

Contesting whiteness at its intersections: European racial formations

Call for Papers

Guest Editors: Jovita dos Santos Pinto (University of Bern) and Elisa Fiore (Radboud University), and dr. Katrine Smiet (Radboud University/Utrecht University).

‘Europeanness’ is often uncritically associated with ‘whiteness’. In the rhetoric and imagery of far-right political movements across Europe, the presence of migrants, refugees and communities of Colour is framed as a threat to the (implicitly white) national identity and community. In the 2007 campaigns of the Swiss People’s Party, this is most literally depicted with a white sheep pushing a black sheep off the national flag. However, it is not only in the rhetoric of the far-right that Europeanness is conflated with whiteness. The investment in whiteness as a cornerstone of European national identities is a legacy of colonial epistemology that still persists today. Since the aftermath of WWII, liberal discourse has been entrenched in a discourse of ‘racelessness’, where racial markers are still recognised and producing exclusions, while race is nevertheless regarded as irrelevant or overcome for continental Europe (Goldberg 2009). In most European public discourses, People of Colour figure as outsiders-within: as ‘tolerated guests’ at best, as imminent threat to national security at worst. As critical race scholar Fatima El-Tayeb argued, the

‘inability or rather unwillingness to confront, let alone overcome, the glaring whiteness underlying Europe’s self-image has rather drastic consequences for migrant or minority communities routinely ignored, marginalized, and defined as a threat to the very Europe they are part of’ (El-Tayeb 2011, p. xxv).

The significance of gender and sexuality in understanding contemporary European racial formations has been stressed for some time (Wekker 2016). Notably, activists and scholars of colour have been pointing to the sometimes exceptional and mediated, but most often banal and everyday exclusions, marginalisations and invisibilisation of People of Colour in a variety of settings: e.g. Feminist and LGBTQ-Movements and its neoliberal mainstream incorporation; academic knowledge production; the formation of public spaces; urban development and/or
regeneration; political discourse; the migration and asylum industrial complex and its mass incarcerations and deportations (e.g. Essed 1990, 1991, 1996; El-Tayeb 2011; Haritaworn 2016; Wekker 2016). Yet, these intersectionally framed insights are still marginalised in European critical race studies and gender studies. Within gender studies in particular, the approach of intersectionality has opened up a space for analysing how gender intersects with race and ethnicity. However, critics have argued that intersectionality scholarship in general, and European intersectionality scholarship in particular, has also been a site where ‘race’ has once again been side-lined, in favor of other axes of difference (Bilge 2013; Carbin & Edenheim 2013; Lewis 2013; Tomlinson 2013 Wekker 2016;).

In this special issue of the Dutch Journal for Gender Studies, we want to bring together contributions that reflect on the conflation of Whiteness with Europeanness in various societal settings, and do so with an intersectional approach. How is European whiteness discursively formed and normalised at its fluid, varying and changing intersections with other axes of difference, specifically gender, sexuality, religion, class, dis/ability, resident status and age? And, how have People of Colour, in particular Black women, Women of Colour, QTIBPoC and allies, challenged the conflation of Europeanness and whiteness within anti-racist activism as well as in scholarship across Europe? How is whiteness challenged at the intersections with gender, sexuality, religion, class, and other axes of difference? How can feminist intersectionality scholarship in Europe centre analyses of race and challenge the conflation of Europeanness and whiteness?

The special issue seeks contributions that speak to one or more of the following agendas:
- Whiteness and knowledge production. How whiteness can function as an implicit norm within European gender studies and feminist scholarship, including in intersectionality scholarship. The position of scholarship by women of color and queers of color in the academic field.
- Whiteness and visibility. How are certain bodies, experiences and positionalities rendered desirable and incorporated into a public acceptance in feminist and LGBTQ-movements while others are made hypervisible as disruptive and disturbing, and what positionalities are unintelligible within these discourses.
- Whiteness and the politics of location. Trans-regional, trans-national and trans-continental racial discourses and their contestations, and their historical and local specificities and practices. Including also differential relations and imaginations of whiteness across European regions (East/West, North/South), and how these relate to gender and sexuality.

- Whiteness and nation. The role of whiteness in the construction of national self-image; including the ‘homonationalist’ and ‘femonationalist’ rhetorics – discourses of saving ‘our women’ and ‘our gays’ by the populist far right in different European contexts.

- Whiteness and the politics of memory. The position of whiteness in relation to the history of European colonialisms. How are these histories remembered, forgotten, or actively denied in different European contexts?

- Whiteness and migration. The normativity of whiteness in migration and asylum industrial complex: how are ‘unwanted’ racialised Others constructed not simply in opposition to ‘acceptable’ Others, but also how do these constructions relate to racialised privilege.

- Whiteness and gentrification and urban regeneration. How do social mix or tenure mix strategies for urban regeneration contribute to the whitewashing of neighborhoods with large communities of Colour and how do race and class intersect in techniques of urban governmentality for population quality control, crime prevention, and social order maintenance

- Whiteness and religion. Including Islamophobia and the racialisation of religion. How does anti-Muslim racism to other forms of racism and exclusion in the European context, including reflection on the the hijab as a gendered and racialized marker of Otherness and non-whiteness.

- Whiteness and Blackness. Blackness as real and imaginary opposition to whiteness in art, activism and popular imagination.

**Deadlines and timeline publication:**

- Deadline submission of abstracts for special issue: 1 January 2018
- Notification of acceptance before: 1 February 2018
- Deadline first version articles (max. 6000 words incl. references and bibliography): 1 April 2018.
Reviews from external reviewers received: 1 June 2018
Final version from authors (max. 6000 words): 1 July 2018
Publication: 21 September 2018

Abstracts and papers should be submitted to tvgarchief@gmail.com. For more information, email any of the guest editors: k.smiet@ftr.ru.nl; jovita.dossantos-pinto@izfg.unibe.ch or e.fiore@let.ru.nl

Research articles are subjected to a double-blind peer review process. Articles are to be submitted in either English or Dutch. The Dutch Journal for Gender Studies (Tijdschrift voor Genderstudies) is published by Amsterdam University Press: www.tijdschriftvoorgenderstudies.nl

Author Guidelines (English):
http://nl.aup.nl/wosmedia/1399/author_instructions_tijdschrift_voor_genderstudies.pdf

Author Guidelines (Dutch):
http://nl.aup.nl/wosmedia/2084/ auteursinstructies_tijdschrift_voor_genderstudies.pdf