



CALL FOR PAPERS

White Academia: Paradoxes of Diversity, Labeling and Exclusion

Over the past decade, institutions of higher learning, in Israel and throughout the world, have led the way in introducing diversity and accessibility programs. Israeli policy calls for rendering higher education accessible to Arabs and to Israeli Jews of Ethiopian origin, as well as for opening the academic world to *Haredim* (ultra-Orthodox Jews). Ample budgets for these programs are provided by the Council for Higher Education's Planning and Budgeting Committee. Similar processes affect the planning of diverse campuses. Opening the academic world to diverse population groups draws attention to several powerful, substantive issues concerning the structure and mechanisms of labeling, exclusion and discrimination. This conference addresses such mechanisms directly, seeking to encourage empirical and theoretical research on the topic and thus achieving a change in policy.

Western academia, including that of Israel, is characterized by white hegemony. Academic colleges and universities are perceived as liberal, meritocratic institutions at which aptitude and skills are the basis for admission and advancement. Nevertheless, studies show that Israeli academia suffers from discrimination, exclusion and labeling of weaker groups in terms of ethnicity, gender, class or sexuality. Exclusionary mechanisms include the university entrance examination that constitutes a basic impediment to acceptance, as well as study content, syllabi, advancement mechanisms and underrepresentation of research students and staff members from weaker population groups.

These practices constitute part of the systematic and institutional discrimination. Exclusionary power structures thus become so assimilated that they are no longer discernible. These processes are covert so that it is difficult to estimate their number. Further research is required to identify and address them. In the academic discourse in Israel, the marginality of minority groups in Israeli academia is largely defined in terms of discrimination, inequality, disparities and lack of representation. While such discourse identifies the institutional practices responsible for inequality, it does not analyze these disparities in terms of racialization—a type of discourse that deconstructs and challenges such categories while exposing the dominant power structures and the justification regimes that stand behind them. This conference aspires to mention the unmentionable, to reveal the overt and covert stratification and discrimination mechanisms of the academic world and suggest empirical studies and appropriate changes in policy.

The conference guest speaker is Dr. **Deborah Gabriel** author of the book:

"Transforming the Ivory Tower: Models for Gender Equality and Social Justice" (UCL Press, 2020)

We invite you to submit 500-word abstracts that include the research topic, objectives, methodology, findings and key arguments. Abstracts should be submitted by October 1, 2020 by email to: whiteacademiaconference@gmail.com. All abstracts will undergo academic review procedures. Some lectures will be published as full scientific articles in a special collection accompanying the conference. Interested candidates should submit full articles, in English (8,000 words, not including Bibliography), about a month before the conference date.

The conference will take place on 21-22 March, 2021. The first day's sessions will take place at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the second at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, including a visit to a school in an unrecognized Bedouin village.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sarab Aburabia-Queder, Ben-Gurion University, Dr. Michal Barak, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
Conference Chairs