



## Colloquium

PROF. AMALIA SA'AR (UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA)

**Paradoxes of knowledge and positionality in critical diversity  
research. A feminist-activist perspective**

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**Wednesday, 19.04.2023**

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In the current neoliberal moment, calls for diversity and inclusion typically represent the notion that better accommodation of social, ethnic, racial, and gender heterogeneity will benefit both democratic resilience and economic prosperity. Economists and politicians tend to celebrate diversity as a 'win-win,' quintessential capitalist solution to social inequality: for members of marginalized groups, it creates new venues for economic success and social inclusion; for the different industries and the economy at large, it offers a growth engine through widening the supply of talents and creativity. This perspective fits the late-capitalist habitus, in which political-economic histories of violence and usurpation are repressed and repackaged as freely chosen individual identities.

For critical scholars like myself, who are also engaged social activists, this idea of diversity is challenging. On the one hand, I approach it with suspicion. Well-aware of late-capitalism's tendency to increase class, ethnic, and racial polarization, I aim to unravel diversity's underlying, self-denied assumptions, to explore the gaps between its overt discourse and actual consequences, and to dwell on its deeply paradoxical nature. On the other hand, as a feminist activist committed to minority rights and inclusion, I cannot readily dismiss the idea of diversity, for I can see that it has created new opportunities for women and minorities, and has mainstreamed some measures of tolerance towards Others. The talk will address the dilemma of critical, engaged diversity research, using feminist intersectionality theory and examples from the Israeli case.

All those interested in the social sciences are cordially invited.