



Public Lecture

Women and the Re-Casting of the Spiritual in Morocco

Dr. Meriem El Haitami (Rabat and Zurich)

Tuesday, September 19th 2023, 18:15-20:00
University of Zurich, RAA-E-29
Rämistrasse 59, 8001 Zurich

This lecture traces the emergence and contours of newly gained spaces for women in the fields of new/self-spiritualities and wellbeing culture in Morocco, evoking themes of empowerment, agency and self-determination. By providing a nuanced empirical portrait of emergent spiritual trajectories, this lecture revisits the notion of empowerment, in relation to self-fashioning, the potential for collective action, and modes of meaning-making. It seeks to delve into the reasons why practices within these domains continue to captivate numerous women, surpassing the appeal of feminism, and argue that while such spaces can carve sites of sisterhood, agency and a post-patriarchal cultivation of feminine values and qualities, they also raise concerns about gender essentialism, neoliberal entanglements, and the erasure of socio-political and systemic issues.

Meriem El Haitami is currently a research fellow at Zurich University. Her research addresses the interactions between state and new social and religious configurations in Morocco, with particular focus on the role of women. El Haitami is a recipient of a number of visiting fellowships including her position as a visiting professor at Columbia University (2021-2022) and Yale University (2015-2016).

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The Lecture is followed by an Apéro. Please register for the Apéro before September 14th via: sina.ritt@aoi.uzh.ch