

Critiquing the Center/Periphery Narrative: The Cosmopolitan Avant-Garde in Portugal during World War I

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This talk considers the activities of the Portuguese avant-garde during World War I. Joana Cunha Leal looks both into the publication of the *Orpheu* journal and Corporation Nouvelle's initiatives, defined by Sonia and Robert Delaunay with Portuguese Amadeo de Souza Cardoso and Eduardo Viana, while discussing the contrast between the peripheral places where these activities were devised, and their transnational-cosmopolitan profile. While recognizing that the differences between centres and peripheries deserve to be highlighted, this talk argues that the divide between them is far from transparent. Amadeo de Souza Cardoso's works of the War years will be taken as the most significant example of how the uneven power relationships that support the centre/periphery dichotomy do not arise from a merely geographical location. Cardoso's work shows us some of the inconsistencies in art historical narratives relating to the peripheries, since the diversity and complexity of the exchanges and dialogues occurring in his collage-paintings challenge both straightforward preconceptions about production-places and the beliefs of formalist aesthetic discourse. These hybrid works achieve this by doubling the possible connotations of collage, and by forcing us to reconsider their ongoing relations with the means and possibilities of painting and representation.