ABSTRACT

AFRO-SAXONS AND OTHER EUROPEAN SPECIES: CITIZENSHIP, THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY, AND REPRESENTATION IN A MULTI-ETHNIC EUROPEAN UNION

Madeleine Kennedy-Macfoy, Goldsmiths College University of London

Presented at Gender and Power in the New Europe, the 5th European Feminist Research Conference

August 20-24, 2003 Lund University, Sweden

A person's location in a society, as defined by such factors as gender, 'race', sexual orientation, religion etc, determines the construction of their citizenship as 'different' or not from the 'norm' (Lutz 97), and 'different' has tended to mean 'inferior'. Recent Scholarship on citizenship has challenged the classic liberal assumption of automatic equality, and uncovered the 'democratic paradox' (Yuval-Davis & Werbner), which results in “some citizens being more equal than others, and the equality of citizenship making some people more powerful citizens” (Young).

Currently, there is a sharp move within the European Union towards “a defensive discourse of constructing a ‘pure Europe’” that is a “homogenizing process from the inside” (Lutz). Old but familiar discourses about the dangers of ‘letting more in’ (new immigrants) resonate across the Union, and are being crystallised in the increasingly converging and narrowly defined entry and nationality legislation of member-states; whilst minority ethnic European citizens continue to be targeted by reactionary extreme right groups.

Against this backdrop, my research aims include an attempt to critically investigate the reality of life in the EU from the perspective of minority ethnic Europeans at the cross section of ‘race’ and gender. Until recently in the UK, discussions of ‘identity politics’ have tended to treat ethnicity and national identity separately; the former remaining within the framework of ‘multiculturalism’, and the latter restricted to the spheres of constitutional politics and the devolution of power (McCrone), with both failing to sufficiently address gender and/or ‘race’. I am interested in looking at how the ‘politics of identity’ is negotiated by minority ethnic British women in an England “…where the whole issue of English (/British) identity is full of complexity and ambivalence, of implicit superiority and suspicion of nationalism” (Modood,). Is it in fact the case that “'English’ is treated by the new Britons as a closed ethnicity rather than an open nationality”? What then are the implications for the Labour Government’s commitment “to creating One Nation…where every colour is a good colour…every member of every part of society is able to fulfil their potential…everyone is treated according to their needs and rights…” (Parekh Report). What comparisons can be made with other EU partners? And underlying all of these, at both domestic and supranational levels: what are the relations of power that are at play in the struggle for representation in the political arena, where citizens are supposed to be able to act to defend their rights?
ABSTRACT

GENDERED MARGINS: SURVIVAL STRATEGIES OF 'ILLEGAL' MIGRANT WOMEN IN PORTUGAL

Christiane Hellermann, Humboldt-University Berlin, Germany

Presented at Gender and Power in the New Europe, the 5th European Feminist Research Conference
August 20-24, 2003 Lund University, Sweden

My paper focuses on the special situation of migrant women, their double marginalization and exclusion due to their irregular status and gender. Self-perception and identity become crucial aspects in my analysis of their survival strategies at the margin of the European and Portuguese society as well as within the migrant community, asking for the existence and role of female social networks and further structures and ways of support.

Context
Portugal, borderland of the EU, is a new receiving area. Migrants are coming from the former African colonies and, very recently and with increasing numbers, from Eastern Europe and Asia. Their life situation is dominated by social exclusion and exploitation. Competition and conflicts amongst the migrants are emerging.
ABSTRACT

ENGENDERING HOSPITALITY:
LEVINASIAN ETHICS AND WOMEN REFUGEES IN THE NETHERLANDS

Suzanne Metselaar, Department of Philosophy, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Presented at Gender and Power in the New Europe, the 5th European Feminist Research Conference
August 20-24, 2003 Lund University, Sweden

In this paper I elaborate on the importance of the ethics of hospitality we find in the work of Emmanuel Levinas to a politics of hospitality. Whereas this ethics is founded on unconditional hospitality, a politics of hospitality is always conditional. This conditionality inevitably engenders thematisation, generalisation and totalisation. As a result the uniqueness and otherness of the absolute other accounted for in the dual relationship is disregarded, at least to some degree. Nevertheless, to some extent, this conditionality is necessary for it guarantees reciprocity and the possibility for the subject to be an other for the others in the public/political realm. However, a politics of hospitality engenders violence, is violent in itself, if neither plurality nor the field of tension between judging an individual, unique situation and implementing general law is taken into account adequately. This phenomenon is thoroughly dealt with by political philosopher Hanna Arendt, according to whom plurality should always be acknowledged when constituting, interpreting and implementing law in order to prevent that general laws turn out to privilege some and deprive others.

The treatment of women refugees by Dutch asylum policy is exemplary for the violence engendered by a legislation that is indifferent to differences, to otherness. For one thing, no adequate account is given of specific problems, needs and risks of women refugees by this politics of hospitality. Poignant cases of women refugees who end up in degrading and dangerous circumstances are approached rather as unpleasant by-products—‘spin-offs’—of a generally just and well-functioning policy than as appealing cases demanding critical reflection and radical change of the current politics. The works of both Levinas and Arendt offer valuable tools for criticising and revaluing a politics of hospitality, in this case the inhospitable Dutch asylum policy. Furthermore, especially Levinas helps pointing out that, positioning myself as a subject in society, I have to make up my mind. What do I have to do with justice? How do I respond to the appeal of the other who is done wrong? Even if this may lead to civil disobedience.
In this paper – while looking at Belarusian national identity and its features in a post-communist context, I focused on the consequences of the implicit perception of the world in terms of binary oppositions organized around the principles of ‘female’ and ‘male’. Two issues were of particular interest here: firstly, how the ‘objective’ language of science incorporated the principles of ‘agency’ – culturally associated with the male domain - into its definition of ‘national identity’. Secondly, how the language of self description used in Belarus was permeated with the values that are associated in an implicit way with the ‘female’ pole of the male-female dichotomy construct, and how this led to a negative (self) evaluation of Belarusians as the people.
This presentation focuses on the issue how making of the Ukrainian nation-state and the idea of national intersect with constructions of gender identity. It is underlined that unlike in the Western women’s movement in Ukraine an approach to woman’s identity directs not to the notion of “different” but to the notion of the “other” which accentuates not a principle of woman’s subject autonomy but a particular status of “woman’s” in the Ukrainian culture. In the structure of “woman’s” as “other” not a problem of gender discrimination is putting in the forefront but a role of an ideal model of “woman’s” and conformity of an individual woman’s subjectivity to this model.

Today in Ukraine the model of “woman’s” as “other” is embodied in a model of Berehynia – a pagan goddess, who is, as perceived by today’s Ukrainian society, mother and guardian of the nation. This metasymbol has become a cultural icon portraying a traditional, hence innately ideal Ukrainian woman. Ukrainian patriarchally-structured society victimises its women by inducing them to accept the reinvented matriarchal paradigm as at once a genuine manifestation of Ukrainian cultural values and a true measure of contemporary reality. Seduced by the myth of female empowerment, Ukrainian women all too eagerly embrace their delusive superiority, and are deterred thereby from any independent program of action that might afford them authentic authority.

Analysing domination of the national priorities in the contemporary Ukrainian women’s movement and reasons of the unfavourable attitude to feminism, the author explores successes and challenges experienced by gender studies in higher education in Ukraine and emphasises significance of its further development as a tool for women’s empowerment, gender awareness, and critical self-consciousness.
New Geographies of Polish Women Identities

Joanna Regulska, Rutgers University, Magda Grabowska, Rutgers University

Presented at Gender and Power in the New Europe, the 5th European Feminist Research Conference
August 20-24, 2003 Lund University, Sweden

How do women claim and reclaim their multiple identities while simultaneously losing others? How these processes are mediated across scale and through changing relations to space? How a woman’s individual experiences is translated into collective interests and in turn, how do these implicate production of scale (from local to transnational)? In this paper identities are understood as constructed through multilayered intersections of diverse markings such as class, sexuality, ethnicity, abilities, age, and the urban/rural division, among others, and are shaped through material, cultural and spiritual forces. As some identities are being claimed, others are simultaneously being lost. These contestations and confrontations are especially strongly visible in countries undergoing political, socio-economic and cultural transformations, such as those of central and east Europe, where the post-communist identities are confronted by emerging traditional and nationalist subjectivities, and concurrently are challenged by rising global and transnational communities. Such processes create new opportunities for subjects to access diverse means and resources in order to utilize different strategies of engagement across scale and, through these practices, to mould new hybrid identities. This paper will examine new geographies of women’s identities and will use Poland as the case study. It will draw on the results of public survey data, field interviews with women’s NGOs, and textual analysis in order to show the diversity of sites conducive to new identities construction processes. It will show how the mixture of the forces represented by women’s agency and their collective power, the state (which on one hand supports Poland’s membership in the new Europe - EU, NATO- and on the other enters into the conservative agreement with the catholic church), along with those of pro- nationalist forces (church, traditional family values, anti-foreign sentiments) opens and constrains the spaces where new transnational women’s identities can emerge.
MOST MODERN - THE NORDIC OR THE SOVIET RUSSIAN MARRIAGE MODEL?

Helene Carlbäck, Baltic and East European Graduate School, Södertörn University College

Presented at Gender and Power in the New Europe, the Fifth European Feminist Research Conference, August 20-24, 2003 Lund University, Sweden

With its far-reaching aim to promote secularisation and individualisation of marriage and equality between the sexes, the Nordic family laws in the Interwar period is viewed as perhaps the most progressive and modern in Europe at the time. However, the family laws that were passed at the same time (early 20s) in the new, Soviet Russia can in fact be considered being much more radical - modern? - in the above mentioned aspects. This paper deals with the background of the ultra radical Russian family laws of the 20s. To what degree were these laws rooted in the professional groups and political/social movements of Tsarist Russia (pro-reformist lawyers, women's organizations, liberal and socialist parties) that had worked to achieve a modernized family code since the turn of the last century? And to what degree was the legislation the result of Marxist intentions to reshape the society according to classical Marxist theories on family and women's question, such as Engels, Bebel, and Zetkin?

The Soviet marriage legislation and the prerequisites for issuing the marriage laws are being compared to the Nordic marriage model (cf. Melby, Rosenbeck, Carlsson Wetterberg et al. in various recent publications) and its prehistory. In this comparative analysis the underlying question is: "How to explain the similarity in legislation with such evident differences in the historical background?"
This paper explores the complexity of the processes involved in the construction of young women's subjectivity and identity in contemporary Southern Italy. In fact, they grow up in a social context in which new resources of knowledge, cosmopolitan cultural models and the enhancement of individuality still coexist with social roles marked, at least in part, by rigid sex differences. Besides that, the opportunities offered by the labour market are weak while the legacy of previous women's generations biographical models (the centrality of mothering) is still strong. The paper aims in particular at discussing two dimensions of this ambivalent situation: how young women negotiate their (difficult) relation with paid work and how they decide of having fewer children. In both cases, they show how "choice" plays a central role in their lives, and how self-realization is central in their existential horizons. Nevertheless, the consciousness of being today, as women, subjects in the full sense is confronted by the objective limitation of the economic, political and cultural structure. As a result, ambivalence is experienced as a core component of identity: a conquest is often also a loss, and a specific sense of personal loneliness grows.
ABSTRACT

TEACHING “ITALIANNESS”: THE ITALIANIZATION EFFORTS OF THE FASCIST REGIME IN SOUTH TIROL

Roberta Pergher, University of Michigan

Presented at Gender and Power in the New Europe, the 5th European Feminist Research Conference
August 20-24, 2003 Lund University, Sweden

The conference paper I would like to present at Lund University analyzes discourses and practices that sought to delineate the parameters and define the content of “Italianness” (Italianità) during the twenty-year period of Fascist rule in Italy. Specifically, the paper examines the efforts of the Fascist regime to Italianize the ethnic German population of the Northern province of South Tirol (Alto Adige), a former territory of the Habsburg Monarchy annexed to Italy after World War I. One of the ways in which the regime hoped to bring its recalcitrant German-speaking population into the fold of the fascist Italian nation was by outlawing German schools. Female schoolteachers from across Italy were sent to the recently annexed province in order to educate South Tirolean children in Italian. The maestre (female teachers), who are vividly remembered by their former pupils, sought not only to teach the Italian language and culture but also to instill the fascist spirit and an unwavering sense of Italianness. Why did the regime entrust women with the imperative task of constructing a fascist Italian hegemony in South Tirol? What was the normative understanding of Italianness that these female teachers brought to the province as they attempted to turn ethnic German children into fascist Italians? By investigating the interactions between schoolchildren, female teachers, and the wider social environment, I hope to illuminate the articulation of racial, ethnic, and gender differences in Fascist Italy.
ABSTRACT

MOBILIZING GERMAN WOMEN AGAINST ‘CULTURAL DRUNKENNESS’: RASSEN-HYGIENE AND COLONIAL DISCOURSE IN THE PRUSSIAN-POLISH PROVINCES, 1880-1914

Lenny A. Urena, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Presented at Gender and Power in the New Europe, the 5th European Feminist Research Conference
August 20-24, 2003 Lund University, Sweden

My purpose in this project is to analyze the interactions of colonial, racial, and gender subjectivity in the height of German imperialism and the expansion of medical knowledge. By focusing on the notion of an imagined “Germannes,” I intend to show how colonial discourses were part of a much-complicated and dynamic rule circulating between policies “at home” and “abroad” in the colonies. The debates about Germanizing a considerable population of Polish-speaking Prussian citizens (the so-called “Polish Question”) provide a useful instance to analyze German fears of both cultural and epidemical contagion, as well as men’s constructions about German women’s role in reproducing and spreading Germannes. How were women mobilized and what were their responses to the civilizing discourses? The Prussian Polish provinces, “the Eastern frontier”, give us an example of a colonial experience, where images about colonial pathologies were lived not outside in the tropics, but at “home.”
ABSTRACT

CITIZENSHIP AND THE DE-TERRITORIALIZATION OF BELONGING: HILDE SPIEL AND HER ‘EXILE’ IN LONDON BETWEEN 1936 AND 1963

Ulrike M Vieten, School of Social Science and Law, University of Greenwich, UK

Presented at Gender and Power in the New Europe, the 5th European Feminist Research Conference
August 20-24, 2003 Lund University, Sweden

I would like to share some ideas concerning multi-layered Citizenship, dimensions of transnational migration and de-territorialization of belonging, drawn from my dissertation in Gender & Ethnic studies (University of Greenwich).

I have analysed a particular life-stage of the Jewish Austrian, but also British writer Hilde Spiel, who e-migrated from Vienna to London in 1936 and re-migrated in 1963 back to Vienna. I was especially interested in the modes of her complex and contradictory ‘belonging’ to different and even clashing ethnic, religious and cultural (nation-states) communities. How did her personal and political attachments affect her interpretation, interaction and ordinary life during her exile and her view on the British nation?

Spiel’s biography and oeuvre are increasingly regarded within the discourse about ‘Transnationalism and Inter-culturality’ in Europe. Whether coincidentally or not, Vienna is hosting a conference on ‘Unifying Aspects Of Culture’ in November this year. On the web-side Hilde Spiel was introduced as an example of transnational European (!) Culture.

Women have often considered as personalised symbols of boundaries and been misused in order to separate groups in ‘us’ and ‘we’ categories. With such binary and non-permeable construction of communities, intersections of social divisions such as ‘race’, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, ability or stages of age are being ignored (Anthias/ Yuval-Davis 1989, 1993).

My research focuses, inter alia, on the question whether and to what extent Hilde Spiel’s life story underlines the intersectionality of these social divisions, which caused specific tensions and insecurity as regards any community and belonging.

This questioning has to take into account the specific historic circumstances: The 1930’s are characterized by institutionalised anti-Semitism, mass-murder...
and forced emigration of Jews and Jewess, whether assimilated and even christened or not. Thus, the recent discourse about a cosmopolitan image of individuals moving beyond borders and countries may be viewed as de-contextualizing a rather contradictory experience of belonging with clearly hierarchical access to Citizenship.

Hence, the incorporation of expatriates and refugees of the 20th century into the symbolical European order of the 21st century sheds light on an ideologically constructed ‘new’ transnational cultural space: Within the context of the contemporary transformation of European nation-states into a ‘single’ European region we have to be aware of the symbolical significance of Femininity or - more accurately - of a specific image of heterosexual, white, middle class, secular Femininity, involved in an institutional (re-)structurizing of political systems.

Did there exist a characteristic transnational European point of view in Hilde Spiel’s experiences? In contrast or in comparison, how does the contemporary imagination of a transnational European culture operate? Re-constructing Hilde Spiel’s migration to and exile in London from my present-day, also culturally limited perspective, I attempt to critically assess the recent trend to construe a cosmopolitan image of a transnational European culture. Contrasted with the concrete experience of migration and exile, these construction may well appear as creating an imaginative constituency.

In addition, the intertwined social layers of ‘historically’ stateless Jewish ethnicity and gender seem to collude into a new founding myth of a common European culture grasping the recent change of territory issues concerning globalization.

Nonetheless, the arbitrary loss of national (nation-state) belonging and kinship caused specific experiences of being a stranger at home and abroad, only re-fragmented in a painful transformation of any belonging. The recent discourse tends to de-contextualize the violence of the 1930’s moving beyond borders and boundaries and does also neglect the continuity of an overall ‘broken’ community structure in 21st century Europe.
ABSTRACT

THE INTEGRATION OF POLAND INTO THE EUROPEAN UNION: OPPORTUNITIES FOR EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN OR ADHERENCE TO TRADITION?

Ewa Gontarczyk, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland

Presented at Gender and Power in the New Europe, the 5th European Feminist Research Conference
August 20-24, 2003 Lund University, Sweden

This paper is an attempt to present briefly the situation of women and gender relations, and to consider some aspects of the most recent changes in Poland. The analysis shows the existence of various forms of gender inequalities and discrimination against women. It is also evident that there is a contradiction between reforms initiated recently and the adjustment of Polish reality not only to social expectations expressed in Poland, but also to the European Union’s fundamental objectives relating to equality between women and men, as well as legislation and programmes aimed at promoting equality and fighting discrimination. The most recent experiences of Polish women show that again women are not the subject, rather than the object, in the processes of social, economic and political changes. Therefore, it is possible to claim that the idea of Global Europe, with its principles of equality, democracy and human rights, may become in Poland only the new gendered rationalization of old ideas of unequal power divisions and inequalities between women and men in practice. In this context, it is also pointed out that further efforts toward the spread of the feminist movement and the development of feminist research and teaching may stimulate activities toward the improvement of the women’s situation and the achievement of a real gender equality, as well as the formation of a democratic state. Although the comments made in the paper relate specifically to women’s situation in Poland, I believe that this is not in fact a specifically Polish problem.
ABSTRACT

GENDER, POWER AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION THEORY

Annica Kronsell, Department of Political Science, Lund University, Sweden

Presented at Gender and Power in the New Europe, the 5th European Feminist Research Conference
August 20-24, 2003 Lund University, Sweden

The European integration process both affirms and challenges gender relations in Europe. Yet, integration theories have contributed little to understanding gender dynamics. Taking a feminist position, the article argues that integration theory has failed to look at how gender relations impact ‘the driving forces’ of European integration, i.e., the formation of state preferences and national interests, transnational actors activities, supranational norms, institution building and multi-level governance patterns. This oversight, it is suggested, relates to the view of power in integration theories. The article explores ways to include gender analysis in integration studies and thereby broadens the field both in terms of integration and feminist theory.