Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies – Chair of Gender Studies and Islamic Studies
University Research Priority Program (URPP) Asia and Europe
Swiss Society for Gender Studies

International Workshop
Zurich, March 18–19, 2016

Feminism and Theory in the Arab World
The question of women’s rights, and by extension of feminism, is a highly debated topic in the Arab World. Not only does it touch upon the controversial issue of gender equality but also on questions of identity, ideology, power and politics. Organizations and actors with different – and often opposing – ideological backgrounds that claim to have a women’s rights agenda have been amongst the most active in the region in the past decades. Studies of their work and trajectories have led to substantial scholarship, both in the fields of academic research and of activist grey literature. These works have shed light on processes of political advocacy and negotiations, and have described ensuing legal and social changes. They have further contributed to producing typologies of different forms of feminism, and to highlighting the interrelation between diverse currents.

Starting from the different historical experiences and political as well as intellectual trajectories of feminisms (understood as both feminist movements and ideologies) in the MENA region, the workshop focuses on how scholars who have long been observing feminist endeavors, while being themselves women’s rights activists, interpret the present situation beyond ideological fault lines. What are the relevant concepts for understanding current debates and evolutions inside Arab feminisms? What is the potential of feminism(s) as both a set of critical theoretical tools as well as an ensemble of movements in the region? How does one theorize Arab feminisms from within while taking account of their historical entanglements as well as their current transnational connectivities?
Program

Friday, March 18, 2016

9:30–10:00  Bettina Dennerlein & Yasmine Berriane  
Short Introduction by the Organizers

10:00–11:00  Marnia Lazreg (City University of New York)  
Theorizing the Median Space between Power and Feminism: The Case of Algeria

11:00–11:15  Coffee Break

11:15–12:15  Fatima Sadiqi (University of Fez)  
The Centre: A Post-‘Arab Spring’ Space for a New Moroccan Feminist Discourse

12:15–14:30  Lunch Break

14:30–15:30  Amel Grami (Manouba University)  
Male Feminism in Post-Revolution Tunisia

15:30–15:45  Coffee Break

15:45–16:45  Zeina Zaatari (University of California, Davis)  
A Fourth Wave of Feminism: The Body as Core, the Story as Voice

16:45–17:15  Coffee Break
17:15–19:00 Roundtable
“Women’s and Gender Studies in Arab and Swiss Universities”

Participants: Hoda Elsadda (Cairo University), Amel Grami (Manouba University, Tunis), Fatima Sadiqi (University of Fez), Marylène Lieber (University of Geneva), Regina Wecker (University of Basel).

Chair: Bettina Dennerlein (University of Zurich)

Open to the public

19:30 Apéro and Dinner (by Invitation)
Saturday, March 19, 2016

10:00–11:00  **Hoda Elsadda (Cairo University)**
Traveling Critique: Anti-imperialism, Gender and Rights Discourses

11:00–11:15  **Coffee Break**

11:15–12:15  **Raja Rhouni (University of El Jadida)**
Fatema Mernissi and the Decolonization of Feminism: Islamic Feminism as a New Paradigm and Beyond

12:15–13:30  **Lunch Break**

13:30–15:30  **Final Discussion**
Discussants: Katrin Meyer (University of Basel) and Nadia Al-Bagdadi (Central European University).
# General Information

**Location**
- University of Zurich
- Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies
- Room RAA G-01 (Aula)
- Rämistrasse 59
- CH-8001 Zurich

**Convenors**
- Dr. Yasmine Berriane (URPP Asia and Europe)
- Prof. Dr. Bettina Dennerlein (Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies – Chair of Gender Studies and Islamic Studies)

**Contact**
- Dr. Yasmine Berriane
- University of Zurich
- URPP Asia and Europe
- Rämistrasse 66
- CH-8001 Zurich
- yasmine.berriane@uzh.ch

**Registration**
- Please register by March 10, 2016: yasmine.berriane@uzh.ch (limited number of participants)

**Internet**
- www.asienundeuropa.uzh.ch/feminism

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