

## **TRACES...: Thinking Objects Through Remains**

**Date :** May 9, 2010

**Imprints ? Ruins ? DNA ? Waste ? Relics ? Manuscripts ? Images ? Dust ? Ashes ? Shadows & Ghost ? Memory ? Weather? Materials & Substances**

*UCL, Department of Anthropology, 04 June 2010*

*Daryll Forde Seminar Room – 2nd floor*

This workshop is sponsored by the *Journal of Material Culture*.

The Department of Anthropology at UCL/Material Culture and the Centre for Museums, Heritage and Material Culture Studies propose a one-day workshop on the theme of 'TRACES: Thinking Objects Through Remains' that will be hosted by the Department of Anthropology at UCL (Daryll Forde seminar room), on the 04th of June 2010.

TRACES aims to explore people life through fragments of their material world and therefore through processes of re-construction of knowledge associated to them. Material and immaterial traces are both, a metonymic, indexical presence – as in fragment or particle – re-calling a previous whole no longer in existence. Yet as an imprint, inscription, incision or aperture the trace is also an absence itself. Thirdly, trace is also metaphor, a figure of thought, a device of deconstruction rather than a material presence/absence. Traces as evidences of human/non-human actions draw upon the dialectic between the visible and invisible, the past and the present. Furthermore, traces objectify particular spatial and temporal qualities and its variabilities such as temporalities, ephemerality, durée, instantaneity, which are cross-culturally defined and interpreted in multiple ways. Hence, the proposed workshop investigates the construction of knowledge and process of interpretation about people life and body through material remains.

By considering themes such as ruins, DNA, imprints, waste, weather, images, dust, ashes, shadows & Ghost, relics, memory, palimpsests, materials & Substances, we would like to explore how worldwide cultures of the past and of the present interpret material and immaterial traces as processes of knowing about the world.

We seek to address the questions such as, but not limited to:

§ What do traces mean to people?

§ How is time expressed and recovered through traces?

§ How do we interpret them?

§ To what extent can traces tell us about actions, object biographies and people's identities?

§ What can traces tell us about objects and people?

§ What are the methods and techniques to identify traces and recover objects and subjects

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