

Dear colleagues, dear Prof. Danuta Rytel-Schwarz, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Philology, dear Prof. Ulrich Brieler, Head of the Unit of Political Knowledge (Wissenspolitik) of the City of Leipzig, on behalf of Burkhard Jung, Mayor of the City of Leipzig, dear M. Jean-Christophe Tailpied, new director of the French Institute,

Welcome to our international, transdisciplinary and transcultural conference

The World in Movement
Identity and New Diaspora
(Hospitality – Belonging – Emotion – Body – Desire)

Organized by the

Ibero-American Research Center / Francophone Research Center
of the University of Leipzig

In cooperation with several partner institutions and friends and with the support of the German Research Council (DFG)

Thank you all for having accepted our invitation!

I have the very sad duty to inform you that our colleague and friend Ruth Fine had to cancel her trip because of a tragic case of death in her family. But she will be always present in our hearts during the whole conference.

When I prepared the concept for the conference and the application for the Council, I indicated the highly political dimension as well as the topicality of the subject and the goals of the conference. I didn't know at that time which brutal and cruel reality we were going to expect, like the tragic migration of refugees in the last days and weeks, that leaves us almost speechless and profoundly challenges the legitimation of the conference.

We are living in a world full of conflicts that go hand in hand with fundamentalism and terrorism. They have cultural, religious, and territorial causes that lead to large-scale migrations and the creation of diasporas. Victims and casualties of these conflicts are primarily civilians and those who promote peace and. Again and again, intellectuals, writers, and journalists, filmmakers and artists in general are targeted by agitators and those in power.

Not only in the Middle East and the Muslim world, but also in Europe, we now see increasing xenophobia, racism, antisemitism, and islamophobia. Different radical right-wing groups have become socially acceptable, and operate both within and outside of the middle class. Examples in Germany include the PEGIDA and Citizen In Anger (BIW) protest movement, as well as the Alternative for Germany (AfD), that really is not an alternative, in France, the *Front National* in France, and a range of other populist racist parties in Europe. We see acts of violence motivated by racism that are concealed, ignored, or trivialized by German judges and lawyers in drastically increasing numbers. Even violence and attacks against facilities for refugees and families, as well as against pro-asylum politicians, seem to have become a matter of course. On top of all this, we see terrorism and fundamentalism motivated by Islamism, as well as new different, partially xenophobic instances of nationalism.

According to Sansal, all of these negative consequences can also be understood as wars within society, with no less potential for violence than other wars.

This is more than just disconcerting, and requires a counter strategy and answers. We now have the opportunity to humbly go about outlining these strategies (although we may find ourselves unable to do even that at present).

Considering the actuality of our subject, we can keep the goals of our conferences, the analysis of constructions and representations of diaspora and identities in different regions including the Maghreb, Europe, Latin America, and Israel in the age of globalization. Another goal is the description of how new *performative Diasporas* that are different from traditional ones create multifaceted socio-cultural relations that foster ambivalent feelings and perspectives. ‘Hospitality’, ‘belonging’, ‘emotion’, ‘body’, and ‘desire’ play a central role in a dynamic process of cultural assessments, actions, and negotiations.

The goal of this procedure in the colloquium is to supplement or even to replace the concept of *integration*, which encompasses the conventional, linear conception and practice of migration, with that of a *mutual dynamic interaction* in connection with the aforementioned concepts and with that of a *shared responsibility and culture* in a *shared space*. Subsequently, the resulting *new diasporas* will be illuminated in the context of a *situation imperative* in which these new diasporas construct their own space, history, and identity practices.

The colloquium will deal with these phenomena by means of a transdisciplinary and transcultural approach in the context of four central *micro-aspects* of today's globalized society and the current cultural-theoretical and political debate:

First, the conquest/creation of new homelands for the new diasporas.

Second, their spatialization/location and medial ascertainment and representation.

Third, the deep-seated changes to the social and gender roles of the actors in the new diasporas.

Fourth, the historical categorization of these phenomena in order to explain the altered processes of migration, identity, or diaspora and the different strategies of hospitality and belonging.

The colloquium thus seeks to contribute to a new cultural-political agenda and political school of thought.

1. ALTERNATIVES TO REALPOLITIK OR THE CONSTRUCTION/REPRESENTATION OF PERFORMATIVE DIASPORAS: BELONGING/HOSPITALITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF LITERATURE, CULTURE, FILM, AND INSTITUTIONS:

Point-by-point description:

a) In dealing with the new diasporas, the colloquium will place focus on the oscillation between difference and the negotiation of identities as a tension-filled process of new economic, social, cultural, and religious practices; and on the development of diasporic formations based not only on ethnic features, but on pluricultural social constellations, in the new reality, not only in countries of arrival, but in countries of origin (including movement in space and time, displacement, and labor and trade migration ([neo-]colonial projects); as well as on the description of different constellations that impact identity; on different diasporic consciousness formation processes; on similar experiences and destinies, similar emotional and life situations; on returning temporarily to the original homeland, returning to the country of arrival, and going back and forth; on the dispositives and imperatives in each situation; similar form of representation and symbolic forms of expression; transethnic, transcultural, and transgender identities; on the reinvention of one's own homeland and the acquisition of a new one; the lack of a sense of acceptance in the new land; tensions; on the potential for creativity and a fulfilling life in the new land based on tolerance and pluralism; and on new gender roles.

b) In this context, the colloquium will deal with the questions of how individuals and diasporic societies develop a *feeling of belonging* in a new country, and whether and how they experience *hospitality*.

c) Connected with this is the question of how new ideas and visions of politics of *migration, integration, and citizenship* develop in *Realpolitik*.

d) How do *new concepts and experiences of emotion, body, and desire* (which play a central role in the development of integration strategies in diasporic life) and their psychological, affective, and subjective aspects develop for a "citizenship that is felt and experienced"?

e) Further, it will deal with the question of the identification and specificity of the *new diasporas* by means of a *situation imperative or situation dispositive* that is treated with regard to nation state, urban spaces, and gender constructions.

2. IMAGINATION AND TRANSMEDIAL URBAN SPACES: CITIES IN MOTION DESCRIBED AS THE SITUATION OF REPRESENTATIONS:

Point-by-point description: This includes aspects

a) of the transmission and representation of diasporic processes of *urbanization* in the globalized 21st century, as well as of the dynamic and performative dimension of space, a concept of socio-cultural and symbolic negotiation that records stories and power dynamics situated in urban spaces;

b) of how *the* imaginary of cities can be shown to be a "polysystem" by focusing inter/transmedial and transnational/local dynamics as well as designating ideas that constitute space and interweaving medial and socio-cultural practices using cognitive or mental *mapping*;

c) of recording the features of imagined urbanity on the basis of individual cities from a transcultural perspective – the Maghreb (Algiers, Tangier)/ Paris;

d) of the role of different media in the transcultural diasporic space of cities with their different colonial histories, education systems, and cohabitation situations;

e) of to what extent cities are able to create a legally protected social space for cohabitation in hospitality that can evoke a sense of belonging;

f) of Paris as a contrastive imagination space in the francophone literature of the Maghreb, like the "myth of Paris" from the perspective of postcolonial approaches;

g) of the geopolitical dislimination and interconnection of cities in the Mediterranean, which is influenced by literature and mythology. The representation of the Maghrebine migration in public discourse and the media will be explained from historical and postcolonial perspectives in consideration of the levels of feelings and of the idea of the male body in a polysystemic tapestry of spatiality, sociality, historicity, and specific forms of staging.

3. DIASPORIC GENDER IDENTITIES OUTSIDE OF TRADITIONAL CONCEPTS OF MASCULINITY AND FEMINITY IN "IDENTITES SEXUEES DIASPORIQUES: AU-DELA DES MODELES TRADITIONNELS DE FEMINITE ET DE MASCULINITE":

The following points will be addressed:

a) How diasporic processes influence migrants' existence, especially their bodies, "sexual identity", and gender subjectivity; the modification of individual ideas of masculinity/femininity in relation to prevailing models and social classifications and to their objects of desire in a diasporic context.

b) The representation of the private space within a hybrid, public space and the resulting difficulties and tensions between the individual and society, nearness and distance, and foreignness and familiarity in the cohabitation of different cultures.

c) How models of emancipation and phenomena of migration and diaspora prevalent outside European societies affect the female gender concept in Franco-Maghrebine societies and how migrants create a *diasporic gender identity*.

d) How, apart from models of *masculinity* perpetuated internationally starting in the 1960s, migration and diasporic processes effect male gender concepts; processes that influence the male self-image and the concept of masculinity with negative effects on the integration of the individual in countries of arrival, but that also allow for an identity construction no longer based on the opposition between masculinity and femininity that will be described in the colloquium as transgender.

e) In connection with c) and d) an analysis of the *migrant body* and *migrant desire*, sexual behavior, sexual self-determination, including the effect on those who stayed in the country of origin and on fellow expatriates in the country of arrival, which leads to a change in sexual behavior and the estimation of homosexuality.

4. MANIFOLD STORIES AND SHARED CULTURAL SPACES [HISTOIRE MULTIPLES ET ESPACES CULTURELS PARTAGES]; SOCIAL, URBAN, AND GENDER CONSTELLATIONS:

Here we will do the following:

a) Develop a critical reading and re-evaluation of the history of Franco-Maghrebine migration processes as an alternative to migration history written from the perspectives of "labor migration" and integration into "cultures of arrival" on the basis of central historical texts and field research from the colonial period; and evaluate the *new* diasporas that have developed between 1920 and 1970. Focus will be placed on the European Jewish diasporas in the Maghreb during the colonial era within which hybrid diaspora worlds have been created;

b) Empirically evaluate the different ways diasporas have been situated: the reality and the reconstruction of locations of origin, arrival, and transversal that give diasporas a specific character, as well as the periodization of spurts of migration as part of the formation of diasporic constellations of more or less *shared/multifaceted* histories, spaces, and cultures at turbulent interfaces. This will generate new potential and concepts for peaceful cohabitation. Muslims created diasporas in colonial Algeria, as did Jews at the end of the Algerian War of Independence.

c) Discuss the concrete places of arrival and the differences between labor and life practices; the discourses that develop from the diaspora situation; how to investigate performative processes; the tension between the past (country of origin) and the present (new socio-cultural orientation in the country of arrival and the future project, definitive settlement site in the country of arrival in different diasporic situations, ethnic-cultural emancipation).

d) Question how hybrid, performative, and transversal processes encompass and enable hospitality and the development of a sense of belonging in countries of arrival, which feelings are indispensable to cohabitation in equity.

e) Discuss how "emotional communities" arise and create their own spaces, histories, and ways of life that contribute to a new concept of integration and political space which in turn eases communal life by giving individuals equal rights in the recognition of transversal and hybrid feelings of belonging.

In addition to its central academic goals, this conference wants to make a contribution to cultural understanding. For this reason, the organizers consider it a great success to bring together, for the second time, a group of scientists and scholars from Israel, Turkey, and the Maghreb; and to welcome Lizzie Doron, Boualem Sansal (Peace Prize of the German Book Trade laureate in 2011) and Michel Gribenski, among others, to Leipzig.

Finally I want to express my respect and solidarity with all refugees in the world, and of course to all those who are coming to Europe and to Germany.

Given the images of the catastrophic situation of the refugees and the very different reactions in Europe and Germany in the last weeks up to today, it is for me a necessity to declare that I

feel ashamed to be a European. However, for the first time in forty three years, I can say that I am proud to be a German!