

## Citizenship After Orientalism (Oecumene): The Final Conference

6-7 March 2014, Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes

To register for this conference please email: [Oecumene-project@open.ac.uk](mailto:Oecumene-project@open.ac.uk)

Please note that attendance at the conference is free.

This conference concludes the project Citizenship After Orientalism (Oecumene) funded by the European Research Council (ERC). Since January 2010, six postdoctoral researchers, two visiting postdoctoral fellows and three PhD students have conducted research on the vexed relationship between citizenship and orientalism and explored ways of rearticulating or reimagining this relationship. Drawing upon this research, this two-day conference presents 12 papers as statements on this vexed relation between citizenship and orientalism and provides a glimpse of how we might (and must) *begin* to think about it differently.

Critique of citizenship in liberal democracies over the last two decades has demonstrated that the abstract and ostensibly universal and secular figure of the citizen was in fact a projection of a male, propertied, white, heterosexual, able-bodied, Christian and Western figure. This critique also demonstrated that the challenge was not one of progressively including the subaltern figures such as women, blacks, queers, Muslims, and eventually non-Westerners into that figure through sexual citizenship, multicultural citizenship, or indigenous citizenship. Such assimilation meant that the subaltern figures could appear only through the qualities of the dominant figure of the citizen. It also meant that the logic of citizenship as a dividing practice remained intact.

'Citizenship after orientalism (Oecumene)' explored the possibilities of uncovering subaltern citizens and their acts and practices not with reference to the dominant figure of the citizen and its orientalizing perspective, but as a challenge to them. The project's name plays on the etymology of the word Oecumene, which originally meant the inhabited world, separating it from 'another' world in ancient Greece. It then acquired a meaning that included other 'worlds', finally standing for the 'whole' world.

The project explored how the Arabic tradition of telling (humorous) tales produced political subjects (*hakawatis*); how Adivasis (indigenous people of India) have made claims to rights and how their claims spur acts of writing as acts of citizenship; how Gurus cultivate post-secular citizenship in India; and how Israel's Zionist colonialism in Palestine is unsettling modern citizenship by spawning non-Zionist settler colonies. It also explored how the continuity between imperial and nation-state citizenship affected postcolonial conditions in Algeria and India; how orientalism plays a strategic role in curbing migrant activism in Europe; how gendered and sexual subjects are interpellated to exercise political agency in postcolonial Europe and India; how debt is reorganizing the geopolitics of Europe's orientalism; how genealogies of multiculturalism point toward a continuous problem of difference management in the UK; and how a hybrid Muslim family law is being forged in the UK legal system.

## Thursday 6 March 2014

9:00 – 9:30 **Coffee and Registration**

9:30 – 10:00 **Welcome by Tim Blackman** (Pro Vice-Chancellor, The Open University)

10:00 – 10:30 **Engin Isin** *Why Citizenship after Orientalism?*

10:30 – 13:00 **Session 1: Feminist Legacies and Challenges to Orientalism**

Chair: Darren Langdridge

Alessandra Marino - **Performing Citizenship: Acts of writing**

Leticia Sabsay - **Abject Choices? Orientalism, Citizenship and Autonomy**

Tara Atluri - **Haunted Citizens: Of Ghosts, Gang Rapes and Bureaucratic Fictions**

11:30 – 11:50 Coffee

11:50 – 13:00 Q&A on Session 1

13:00 – 14:00 **LUNCH**

14:00 – 16:30 **Session 2: Decolonizing the Lineages of Citizenship**

Chair: Raia Prokhovnik

Aya Ikegame – **Overlapping Sovereignties: Gurus and Citizenship**

Deena Dajani – **Foolish Citizens**

Jack Harrington – **The Imperial Citizen: British India and French Algeria**

15:15 – 15:30 Coffee

15:30 – 16:30 Q&A on Session 2

16:30 **Introduction to 'In Conversation'** by **Kevin Hetherington** (Dean, Faculty of Social Science)

16:30 – 18:00 John Clarke (OU) In Conversation with Humeira Iqtidar (King's College) and Gada Mahrouse (Concordia University)

Closing remarks by Engin Isin

18:00 – 19:30 Evening Reception

## Friday 7 March 2014

10:15 – 10:30 **Introduction by Jef Huysmans** (Director, CCIG)

10:30 – 13:00 **Session 3: Deconstructing Secular Citizenship**

Chair: Kath Woodward

Dana Rubin – **Against Modernity: Jewish Ultra-Orthodox and Religious-Nationalist Colonialism in West Bank Settlements**

Iker Barbero – **Against Orientalism: Migrant Activism and the Claim for Justice**

Lisa Pilgram – **Legal Orientalism and Citizenship: British Muslim Family Law**

11:30 – 11:50 Coffee

11:50 – 13:00 Q&A on Session 3

13:00 – 14:00 *LUNCH*

14:00 – 16.30 **Session 4: The Indebted Citizen: Inheriting Orientalism**

Chair: John Clarke

Andrea Mura – **Indebted Citizenship: Acting Out Austerity**

Zaki Nahaboo – **Multicultural Society Must be Defended?**

Engin Isin – **Citizenship's Empire**

15:00 – 16:00 Q&A on Session 4

16:00 – 16:30 Final comments

**Close of Conference: John Clarke and Engin Isin**