

BISA is pleased to announce the following Plenary Session organised by the Colonial, Postcolonial and Decolonial Working Group (CPD) and Post-Structural Politics (PPWG) working groups.

## **Radicalism and the Challenge to Colonial Legacies**

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017 @ 5.30pm Tennyson Room

Wine will be served at the Plenary session

Plenary speakers are:

- Dr Nirmal Puwar (Goldsmiths)
- Dr Louiza Odysseus (Sussex)
- Prof. Gurminder K. Bhambra (Warwick)
- Dr Olivia Rutazibwa (Portsmouth)

Plenary chairs are:

- Dr Aggie Hirst (City)
- Dr Nivi Manchanda.

The abstract for the session is as follows:

“The term protector is a colonised term for standing up for what’s right” – Indigenous protector, North Dakota, September 2016

This special plenary session engages with changing ideas and practices of ‘radicalism’ in the global political present and in relation to living colonial legacies. In recent years, forms of radicalism have been redefined and rejuvenated from multiple ontological positions. In North Dakota, for instance, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe along with thousands of other Indigenous ‘protectors’ gathered on the frontline of the climate fight to block the Dakota Access oil pipeline in 2016. The Standing Rock action drew attention to how 500 years of the enclosure of Indigenous lands has been foundational to the implementation and spatial extension of the global extractive economy which presently threatens all forms of life on the planet. However, the Standing Rock action also involved a wholesale rejection of the term ‘protector’ and a firm alternative identification as ‘protectors’ of the planet and of its threatened forms of life.

In a further example, the Black Lives Matter movement has structured a restorative struggle for justice around an “unapologetic Blackness”. This struggle began by challenging lethal institutional violence against Black bodies in the US context, however, it ultimately works towards a Black globalism, connecting struggles across borders.

Finally, the Rhodes Must Fall movement began in South Africa with a recognition that the collective memory of a society is made in built space, in part through commemorative statues which glorify the colonial experience while at the same time erasing its constitutive violence. The demands to remove a statue of Rhodes were intended as a segue into a broader challenge to the reproduction of institutional racism in the academy.

All of these movements ultimately pivot around the resonance of colonialism in the present and range from a meaningful challenge to the global colonial system of carbon capitalism, to challenging institutional racism, not only within systems of law enforcement and within the academy but across society more broadly. At the same time, these struggles are also challenging the very meanings of protest and resistance in relation to the re-making of communities and institutions.

Our invited speakers have brought a range of radical traditions of thought to bear on the UK context and beyond in order to challenge racial injustice, epistemic injustice, the exclusionary nature of citizenship and other colonial legacies. This plenary will therefore draw together their own modes and means of struggle into comparative perspective with other forms of radicalism in the global political present.