



FROM THE DARK SIDE

Black Feminisms

CALL FOR PAPERS

EDITORS: KEIVAN DJAVADZADEH, ELSA DORLIN, AND MYRIAM PARIS

Ganguro girls. In Tokyo since the early 2000s, more and more girls tan their skin and bleach their hair. In doing so, they contest the gender norms stating that *the* young Japanese woman is light-skinned with dark hair, chaste, and keeps foreign influences at bay in the service of Imperial Japan and the men who rule it. They translate and reconfigure the *blackface* practice by performing an obscure, non-conformist, and obscene feminism that bites back at imperialism: a black feminism.

In France, “féminisme noir” refers first of all to the importation and translation of the *Black feminist* tradition, with its politics and theoretical toolbox. However, the transatlantic circulation and reception of these tools deploy different Black feminist issues here. Translations have affected and overwhelmed the economy of Black feminism. They have reinvented this tradition and de-centered our own long-established theoretical frameworks. Black feminism is a legacy that questions and sets us in motion; however, this legacy meets *our own* legacies transmitted by our social movements, our thoughts, and our mothers’/sisters’/partners’ struggles in the territories that have been literally erased by mainland France. What about this overseas feminism? Between legacy and fantasy, oblivion and reconstruction, return of the repressed or restoration of a “truth”: Black feminism must be approached from the perspective of a political temporality that is non-linear, split-up, and constellar.

We inherit an approach: our task is to investigate and question our societies as they are held and divided by racist, sexist, and capitalist power relations. The reception of Black feminism has led to a reflection about our social location and our positioning, about our individual and collective imperial history, about the sexual and gendered dimensions of racist and migration policies. In the French political context of a racist offensive led in the name of so-called feminism, those questionings have reconfigured the cartography of feminist research



and feminist movements. While actuating a return of the colonial repressed, they divided feminists along new splits such as “queer” and “indigenous”, “secular” and “submissive”, “black” and “white”, but also “deep black” and “high yellow”. Because of these polemics, our bodies, our complexions, our clothes, our places of birth and residence, our sexualities, our religions, and our languages have acquired new empowering or disempowering qualities, thus legitimizing or delegitimizing our discourses. We have sometimes put on our “objectionable skins” (Roberte Horth) as a way of becoming audible, with the danger of racializing both our adversaries and our traditional allies by rendering them “white”. Thus, we were trapped in the “master’s house” (Audre Lorde), within its racist delimitations. We have sometimes masked our complexions in order to widen our coalitions, exposing ourselves to the risk of becoming invisible.

Given these aporias, we are committed to carrying on the deconstruction of the dichotomies imposed by the “white solipsism” (Adrienne Rich) in feminist thought. We are committed to exhuming repressed, buried, and ignored feminisms that contest this white solipsism.

Authors are invited to submit articles exploring the feminist movements fighting against slavery, colonialism, imperialism, and racism, providing evidence of the multiple historical, geographical, and political origins of Black feminisms. We are looking for articles that index and study the tactics and strategies actuated by feminists under the pressure of racism: how do they shift, foil, invert, split, or stave in the color lines? How do they smash racialized relationships and categories such as “Muslim”, “Asian”, “oriental”, “veiled”, “Roma”, “Arab”, “African”, “immigrant”, *etc.*, as well as their corollaries, “European”, “occidental”, “secular”, “French”, and what does such a smashing imply? It is a matter of multiplying the legacies of obscure, masked, veiled, and darkened feminisms, such as those of Solitude, Fathma N’Soumer, Awa Thiam, Julia Cooper, Emma Goldman, and the Nardal sisters. It is a matter of analyzing the processes of dominations, resistances, and migrations that color or discolor, retract or magnify the location of possible solidarities. This inaugural issue of *Comment S’en Sortir ?* entitled “From The Dark Side” aims to build walkways and bridges (Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldù), alliances and coalitions; it aims to draw upon Black feminisms’ theoretical and political tools that allow us to thwart the oppositions, hierarchies, splits, and aporias that impoverish our experience and condemn our struggles.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

To propose an article, please submit an abstract up to 500 words and a presentation of the author, including your name(s), discipline, contact details and a short biography (up to 150 words) by April 1, 2013. Send proposals to redaction@commentssortir.org.

For further details, please check the journal website: <http://commentssortir.org/>

DEADLINES

- **Submission of proposals:** April 15, 2013.

Acceptance decisions will be communicated by May 1st, 2013



- **Submission of articles:** July 31, 2013.

Definitive acceptance: September 15, 2013

- **Publication:** October 2013

Articles should not exceed 7 000 words.