

Austere Histories

Social Exclusion and the Erasure of Colonial Memories in European Societies



An International Symposium at REMESO, Linköping University. 28 – 29 November 2013, at Arbetets Museum, Norrköping

EUROPEAN SOCIETIES have recently turned toward more austere political regimes. Evidence of this can be seen in budget cuts, management of the labor market and restrictions of welfare systems, as well as in new regimes of migration and citizenship. In the wake of these changes new forms of social inclusion and exclusion appear that are justified through a reactivation of differences of race, class and gender, all this serving, in its turn, to justify new forms of labor extraction and the formation of a new underclass or “precariat”. Another consequence is that democracy itself has become precarious. While the agents and adherents of austerity programs impose themselves as democracy’s saviors, practitioners of democracy find themselves pushed toward the extra-parliamentary margins.

This symposium investigated how a current politics of austerity affects our cultural memory. Are we witnessing a turn toward austerity in theories and practices of historiography, as well as in pedagogies of history? Can we speak of an austere historiography, an enforcement of conformity on Europe past and present?

If this is the case, it helps explain that certain narratives of the European past are now privileged whereas other parts of the cultural heritage are weeded out. Strong tendencies and interests are apparently at work to purge the histories of specific European nations, but also those of Europe, the West, and globalization from

cultural plurality. In their stead, assertively heroic and homogeneous stories about the past of nations, regions, institutions and religions are being retold, reinvented, and re-launched. In brief, history (including public debate on history and history education) is again becoming either “nationalistic” or “cosmopolitan” – but cosmopolitan in a way that tend to celebrate the achievements of Europe and posit the West as a model of universality, humanism and perhaps also of the human as such.

Among the sacrifices of this tendency are multiculturalism, postcolonial memories, and minority discourses of all kinds. What is lost is the very complexity and contradictoriness of Europe and the West. Especially, colonial and postcolonial memories are evicted from their recently claimed habitats in the European past, and again placed at the outskirts, far beyond the limit of the Western world.

The symposium sought to extract the correlation between how minorities, migrants and their descendants are treated by present policies and how memories and experiences of migrants, minorities and colonized peoples are treated in historiography and historical pedagogy. By bringing together a group of distinguished European scholars who have examined Europe’s colonial past in relation to migration, historiography and cultural heritage, the symposium elucidated how new regimes of historiography and memory culture relate to integration, discrimination, and social segmentation in the present.

THE SYMPOSIUM took place at the Museum of Work (Arbetets museum) in Norrköping, November 28–29, 2013, and was organized by professor Stefan Jonsson, REMESO, Linköping University.

Speakers

Nicolas Bancel, Université de Lausanne, Switzerland
Gurminder K Bhambra, The University of Warwick, Great Britain
Manuela Boatca, Freie Universität, Germany
Nacira Guénif-Souilamas, Université de Paris X, France
Peo Hansen, REMESO, Linköping University, Sweden
Lars Jensen, Roskilde University, Denmark
Nicola Labanca, Università degli Studi di Siena, Italy
Esther Captain, National Committee for the Remembrance of WWII, Netherlands
Robbie Shilliam, Queen Mary, University of London, Great Britain
Kuratorisk Aktion (Tone Olaf Nielsen & Frederikke Hansen), Copenhagen

Commentators, Panelists and Chairs:

David Gaunt, Södertörn University
Stefan Helgesson, Stockholm University
Stefan Jonsson, REMESO, Linköping University
Carsten Juhl, The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Denmark
Mikela Lundahl, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
Edda Manga, Uppsala University
Anders Neergaard, REMESO, Linköping University
Carl-Ulrik Schierup, REMESO, Linköping University
Anders Stephansson, Columbia University

Maria Stern, Göteborg University
Julia Willén, REMESO, Linköping University
Charles Woolfson, REMESO, Linköping University
Aleksandra Ålund, REMESO, Linköping University

About the Participants

NICOLAS BANCEL

Professor of history at the University of Lausanne (Faculty of Social and Political Sciences), director of the Research group GRISSUL (Lausanne University), Adjunct-director of ISSUL (Lausanne University). He works on the cultural history of decolonization in West Africa; the political imaginary of colonization in France and in Europe and on the contemporary consequences of the imperial configuration. He has also developed an epistemological and methodological examination of the historical perspective inaugurated by Postcolonial and Globalization studies.

GURMINDER BHAMBRA

Professor of Sociology and Director of the Social Theory Centre, University of Warwick. Visiting fellow at Linnaeus University, Sweden; Sept 2013 and Institute of Social Sciences, University of Brasilia, Brazil. Author of *Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination*, 2007, which won the British Sociology Association's prize for best first book in Sociology; *Connected Sociologies*, Bloomsbury Academic, forthcoming, 2014.

MANUELA BOATCĂ

Manuela Boatcă – B.A. University of Bucharest 1997, Ph.D. in sociology, Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt 2002 – is professor of sociology at the Center for Latin American Studies of the Freie Universität Berlin. Her research interests include world-systems analysis, sociology of development, gender and violence research, and postcolonial studies in historical-comparative perspective, with a regional focus on Eastern Europe and Latin America. She is author of *From Neoevolutionism to World-Systems Analysis. The Romanian Theory of "Forms without Substance" in Light of Modern Debates on Social Change* (2003), and co-editor, with Encarnación Gutiérrez-Rodríguez and Sérgio Costa, of *Decolonizing European Sociology. Transdisciplinary Approaches*, Ashgate 2010.

ESTHER CAPTAIN

Esther Captain is a historian and director of research at the National Committee for the Remembrance of WW II (in Dutch: National Committee May 4 and 5) and also associated researcher at the Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies in Amsterdam. She has published extensively on the legacy of WW II, memory and heritage studies, and postcolonial history, including *Oorlogserfgoed overzee. De erfenis van de Tweede Wereldoorlog in Aruba, Curaçao, Indonesië en Suriname* (2010; *Heritage of the War Overseas. The Legacy of WW II in Aruba, Curaçao, Indonesia and Surinam*). Her PhD dissertation focused on internment diaries and memoirs written during the Japanese occupation of Indonesia. She has published walking guide, *Traces of Slavery in Utrecht*, a travel guide to WW II-related locations in Indonesia and a historical cookery book with recipes collected in women's internment camps in WW-II Indonesia.

NACIRA GUÉNIF-SOUILAMAS

Nacira Guénif-Souilamas is professor of sociology at Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis and research fellow at Experice (U. Paris 13–U. Paris 8). In 2009, she was a Fulbright fellow at Wellesley College and Columbia University and a visiting professor at the Institute of French Studies of NYU. Her PhD dissertation was awarded “Le prix le Monde de la recherche universitaire” and published as *Des beurettes aux descendantes d’immigrants nord-africains* (2000). She has co-authored with Éric Macé *Les féministes et le garçon arabe*, (2004) and edited *La république mise à nu par son immigration, La* (2006). She is a collaborator of the Religion & Diversity project (U. of Ottawa), a fellow of the Oecumene Citizenship after Orientalism ERC project, a fellow of the “Gender, Religion and Law in Muslim Societies” and the “Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance: Feminism and Social Change” projects at the Columbia Center for the Study of Social Difference – Women Creating Change Program, and of the TERRA network. She also serves as the vice-president of the Islamic Cultural Center in Barbès, a longstanding Arab and Black quarter of Paris.

PEO HANSEN

Peo Hansen is associate professor of political science at the Institute for Research on Migration, Ethnicity and Society (REMESO), Linköping University. A former fellow at the Remarque Institute at New York University, and Columbia University’s European Institute, his research areas include European integration, EU migration policy, theories of citizenship and nationalism, postwar European geopolitics, and the history of colonialism and decolonization.

LARS JENSEN

Lars Jensen is associate professor in the Department of Culture and Identity at Roskilde University Centre Denmark. He holds a Ph.D. in Postcolonial Studies from Leeds University (1997). Jensen has written extensively on the history and interpretation of Danish and Nordic colonialism and is co-writer – with John Botofte – of a book on Edward Said. He has also written on issues of whiteness and indigeneity in the context of Australian history (*Unsettling Australia: Readings in Australian Cultural History*, 2005).

KURATORISK AKTION (FREDERIKKE HANSEN & TONE OLAF NIELSEN)

Kuratorisk Aktion (English: curatorial action) is an all-female curatorial collective engaged in decolonial-transnational feminist work. It was formed in 2005 by Danish independent curators Frederikke Hansen (b. 1969) and Tone Olaf Nielsen (b. 1967) with the aim of taking curatorial action against the injustices and inequalities produced and sustained by the order of global capitalism. This has resulted in an ongoing curatorial investigation into the complex relations between capitalist globalization and historical colonialism. In 2009, Faroese art historian and researcher Mirjam Joensen (b. 1979) joined the collective, offering a crucial perspective from inside the postcolonial condition. Deploying a methodology of “curating across capitalist divides,” Kuratorisk Aktion strives to trouble the order of global capitalism by bringing together bodies, mentalities, and knowledges in their projects that are usually kept apart. In their broad body of productions, ranging from transdisciplinary exhibitions to film programs, publications, and public discussions, Kuratorisk Aktion has in close collaboration with artists, theorists, and activists from around the globe probed into neocolonial structures of exploitation as well as

postcolonial legacies of resistance, conviviality, and sustainability. Kuratorisk Aktion endeavors to foster decolonial knowledge, actions of protest, and bonds of solidarity that will allow for the envisioning a more just and sustainable future.

NICOLA LABANCA

Nicola Labanca – Ph.D from University of Turin 1989 – is professor of contemporary history at the University of Siena. His research covers four major areas: 1) the relationship between war, armed forces and society in nineteenth and twentieth century Italy; 2) the social and cultural history of liberal and fascist Italy's colonial expansion; 3) the study of the "total war" of the twentieth century; and 4) Italy in the Cold war. As historian of Italian colonialism, Labanca has undertaken a critical re-examination of traditional "colonial history". Important publications are here *Oltremare. Storia dell'espansione coloniale italiana* (2002) and *In marcia verso Adua* (1993) as well as *Posti al sole. Diari e memorie di vita e di lavoro dall'Africa italiana* and *Memorie d'oltremare. Prato – Italia – Africa* (2000; with Pierluigi Venuta). Labanca has also devoted much interest to the photographic or visual representations of colonial rule. Since January 2013 is editor of the journal *Italia contemporanea*.

ROBBIE SHILLIAM

Senior Lecturer in International Relations, School of Politics and International Relations, Queen Mary College, University of London. Have held positions as Senior Lecturer in International Relations at the School of History, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, and have been Hedley Bull Junior Research Fellow at the Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford. Author of *The Black Pacific: Anticolonial Struggles and Oceanic Connections* (Bloomsbury Academic Press, Forthcoming 2014) and *German Thought and International Relations: The Rise and Fall of a Liberal Project* (London: Palgrave, 2009).

DAVID GAUNT

Professor emeritus, Center for Baltic and East European Studies, Södertörn University. Member of Academia Europaea. Gaunt's publications cover a wide range of topics in Swedish and European historiography, most recently the social history of mass violence and genocide in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. His recent writings deal with violence against Jewish, Romani, Armenian, Assyrian and Kurdish peoples. Gaunt is the main editor of *Collaboration and Resistance during the Holocaust: Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania* (2004), and author of *Massacres, Resistance Protectors: Muslim-Christian Relations in Eastern Anatolia during World War I* (2006).

STEFAN HELGESSON

Stefan Helgesson is professor of English at Stockholm University. He is the author of *Writing in Crisis: Ethics and History in Gordimer, Ndebele and Coetzee* (2004) and *Transnationalism in Southern African Literature* (2009), and has edited three volumes, among them *Literature, Geography, Translation* (2011; with Cecilia Alvstad and David Watson). His research interests range from African literature in English, Portuguese and French, to theoretical approaches to translation, postcolonialism and world literature. He published a novel in 2010 and freelances as a literary critic.

STEFAN JONSSON

Professor of ethnic studies at REMESO, Linköping University. He has written widely on European modernism and modernity, as well as on racism and on colonial and postcolonial cultures and aesthetics. His recent books deal with the history of the "masses" in European societies (A Brief History of the Masses and Crowds and Democracy (both from Columbia UP) and with Peo Hansen he has just completed Eurafrica: The Untold History of European Intgeration and Colonialism (Bloomsbury Academic).

CARSTEN JUHL

CV. Since 1996 head of the Department of Art Theory at The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts – Schools of Visual Arts. His books include an Italian history in Danish (1979) and also in Danish a book about the aesthetic exigence (1994). His recent books include Globalæstetik. Verdensfølelsen og det kosmopolitiske perspektiv [Global aesthetics. World feeling and the cosmopolitan perspective]. As a translator and he has introduced into Danish the works of Agamben, Baudrillard, Boccioni, Bordiga, Kant, Lyotard, Marinetti, Montale, Perniola and Serres.

MIKELA LUNDAHL

Mikela Lundahl is a Swedish historian of ideas, working at Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, at Copenhagen University. Her thesis, Vad är en neger? Negritude, essentialism, strategi (What is a negro? Negritude, Essentialism, Strategy, 2005) was a rereading of the negritude movement and its reception. She has since been involved in different research projects concerning translation studies, African literature, and Critical heritage studies.

EDDA MANGA

Edda Manga is a historian of ideas researching the Spanish colonial legacy from postcolonial and de-colonial perspectives. She has written about the construction of legitimate knowledge by the Spanish Inquisition and on the use of the concept of "just war" in legitimating global dominion. Currently she studies the intersection between racism and armed conflict in postcolonial Colombia.

ANDERS NEERGAARD

Associate Professor at the Institute for Research on Migration and Ethnic relations, Linköping University, Sweden. His research focuses on political sociology, racism and cultural racist parties, working life sociology, especially inequality regarding ethnicity, racialisation, class and gender within the labour market and work organisations, and trade union research

CARL-ULRIK SCHIERUP

Carl-Ulrik Schierup is professor at Linköping University and director of the Institute for Research on Migration, Ethnicity and Society (REMESO). He has published widely on issues of nationalism, racism, multiculturalism and the political economy of international migration. Among his newer publications are Migration, Citizenship and the European Welfare State (with Peo Hansen and Stephen Castles, Oxford University Press, 2006) and Migration, Work and Citizenship in the New Global Order (with Ronaldo Munck and Raul Delgado-Wise, Routledge, 2012).

ANDERS STEPHANSON

Anders Stephanson is the Rudd Family Foundation Professor of US History at Columbia University in New York. He has written widely on the history of US foreign

relations, especially the early coldwar period. His works include *Kennan and the Art of Foreign Policy* (Harvard University Press) and *Manifest Destiny: American Expansion and the Empire of Right* (Hill&Wang). “John F. Kennedy in the 1950s: Anti-imperialism and Utopian Deficit” will appear in the spring in the *Journal of American Studies*.

MARIA STERN

Professor in Peace and Development Studies at the School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg. Her research interests are in security studies, the security-development nexus, politics of identity, feminist theory, and post-colonial theory. Her most recent book (with Maria Eriksson Baaz) *Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War? Perceptions, Prescriptions, Problems in the Congo and Beyond* (London, UK: Zed Books, 2013), offers a critical reading of dominant discourses about conflict-related sexual violence from a post-colonial feminist perspective.

CHARLES WOOLFSON

Professor of labour studies at REMESO. Until 2009 he held the chair of labour studies at the Department of Law, University of Glasgow. During 2000-2009 Woolfson mainly lived in the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. He is co-editor with Jeffrey Sommers of *The Contradictions of Austerity: The Socio-Economic Costs of the Neoliberal Baltic Model*. Routledge Studies in the European Economy, (forthcoming April 2014).

ALEKSANDRA ÅLUND

Professor at REMESO. She specializes on the sociology of migration and ethnic studies with a focus on gender, youth and new social movements. The emergence of new ethnicities, cultural production, as well as issues of urban segregation, political marginalization and social exclusion/inclusion, have been documented in a number of her studies published in Swedish, English and other languages. Presently she is directing research project focused on new urban justice movements. Her recent articles include “The End of Swedish Exceptionalism? Citizenship, Neoliberalism and Politics of Exclusion” (2011, with Carl-Ulrik Schierup) and “Reading the Stockholm Riots – A Moment for Social Justice?” (2013, with Lisa Kings and Carl-Ulrik Schierup).

Program

Thursday 28 November, 2013

10:00–10:10. Welcome by Carl-Ulrik Schierup, REMESO, Linköping University

10:10–10:30. Introduction by Stefan Jonsson, REMESO, Linköping University

10:30–12:00. Session 1: Making Colonial Archives Speak

LARS JENSEN, Roskilde University: Caught in the Act: Danish Post-Imperial Anxieties Trapped between Colonial Erasure and Restaging

NICOLA LABANCA, University of Siena: Post-Colonial Italy and her Little Latecomer Empire. Breaking the Silence on the Colonial Past in Times of Austerity

Commentator: CARSTEN JUHL, Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts

Chair: CARL-ULRIK SCHIERUP, REMESO, Linköping University

13:15–15:15. Session 2: Contracting Histories, Narrowing Nations

NICOLAS BANCEL, Université de Lausanne: France 2005-2012: A Postcolonial crisis?

GURMINDER BHAMBRA, University of Warwick: 'Our Island Story': The Dangerous Politics of Belonging in Austere Times

ESTHER CAPTAIN, Committee for the Remembrance of World War II, Netherlands: Austerity in Historiography? The Disappearance and Rediscovery of Post Colonial Legacies in the Netherlands

Commentator: DAVID GAUNT, Södertörn University

Chair: CHARLES WOOLFSON, REMESO, Linköping University

15:45–17:15. Session 3: Legacies of the Past in Present Policies of Exclusion

MANUELA BOATCĂ, Freie Universität, Berlin: Commodification of Citizenship and the Modern Transmission of Property

NACIRA GUÉNIF-SOUILAMAS, Université de Paris VIII: Restrained Equality: A Sexualized and Gendered Color Line

Commentator: MIKELA LUNDAHL, University of Copenhagen

Chair: ALEKSANDRA ÅLUND, REMESO, Linköping University

18:30–20:00. Reception at Rådhuset – hosted by the Municipality of Norrköping

Friday, 29 November, 2013

09:30–10:30. Session 4: Exhibiting Excluded Margins and Memories

KURATORISK AKTION (FREDERIKKE HANSEN & TONE OLAF NIELSEN), Denmark: The Drive to Remember: Invisibilized Colonialism and Indigeneity in the Nordic Region

Chair: STEFAN JONSSON/JULIA WILLÉN, REMESO, Linköping University

11:00–12:30. Session 5: Struggles over Europe's Past

PEO HANSEN: 'Africa cannot be made available, if Europe does not unite': European Integration and the Erasure of Its Colonial History

ROBBIE SHILLIAM: The Crisis of Europe and Colonial Amnesia

Commentator: MARIA STERN, Göteborg University

Chair: ANDERS NEERGAARD, REMESO, Linköping University

14:00–16:00. Session 6. Austere Histories? Concluding Panel Discussion

EDDA MANGA, Uppsala University

STEFAN HELGESSON, Stockholm University

ANDERS STEPHANSON, Columbia University

Chair: STEFAN JONSSON, REMESO, Linköping University