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Inbetweenness and ambivalence, towards a new understanding of social reality

SALIS, DCU, 13th September 2010, Seminar Room, INVENT CENTRE

ABSTRACT

In applying classification to raw reality there will always be an unclassifiable rest and in specifying meaning there is no way to avoid a rest of fuzziness. Understanding can always fail, interpretation can be disrupted by surprises and resistance, rules can be violated boundaries can be crossed by nomads, questioned by folds and by parasites. This essential fuzziness, ambivalence and inbetweenness is not just a critical or even pathological disturbance of the social order but, instead, they are the indispensable elements of this order and they drive the process of social communication – without deviance there would be no awareness of rules, without irritations of a given background there would be no sign or image, without fuzziness there would be no need for understanding. The extraordinary is thus discovered as the indispensable key to social order and this social order is based on the acceptance of the unclassifiable, of ambiguity and inbetweenness. This thesis about the constitutive power of inbetweenness will be exemplified with phenomena as diverse as garbage, monsters, victims and seduction.