclical moves, and rhythmical displacement. Locating and creating new myths with imagination could offer new understanding of identity. (Rosi Braidotti. "Nomadic Subjects." *Embodiment & Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory*. New York 1994, p. 1 - 39)

The first opening of the home series is scheduled for Friday May 13th. It will run until June 30th accessible by appointment only.

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