

Genderstudies in Belgium. A State of the Art

KEY NOTE LECTURE

Dis/Entangling Knowledge: Hegemonic Agenda and Decolonial Coalition

Nacira Guénif

Thursday 19/10, 15.00-17.00, Spiegelzaal

The next changing step in post-Western European societies consists of digging into the vast living archive of knowledge that is used as the latest efficient tool in the colonial oppression of marginalized groups such as Arab, Blacks and Muslims. If the inquiry into the blind spots of gendered knowledge production is underway, and successfully exposes the white male heterosexist premises of knowledge labelled as universal, the inquiry into the underlying colonial dimension of knowledge production and promotion is still to come. Such a task requires looking into the deep sedimentation of public discourses and statements. Yet this is not enough. We need to re-examine academic scholarship as a place of tension and retention with regard to the un/known and deliberate remnants of a mind-set, colonial superiority, that is taken for granted. Activist groups and minority mobilizations have opened repertoires that aim to reclaim their multiple identities and solidarities against a European white supremacy that is entrenched in racism. Weaving gender and queer approaches of unidentified creatures and race relations may be a useful first step towards disentangling knowledge production. As well as dismantling a transnational and trans-local whitening agenda, so as to build decolonial coalitions that may be viewed as subalternatives.

Nacira Guénif-Soulimas is an anthropologist and sociologist, Professor of Education at Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis, member of laboratoire EXPERICE (Paris 8-Paris 13), Vice-president of the Institut des Cultures d'Islam and member of MAFED (Marche des Femmes pour la Dignité).

DISCUSSANTS

Omar Jabary Salamanca is an FWO Research Fellow and lecturer in Colonial Studies at Ghent University. He is also a Research Associate of the Observatoire des Mondes Arabe et Musulman at the Université Libre de Bruxelles. He was previously Marie Curie Fellow at the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies at Columbia University. His research lies at the intersection of urban studies, settler colonialism, political economy and Middle East studies, with a focus on the histories and geographies of infrastructure in Palestine. He is currently working on a book manuscript provisionally titled, 'Fabric of Life. The Infrastructure of Settler Colonialism and Uneven Development'. He is also engaged in a variety of research, art and community projects, including support as editorial board member of the journals *Antipode* and *ACME*; editor for the *Jadaliyya* Cities Page Network and *LAVA*; member of the steering committee of the International Critical Geography Group; co-organizer of the Eye On Palestine Arts and Film Festival; and member of the Slow Science collective.

Rachida Aziz is a community-builder. She relentlessly reflects and acts around the intertwining of struggles and strategies and she analyses how they impact the community-building process. She launched Azira, a clothing line and brand she designed herself back in 2008. After a few years as an entrepreneur, she promoted a new project in 2015: Le Space is a laboratory and try-out room for the cultural centre of tomorrow. It is a haven for the new hybrid identity, who feels right at home amongst the super diversity of our cities' multilayered population. Le Space serves as an intersection where artists, activists, ecological start-ups and cultural organizations can meet. Above all, Le Space is a safe space where respect and solidarity are the key values. Rachida's book "Noone will sleep here tonight" (epo edition) will be released in a few weeks. <http://lespace.brussels/>

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**De Markten, Oude Graanmarkt 5 Rue du
Vieux Marché aux Grains, 1000 Brussels**

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