

Call for Papers

# THE MANY

HISTORY, THEORY AND POLITICS

International Conference

Faculty of Human and Social Sciences of the New University of Lisbon

18-20<sup>th</sup> April 2012

The definition of a collective subject of politics constituted one of the most important questions in modern political thought, history and social sciences. All these disciplines tried to answer the question *who makes politics?* as part of a wider questioning on *what is politics?* In the last decades, however, the names given to collective political subjects – such as people, nation, class or masses – became the object of an ever growing questioning regarding their adequacy, thus creating a conceptual crisis. This crisis' first consequence was the downgrading of any notion of politics as a collective affair. The view that individuals were both the base and object of politics became dominant. According to such a view, the collective should be seen as a mere aggregation of individualities. Nevertheless, this conceptual crisis also opened up to other possibilities. Recent years were also marked by the quest for new concepts or for a renewal of old concepts in order to name the collective subject of politics. Such a quest, in its many guises, entails a strategic notion of politics where the plurality of a singular subject always exceeds the sum of its parts. Such debates around the names of the collective political subject have been taking place in domains as diverse as philosophy, history, economics, political science and anthropology.

This conference aims to gather a set of contributions to the question of the collective subject of politics. The conference welcomes papers that present theoretical contributions to the debate as well as case studies gathered from any geographical space and from all historical periods. It is mainly – but in no way exclusively – directed at researchers from different disciplinary areas working on political thought and social movements. The working language of the conference is English. A limited number of papers presented in Portuguese, Spanish or French may also be accepted. Those interested in presenting a paper at the conference should submit an abstract no longer than 300 words **before the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2011**. An answer will be issued before the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2012.

Abstracts (and a brief CV) should be sent to:

[jose.neves@fcsh.unl.pt](mailto:jose.neves@fcsh.unl.pt) and [politicsofthemany@gmail.com](mailto:politicsofthemany@gmail.com)

## KEY-NOTE SPEAKERS

**Boaventura de Sousa Santos** is Director of the Center for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, Distinguished Legal Scholar at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School and Global Legal Scholar at the University of Warwick. His books include *Toward a New Legal Common Sense: Law, Globalization and Emancipation* and *The Rise of the Global Left: The World Social Forum and Beyond*.

**James C. Scott** is Professor of Political Science and Anthropology at Yale University. His books include *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* and *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*.

**Pablo Sánchez-Leon** is Professor of History at the University of the Basque Country. His books include *Absolutismo y Comunidad: Las Orígenes Sociales de la Guerra de los Comuneros de Castilla* and *La Guerra que nos han contado: 1936 y nosotros* (with Jesús Izquierdo).

**Peter Hallward** is Professor of Philosophy at the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy at Kingston University London. His books include *Damming the Flood: Haiti and the Politics of Containment* and *Badiou: A Subject to Truth*.

**Sandro Mezzadra** is Professor of Political Theory and Sociology at the University of Bologna. His books include *Crisis in the Global Economy – Financial Markets, Social Struggles and New Political Scenarios* (edited with Andrea Fumagalli) and *Diritto di Fuga: Migrazioni, Cittadinanza, Globalizzazione*.

## Organization

Institute for Contemporary History of the New University of Lisbon

Complutense University of Madrid – Department for the History of Thought and Social and Political Movements

Birkbeck College of the University of London – Department of Iberian and Latin American Studies.

## Conference fees

60€

## Convenors

Bruno Peixe Dias (University of Lisbon), Diego Palacios Cerezales (Complutense University of Madrid), José Neves (New University of Lisbon), Luís Trindade (Birkbeck College), Ricardo Noronha (New University of Lisbon) and Victor Pereira (University of Pau and Pays de l'Adour).