

**Azadi (freedom):  
Feminist reading group**

Seminar series run as part of the Brunel  
**Education 'Interculturality for diversity and  
global learning' Research Group**

Session 3: 27.11.21 (5-6pm)

Led by Dr Geeta Ludhra

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## Welcome and House-keeping

1. House-keeping: mutual respect, sensitivity when speaking and sharing comments in the chat, no recordings are made, feeling safe to share.
2. Previous session ('How to Stay Sane in an Age of Division' book. Author: Elif Shafak – see slides on website)
3. You can read more about our research group members and activities on the Interculturality website (access links on next slide).

- **Main Research Group Link:**  
[Interculturality for diversity and global learning | Brunel University London](#)
- **Reading Group Link:**
  - [Feminist reading group | Brunel University London](#)
- **Azadi (freedom): Feminist works by scholars of colour**

This reading group will run on a monthly-basis where sessions will be held on the last Thursday of every month, between 5-6pm to avoid meeting clashes. All sessions will be held over zoom for the first year. Details and updates will be posted on the website, with reminders on my Twitter page.

- **Zoom link:**  
<https://bruneluniversity.zoom.us/j/97896081315>  
Meeting ID: 978 9608 1315; Passcode: 1372024688

## Reflection questions & prompts for the year:

- To what degree do critical feminist writers of colour have the 'freedom' and 'safety' to write about and through their lived 'truths'?
- What does it mean to write through a critical feminist lens that captures the intersections, nuances and complications of lived experiences?
- How does this month's writing challenge some of the power dynamics and dominant feminist discourses?
- What emotional tolls do feminist scholars of colour embody as part of their research and writing experiences?
- How can poetry be used to explore feminist issues and silences?
- How has this 2021-22 critical feminist series shone a light on your theoretical understanding in new ways?

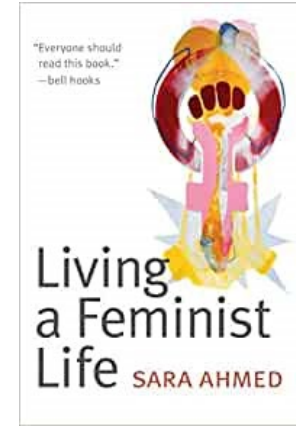
# Reading Session 3:

## Research paper uploaded (focus for the session):

- Ahmed, S (2009). Embodying diversity: problems and paradoxes for Black feminists. Race Ethnicity and Education. Vol. 12, No. 1, March 2009, pp.41–52. Routledge.

## Optional extra recommended readings (discuss if time at the end):

- I have chosen these 2 books by the same author – both critical and beautifully written (I couldn't put them down).
- There are YouTube videos and blogs too, if you wish to explore wider.



## Paper Abstract:

**This paper examines some of the problems and paradoxes of embodying diversity for organisations.**

With reference to a research project based on interviews with diversity practitioners, as well as personal experience of working within universities as a Black feminist, this paper explores how diversity becomes a commitment that requires that those who embody that diversity express happiness and gratitude. Our very arrival into organisations is used as evidence that the whiteness of which we speak no longer exists. Most importantly to embody diversity can mean to be under pressure not to speak about racism. The very talk about racism is seen as introducing bad feeling into organisations. Drawing on the work of **bell hooks** and **Audre Lorde**, the paper argues that we need to reclaim the figure of the angry Black feminist, and that we need to refuse the injunction to be happy objects for the organisation, which means being willing to cause trouble and being prepared to stay as sore as our points.

**Keywords:** racism; diversity; emotion; Black feminism

## Suggested prompts to explore in our discussion:

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1. How does a Black feminist theoretical lens, shine a light on uncomfortable topics through this paper?
2. How does Ahmed provoke us to think about the following:
  - ❖ ‘What does it mean to embody diversity (and racism)?’
  - ❖ What questions does Ahmed raise about the language (and politics) of diversity?
  - ❖ How might this be helpful to us as academics/researchers, if at all?
  - ❖ How has this paper made you reflect differently or more critically about the concept of ‘diversity’?
3. What questions are raised about operations of power in this paper?
4. Pick 2-3 points from this paper that you might explore further in your own thinking, role or writing. Are you willing to share any with the group?
5. We will talk around the 2 books if time. Have you read them?

# Final Reflection

- *What are the take-home messages for you from this month's session?*

**Reading Month 4:** 27th January 2022

**Paper:** Power, Intersectionality and the Politics of Belonging, by Nira Yuval Davis

Led by: Professor Maria Tsouroufli

Paper and slides will be uploaded to the website asap.

# Thank you

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- On behalf of the Brunel Education **'Interculturality for diversity and global learning'** Research Group, we encourage you to visit the website and keep up with our research activities and events.
- Full programme on the website.
- Hope to see you in January, ready for an exciting 2022 series with members of the group also leading sessions alongside me.
- Thank you if you have attended and engaged in this seminar series.