

FEMINIST AUTONOMOUS CENTRE FOR RESEARCH

FEMINIST
NO
BORDERS
SUMMERSCHOOL #5

DATES

15-18/6/2022

THEMES

ABOLITION/
COVID BORDERS/
POSITIONALITY

NODES

PALERMO/HERAKLION/
BERLIN/ATHENS-VIRTUAL

WITH: ASSOCIAZIONE CLOSER, DE:BORDER-MIGRATION JUSTICE COLLECTIVE, LEGAL CENTRE LESVOS, THALASSA OF SOLIDARITY, KOMPASS COLLECTIVE, LASCIATECENTRARE, WATCH THE MED-ALARM PHONE (WOMEN* ON THE MOVE)

AT: BOOQ (PALERMO); KATO THEATRE (HERAKLION); KULTURFABRIK MOABIT (BERLIN); FAC RESEARCH/ZOOM (ATHENS-VIRTUAL)

Programme

Feminist No Borders

Summer School

5th annual

15-18 June 2022

Times listed are in UTC+3

Nodes/Locations:

Heraklion: [Kato Theatre](#), Theotokopoulou 28, 72 201 Heraklion, Crete

Palermo: [Boog](#), Via Santa Teresa, 90133 Palermo

Berlin: [Kulturfabrik Moabit](#), Lehrter Straße 35, 10557 Berlin

Virtual: [Zoom](#), Meeting ID:896 4146 4249 & passcode:386596

Wednesday 15 June: Welcome/Introductions

6 pm: Welcome to the Summer School (in each local/virtual node)

7-8:30 pm: Opening Assembly (hybrid)

Thursday 16 June: Abolition

11-2 pm: Morning Session (in each local/virtual node)

3:30-4:30 pm: Abolishing borders in the University, a conversation with: [BRIDGES collective](#) (Heraklion node only)

5-7 pm: Roundtable with: [Associazione Closer](#), [de:border-migration justice collective](#) (hybrid)

On the first day of the summer school, we focus on the relationship between prison abolition and border abolition from a feminist perspective. Whilst the US debates on prison abolition critically link the continuum between colonial violence, slavery, prisons, and bordering, in European contexts there seem to be a need to discuss these entanglements further. The criminalisation and imprisonment of people who defy borders, either by crossing them or by supporting border crossers, has become a key bordering technique. The law and the so-called 'criminal justice system' have historically been key sites of racist and patriarchal oppression, and, as such, key sites of struggle. In the context of no-border struggles, however, appeals to the law, to the discourse of human rights, as well as to the *illegality* of state practices seem to go unquestioned.

The questions that arise, then, are:

- To what extent can we demand states and other authorities to “protect people”, to “respect rights” and to ‘respect the law’, when state formations are founded on violence and oppression?
- Is the abolition of the state and of other forms of oppression a precondition for the abolition of borders and prisons?
- Can we reconcile the legal system, on the one hand, with a practice and vision oriented towards border abolition, on the other?
- Is it possible to use the law, the discourse of rights and appeals to illegality of state practices as a tactical element rather than an end-goal in our struggles?
- Is the use of the law a necessary and relevant tool when its formation, construction and application are intrinsic to State’s institutions? Could other sets of “principles” or “rights” be more relevant?
- How to think about accountability when it comes to state and corporate violence, from an abolitionist perspective?
- How do we put into practice a feminist abolitionist analysis of the continuum of violence of colonialism, prisons, and borders, and how do we navigate inevitable contradictions?

Recommended readings:

1. Angela Davis, Gina Dent, Erica Meiners & Beth Richie, “Introduction: Abolition. Feminism. Now.” In *Abolition.Feminism.Now* (London: Penguin, 2022), 1-27.
2. Angela Davis [interview](#) (8 minute video), excerpt from *The Black Power Mixtape, 1967-1975*, dir. Göran Olsson, 2011.

Friday 17 June: COVID borders/bordering through COVID

11-2 pm: Morning Session (in each local/virtual node)

5-7 pm: Roundtable with: [Legal Centre Lesvos](#), [Thalassa of Solidarity](#), [Kompass collective](#), [LasciateCIEntrare](#) (hybrid)

On Day 2, we focus on how the management of the pandemic crisis has become a pretext for rebordering projects and installing harsher divisions amongst the global population. From the various locations in which we are based, we have witnessed the pretextual use of the pandemic to ramp up the prisonification process: for instance, on the islands and the mainland in Greece, the government continually applies discriminatory regulations confining people forced to live in camps to a perpetual lockdown, while intensifying racial profiling and criminalisation of people racialised as migrants by police in urban centres on the pretext of pandemic controls; In Italy, for racialized populations crossing borders, quarantine has been conflated with detention, as in the “quarantine ships.” The use of detention under the guise of quarantine becomes a practice through which to obstruct people from accessing the asylum services and applying

for asylum. This amounts to denying them the right to asylum and, further, exposing them to violent deportations in the form of push-backs. All of the above point to the ways in which, through the naturalisation of race, pandemic management operates as migration management, which has led to construction of new borders and the intensification of already existing ones. A global regime of vaccine apartheid has reinforced the violent border regime and the forms of inequality, exploitation, and marginalisation it reproduces.

We will reflect on the following questions:

- What are the new borders that have been installed on the pretext of pandemic controls and how can activists mobilise against them in times of social isolation, distancing, and segregation?
- How can we struggle for the right to asylum and international protection without reproducing notions of deservingness and falling into paternalistic conceptualisations of vulnerability?
- How have claims to protection become an excuse to enact violence during the pandemic?
- How can we engage in a feminist critique of bordering that reveals how border violence draws upon scripts of gendered violence and thereby make links between border abuse and domestic abuse?
- How can we resist the prisonification projects, while at the same time challenging fascist opposition to such projects?
- How may we generate feminist resistances to bordering and control of mobility through the pandemic that starts from the location of our bodies?

Recommended readings:

1. Angela Mitropoulos, [Against Quarantine](#). *The New Inquiry*, February 13, 2020.
2. Kirsi Pauliina Kallio et al. "COVID discloses unequal geographies." *Fennia: International Journal of Geography* 198, no. 1-2 (2021): 1-16, <https://doi.org/10.11143/fennia.99514>

Saturday 18 June: Positionality in research and activism

11-2 pm: Morning Session (in each local/virtual node)

5-7 pm: Roundtable with: [Watch the Med-Alarm Phone \(Women* on the Move\)](#) (hybrid)

7:30-8:30 pm: Closing Assembly (hybrid)

On Day 3, we focus on the intersection of research with activism. We look more specifically at the ethical challenges of doing research within and with activist groups interrogating the positionality(ies) of the researcher. We offer constructive reflections on the intentionality of activist research by asking the very basic question: when does research become extractivist? There are plenty of examples where research has gone wrong when it comes to activism. Cases of broken ties with activist communities due to breach of trust, lack of transparency, knowledge expropriation and co-optation have been documented in research with

migrants and/or Indigenous environmental activists in recent years. Along these lines, experiences of gendered violence and sexual harassment in research processes have been heard multiple times. These are issues that put in jeopardy research itself where also fundamental questions of voice, ownership and authorship need to be fully addressed. On the one hand, we need to reconsider the multiple hierarchies within academic research that may not be in line with political values of horizontality, autonomy, and self-determination in no borders activism. On the other hand, we need to acknowledge the various examples of researchers who apply refusal as a methodological tactic to protect communities as well as an ethical commitment to decolonise research. Lastly, we will also reflect on the geopolitical positionality of research driven by funding bodies and academic institutions of the Global North towards minoritised communities and individuals.

The questions on which we will focus include:

- Can we, indeed, claim the existence of activist research? What are the challenges to overcome the boundaries between “research” and “activism”?
- How, as researchers, can we ethically engage in activist spaces and/or movements and avoid co-optation and knowledge extractivism?
- What are the methodological tools through which we can conduct a horizontal, inclusive and decolonial research that aligns with the activist values of participating communities?
- What are the challenges for addressing pluriversality in research with all voices being equally (re)presented? How do we overcome issues of authorship within collaborative processes of research?
- What should be the mechanisms to call out gendered violence and sexual harassment in research processes? How do we form a complaint?
- How can we challenge the knowledge factories, i.e. academic institutions and funding bodies of the Global North, to decolonise their approach to research outputs (e.g. “production” of papers, research excellence frameworks, divisions between researchers and “researched”)?

Recommended readings:

1. Surya Nayak, “Location As Method,” *Qualitative Research Journal* 17, no. 3 (2017): 202-216.
2. Alison Mountz et al., “For Slow Scholarship: A Feminist Politics of Resistance through Collective Action in the Neoliberal University,” *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies* 14, no 4 (2015): 1235-1259.

Organising collective:

Heraklion node: Aila, Anna, Myrto

Palermo node: Camille, Chiara, Deanna, Giulia, Hela, Ilaria, Marta, Sara

Berlin node: Ricarda, Havle, Hazal, Anna

Virtual node: Penny, Lia, Carmen