

Call for papers (Ph.D course)

Heritage activism, memory politics and the decolonial turn: haunted and haunting bodies ,spaces and histories

14- 16 January 2021

Venues

Nobel Park, Building 1481-1485, Jens Chr. Skousvej 2-4
Auditoriums 1440-1443, Taasingegade 3,
Studenterhus Aarhus (Meeting rooms), Nordre Ringgade 3,

City

Aarhus C

ECTS

3 points

Partners:

ECHOES researchers, Warsaw University, University of Rennes, UWE Bristol, The Research Program Cultural Transformations, The Research Program at the Department of Global Studies, The Research Program at the Department of Philosophy and History of Ideas, Research programme Uses of the Past, the Ph.D. Programs for Arts, Literature and Cultural Studies, the Ph.D Program for for Anthropology, International Area Studies and the Study of Religion.

Numbers: 20-25 PhD students from heritage and memory studies, cultural and post-colonial studies, global studies, history, philosophy, European studies, Eastern European studies, art and media studies, sociology and anthropology.

Description

The material and immaterial legacies of colonialism are numerous in former colonized territories as well as in Europe. While formal or external colonialism, defined by the transfer of people from metropole to colony in settlements of overseas territories (Oldfield 2018), has largely come to an end, coloniality persist for example in forms internal colonialisms, within academic disciplines, and in bordering practices – the biopolitical and geopolitical management and fencing of people, land, flora and fauna within a nation actualized by the global Covid-19 virus (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013 , Yuval-Davis, Wemyss, Cassidy 2019). The persistence of structural inequalities between the Global North and South, as well as the (re)entrenchment of aspects of a colonial imaginary of inferior, backward and disposable others, has lead scholars such as Walter Mignolo and Maria Tlostanova to argue that the decolonial agenda remains relevant in a myriad of cultural, social and political contexts. Decolonizing agendas within contemporary heritage and memory activism, knowledge production, heritage landscapes, cultural institutions, city-spaces, and arts have indeed increasingly come to the fore in recent years. Today the imperative to decolonize not only

concerns territories and histories of coloniality, but also the post-colonial entangled afterlives between former colonizers and colonized. It is an agenda present in various societal spheres around the globe fueled by the ambition to oppose structural as well as everyday racism, let silenced actors speak, make 'invisibilized' bodies publicly visible, and to criticize the rejection, exclusion or incarceration of bodies and subjects marked by the colonial past – such as those of the migrants and refugees currently pushing against Europe's increasingly fortified borders. But this colonial imaginary is not restricted to processes and subjects geographically outside Europe or the West, but also emerges in the form of various 'internal colonizations' (Etkind 2011, Glowacka-Grajper 2019), in which majority populations believe themselves to be under threat of colonization - e.g. by stronger geopolitical powers (Russia, the US, China or the EU). Likewise the colonial imaginary also emerges internally in the form of what Madina Tlostanova terms the construction of "problem-people" (Tlostanova 2018). While she is primarily thinking of the post-Soviet bodies of Eastern Europeans conceived as 'problems' by Western Europe, the same kind of gesture is certainly discernable in the othering and racializing of minority groups such as the Romas, Jews, Muslim immigrants, people of African descent or indigenous minorities within metropolises such as Greenlanders, Sami, Native Americans or Canadians and Aboriginal Australians.

In this Ph.D course we welcome young scholars studying coloniality, postcoloniality and decoloniality in all spheres, as well as studies on the different forms and meanings in particular political and cultural contexts, including strategic uses of the terms to achieve nationalist and other identity political ends.

Structure

This international PhD course establishes a dialogue between PhD students and acknowledged keynote speakers in the field such as Madina Tlostanova and Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni as well as to the course conveners who will share their experience of working in the field of colonial legacies and decolonial options from international and collaborative research projects such as ECHOES, European Colonial Heritage Modalities in Entangled Cities (H2020, 2018-2021).

The three days of the course addresses theoretical, empirical and methodological aspects of the issue. On the first day the key questions are concerned with the definition, delimitation and controversies of the scholarly agenda engaging with issues of decoloniality in the field of heritage and memory studies. Students will be led to discuss core distinctions such as that between a decolonial and a postcolonial agenda, as well as the epistemological and theoretical challenges posed by works such as those of Mignolo, Tlostanova, Ndlovu-Gatsheni, De Sousa Santos, Smith and Mbembe.

On such foundations the second day engages more directly with the concrete level of exploring specific fields and contexts as well as the role of specific actors through a decolonial lens. Here the student will encounter a selection of analytically unfolding and empirically grounded explorations of the decolonial agenda in different cases, media and materials.

Finally students will choose between and engage with issues of methodological practice and its entanglement with themed important questions that touch upon core issues such as positionality, interculturality, post-communism, affective politics, activism, transeuropeanizing heritage. The

questioning of assumptions about legitimate voices, knowledges and experiences as the foundation for articulating a decolonial agenda including its politico-normative horizons is central. Here too, the question of which kind of bodies – excessive, problematic, Invisible, too visible – and which kinds of decolonial relationalities we might imagine and hope for, is key.

Course form and student involvement:

The course will present a decolonial city-walk organized by the artist collective FCNNNEWS as part of the curriculum. Such an endeavor invites participants to see a decolonial heritage practice in action as well as it breaks participants expectations of a Ph.D course only being a classroom. Rob Jacobs and Anne Reijniers are decolonial visual artists from Brussels and they will present their latest works on decoloniality.

Students will submit a shorter synopsis or an excerpt (5-7 pages) of their project, that they wish to discuss at this course in particular. The paper will be presented in smaller assemblies and commented upon by an appointed scholar on the second day of the conference.

On the third day the students will engage in workshops and reflect on their own work in light of the themes treated such as positionality, affective politics, post-communist memory, safe and unsafe museums, intercultural dialogues. The themes will comply to the students' various topics and interests. Both senior scholars and younger scholars will engage in exchanges around these issues.

For a full description and a complete program for this course, please visit <https://phdcourses.dk/Course/74252>. If you are interested in participating, please register before **September 1** at <https://events.au.dk/heritageactivismf2021/signup.html>. We would also like you to send us a 300-400 words abstract of your Ph.D project to Decolonialheritage.phdcourse.arts@au.dk

If you are accepted at the course, we would ask for a synopsis or an excerpt of your project (5-7 pages) that you wish to discuss within this course in particular must be submitted before **December 15** likewise to Decolonialheritage.phdcourse.arts@au.dk

There is no fee for participation in the school. Lunches and coffee breaks will be provided by organizers to all participants. In addition, we can cover the cost of accommodation and catering for a limited number of students (around 10). If you wish to be considered please include that information in your application with the justification why you are unable to cover those costs by yourself or with the help of your institution. To give you a basic orientation, we estimate the cost of accommodation in Aarhus to be ca 220 euro total per person for five nights in a double room and costs of additional catering to be ca 135 euro total.