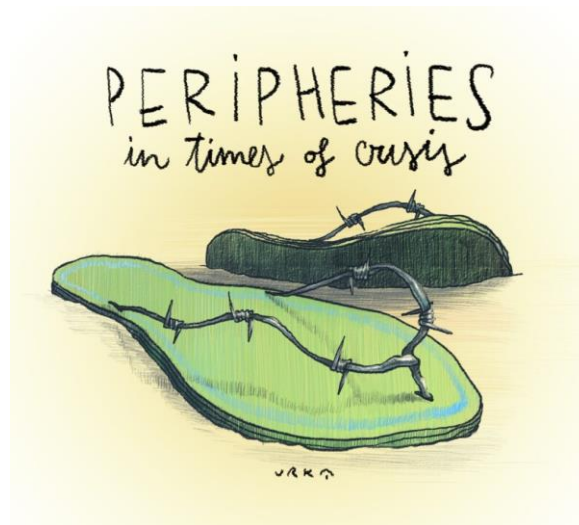


*INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE*



**PERIPHERIES IN TIMES OF CRISIS:  
Representations, Narratives, Discourses**

**University of Madeira**

**Colégio dos Jesuítas, Funchal**

**January 30-31, 2025**

<https://ceh.elach.uminho.pt/ehum2m/>

As a phenomenon inseparable from a risk society, crisis has become latent in the hypermodern global world, functioning as an operative concept for a chronology of recent decades: sovereign debt crisis, refugee crisis, pandemic crisis, housing crisis, education crisis, climate crisis, nuclear crisis, identity crisis, and demographic crisis. From economics to culture – distant disciplinary areas that often use the metaphor of the margin or the border – the use of the centre-periphery binomial as a trope in the media discourse on crises is frequent. This discourse is multidirectional and takes many shapes and forms: on the one hand, peripheries are perceived as culturally determined and determining places, while simultaneously fear inducing as a threshold to the unknown. The Mediterranean, both an imaginary of the West's founding odysseys and a tragic barrier for migrants and refugees, is a clear example of this. Not unrelated to this first aspect, the centre-periphery binomial also relocates to the centre of attention objects of study that have traditionally been invisible. That is the case of post-colonial, black, gender, queer, mobility and border studies. Finally, the centre and the periphery have become particularly inseparable from

the discussion on migration and mobility in the globalised world, from the 'waves' of war refugees to Europe and climate refugees to the global north, to economic emigration from the European peripheries to the centre, or even the flight from pandemic constraints in the opposite direction.

Coinciding with the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, this conference will take place on the Island of Madeira, which is known by the jurisdictional language as "outermost region", but which will become a centre for transdisciplinary academic reflection on issues touched by it from history to the present day: during the 19th century, members of European royal families took refuge in Madeira (not only) for health and leisure reasons, as well as Jews who fled National Socialist persecution, and digital nomads during the 2020 pandemic. These examples provide evidence that migration and mobility articulate well-being and violence in the oscillation of peripheral places as margin and centre. Lastly, Madeira is part of *Macaronesia* ('the fortunate islands'), a bioregion where the Atlantic volcanic island is a geographic and cultural reference point, ranging from Cape Verde to the Azores, archipelagos where several of the aspects under consideration at this meeting coexist: the Canary Islands are a destination for migrants from the African coast, the Azores have traditionally witnessed emigration to the American continent, and Cape Verde is the repository of traumatic histories, such as those of colonialism and the Tarrafal Concentration Camp, used as remote prison for political and social enemies of the Estado Novo regime.

The conference *Peripheries in Times of Crisis* aims at expanding this discussion to other contexts from the perspective of the Arts and Humanities, bringing together researchers from areas such as literary and cultural studies, linguistics, translation, history and communication, not excluding relevant contributions from other scientific areas regarding the representations, narratives and discourses in times of crisis. Papers that focus on peripheral realities beyond the European continent and the Lusophone and Anglo-Saxon world are especially welcome. The aim is to challenge the very etymology of the word 'periphery' as a circumference, promoting, with Walter Benjamin, the distinction between the threshold – a hybrid zone where imagination boils – and the border – a bureaucratic category, a single line of barrage and separation (Barrento, 2022:87). In this sense, the periphery is to be considered literally and metaphorically, including islands, suburbs and regions as well as identities, representations and histories usually ignored or discriminated against.

Barrento, João (2022). *Walter Benjamin: A sobrevida das ideias – ensaios e diário*. Famalicão: Edições do Saguão.

Taking all these aspects into consideration, we invite scholars to submit their proposals on one of the following topics, which are by no means exclusive:

1. Migration, peripheries and crisis.
2. Disasters, borders, margins and threshold spaces.
3. Travelling, exile and confinement in times of crisis.
4. Minority identities and crisis.
5. Insular, suburban and transnational cultures in crisis.
6. Representation and memory of refugees, displaced people and nomads.
7. Utopias and heterotopias in times of crisis.
8. Crisis and thinking in/about margins, borders and threshold spaces.
9. Language(s), discourse, translation and peripheries.

#### **ORGANIZING COMMITTEE**

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## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

*Peripheries in Times of Crisis* is an in-person event and will be held at the *Colégio dos Jesuítas* (Rectorate of the University of Madeira), located in the heart of Funchal. Conference languages are **Portuguese, English, Spanish and German**. Oral presentations should not be longer than 20 minutes.

Proposals should be sent to <periferias.crise@uma.mail.pt> by May 31, 2024, including: name, email, institution, title, max. 300-word abstract, 5 keywords, 100-word bio-note. As soon as the proposal is accepted, it is highly recommended that flights and accommodation are booked as early as possible, since the Madeira Islands are a popular destination all year round.

## IMPORTANT DATES

Submission deadline: **May 31, 2024**.

Results of abstract review: until **June 30, 2024**.

Early bird registration (70€): **June 3, 2024 - September 2, 2024**.

Standard registration (90€): **September 3, 2024 - October 7, 2024**.

**Submission for publication:** A set of selected communications will be published either digitally or in print after submission to peer review.