

Orientalism 2.0.

Developments in Orientalist Criticism in the 21st Century



23rd Meeting of the

PLATFORM FOR POSTCOLONIAL READINGS

Hosted by Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Friday 26 May 2023, 8.30am-1pm (CEST, online)

Registration deadline: 20 May 2023

Since the publication of Edward W. Said's *Orientalism* (1978), the stereotyping of Eastern societies and people in Western discourse has continued to be a topic of academic debate. The enormous political and economic turnaround of China in recent decades in particular has prompted postcolonial and other scholars to take a renewed interest in Orientalist discourses, with new modes of Orientalism being distinguished, such as Anti-Orientalism, Self-Orientalism, Sinological Orientalism, Digital Orientalism. This meeting of the Platform for Postcolonial Readings aims to discuss the new branches of Orientalist criticism that have developed especially in response to the changing dynamics between Eastern and Western cultural powers.

Our session opens with a general introduction to orientalist theorizing since Edward Said by Dr Zhuyun Song (Tongji University/Vrije Universiteit Brussel) and a keynote lecture by Prof. dr. Daniel F. Vukovich (University of Hong Kong), who teaches postcolonial and cultural theories in relation to the China-West relationship. In his monograph *China and Orientalism: Western Knowledge Production and the PRC* (2012), Vukovich discerns a new, Sinological form of Orientalism in contemporary literature and film, i.e. a shift from Saidian conceptualisations of the essentially different Oriental Other to discourses of the People's Republic of China as 'becoming-the-same' as the West. This lecture is followed by a joint discussion of his ideas and by a joint close reading of essays by Vukovich and other scholars, during which all participants are invited to offer their own reflections on Orientalism (in response to their readings of the essays and/or in relation to their own research). The meeting then continues the discussion by means of some more detailed contributions on new modes of Orientalism by (junior) researchers working in this field.

The meeting is open to all researchers working in the fields of East Asian Studies, postcolonial and globalization studies. Active participation by junior researchers (doctoral students/research masters) is strongly encouraged. To facilitate networking as well as the discussion in this online event, all participants are expected to submit, **by 20 May**, a short **bio and contact details** (ca. 200 words) and a brief **discussion** (ca. 500 words) of how Orientalist criticism is/may be relevant for their research; alternatively, a response to a particular aspect of the assigned reading is also welcome. Participation is free of charge, but please register (via <https://www.wjx.cn/vm/YD6HSlS.aspx>) to receive the link and reading material. For more information, you can contact Platform co-ordinator Prof. dr. Elisabeth Bekers (Vrije U Brussel) (elisabeth.bekers@vub.be) and guest organiser Dr. Zhuyun Song (Tongji U/Vrije U Brussel) (zhuyunsong@tongji.edu.cn).

The Platform for Postcolonial Readings organizes seminars for (junior) researchers in the Netherlands and Belgium who are committed to issues of postcoloniality and globalization. This meeting is organized with the support of the VUB Doctoral School of Human Sciences by Zhuyun Song (U Tongji/VUB), Elisabeth Bekers (VUB) and Liesbeth Minnaard (UL).

Programme Orientalism 2.0.

Venue: online; streaming via Microsoft Teams (please register for link)

8.30 WELCOME

by Platform coordinators Prof. Elisabeth BEKERS (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) & Prof. Liesbeth MINNAARD (Leiden University); *the bios and short reflections of all participants will be sent to all participants*

8.40 INTRODUCTION to Orientalism 2.0.

by guest organiser Dr. Zhuyun SONG (Tongji University/Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

9.00 KEYNOTE LECTURE: “‘Orientalism,’ ‘China In/And the World,’ and Other Loaded Phrases: Where Are we Now, and How Might We Go Elsewhere?’”

by Prof. dr. Daniel F. VUKOVICH (University of Hong Kong)

followed by short Q&A

9.40 BREAK

10.00 JOINT DISCUSSION OF READINGS

Moderator: Zhuyun SONG

Readings in preparation of this discussion will be sent to all registered participants:

Dirlik, Arif. “Chinese History and the Question of Orientalism.” *History and Theory*, vol. 35, no. 4, 1996, pp. 96–118.

Huggan, Graham. “(Not) Reading Orientalism”. *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 36, no. 3, 2005, pp. 124–136.

Vukovich, Daniel F. “Sinological-orientalism Now: China and the New Era.” *China and Orientalism: Western Knowledge Production and the P.R.C.* Routledge, 2012, pp. 1-23.

10.50 BREAK

11.15 ORIENTALISM 2.0. IN CURRENT RESEARCH

Moderator: Elisabeth Bekers (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

Respondent: Alice Königstetter (University of Vienna/Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

11.15 “White Women Writing Brown Lives: Orientalist and anti-Orientalist Poetics in Elisabeth Fernea’s *A Street in Marrakech* and Lenora Peet’s *Women of Marrakech*”
by Ezzahra BENLAHOSSINE (Mohammed V University)

11.40 “Self-Orientalism and Anti-Orientalism in Chinese-European Literature of the Late 20th Century: Two Ways of Presenting the Mao Era in a Negative Light”
by Dr. Zhuyun SONG (Tongji University/Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

12.05 “The Rejection of Theological Orientalism in Mahmoud Darwish’s Late Works”
by Nizar MILHEM (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

12.30 “Techno-Orientalism and China’s Digital Immersive Art”
by Dr. Xinyang ZHAO (Curtin University, Australia)

presentations 15 min followed by 10 min discussion

12.55 CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS (*meeting closes at 13.00*)

by Platform coordinator Elisabeth BEKERS and guest organiser Zhuyun SONG