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GERMANY- COLOGNE



RADICAL THINKING FROM THE WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVE – JINEOLOGY

Why a Jineology Conference?

The crisis which has been caused by the patriarchal capitalist system has become obvious in many ways: Not only the financial crisis but also ecological crisis and social crisis are affecting and threatening people's lives all over the world. Due to the patriarchal character of states, societies, capitalist economy, positivist ideologies, religions and sciences women are hit by the crisis in multiple ways. The urgent need for social alternatives that are not based on oppression, hierarchies and marginalisation has been expressed by social movements and women's movements throughout the last decades. While criticising the destruction of the dominant system women also have been involved in the development of alternatives and struggles for change.

Against this context we are calling for the conference "RADICAL THINKING FROM THE WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVE – JINEOLOGY". By the means of this conference we are striving to dismantle the irreality of a patriarchal and positivist "scientific" approach that has distorted history and identities by exclusion and colonisation of women. At the same time we are looking forward to share and discuss alternative concepts of women's sciences, which can contribute to the establishment of a free, democratic and ecological society. An alternative understanding of science is not only a theoretical approach but also linked to the struggle for liberation and social transformation. It means to rebuild our societies from the women's perspective. One of these approaches has been described by the Kurdish women's movement as "*Jineoloji*" (Kurdish terminology for *Women's Science*). Cenî – Kurdish Women's Office for Peace (Germany), Women's Meeting and Education Centre UTAMARA (Germany), International Free Women's Foundation (Netherlands), Women's Research Foundation for the Middle East (Netherlands), the union of female students from Kurdistan YXK Jin and others have thus come together to organize this conference and formed a preparation committee to realize it.

The history of Kurdish women's struggle of modern times can be taken back as far as the late 1980s. Of course the Kurdish freedom movement has been cherishing and learning from the experiences of different women's freedom movements. It has been quite a struggle indeed; and the profoundness of the oppression and enslavement has shown the Kurdish women the link between patriarchy, hierarchy, power, military, state and its like. But more importantly that being against a system or way of living is not enough - there is a need to build and institutionalize alternative ways of life – outside the structures of power.

In present times this discussion becomes more important. This especially applies to the region of the Middle East, where the status quo is being challenged from all around. The peoples in the Middle East have entered a period where the present status quo can be changed for the first time in around 100 years, while at the same time neo-colonialism, nationalism, political

Islam and sexism are composing severe threats for the societies and especially women's lives and freedoms. Thus we realize that we the women, women's organisations and movements have to strengthen our resources in order to assert our preferred way of living socially, politically, educationally, economically, culturally and ideologically.

Realizing the importance of the involvement of the whole society in a democratic social transformation process, the Kurdish women's movement has not only given priority to develop alternative approaches towards women's education, but has also been working on involving children and young people as well as men to create awareness and to combat sexism.

However, in order to prevent the ruling system from reproducing its foundations of power through its education, social, cultural and political system, the Kurdish women's movement concluded that there is a need to construct a women's paradigm in our freedom struggle. Against this background the need for a new scientific approach and agenda was expressed, discussions and researches about the issue and concept of *Jineoloji* (Women's Science) started.

This discussion is in no way a debate that has concluded but has just begun amongst the Kurdish women. This is why we would like to proceed with the discussions with women who are looking for alternatives from all around the world. While learning from different perspectives, approaches and struggles of women and feminist science we would like to introduce *Jineoloji* as a proposal for a method to build women's mentality, knowledge and science which will include a profound intervention to the male mentality and all its paradigmatic periods. Since gender roles are politically and socially constructed there is also the possibility to re-construct them. Thus by creating new resources and methods of knowledge and science as women we shall enable ourselves to rebuild our personal identities as well as the structures of society. This in turn and through its alternative ways of institutionalization and implementation shall also transform and change the general society.

We realize that discussions of such or its bits and pieces have been taken up before and struggled for including within our works and struggles. However we would like to come together to put together all our discussions and experiences in order to come up with a proposal to make it more implementable especially at a time when not only the Middle East but everywhere else is going through such critical changes. We believe that we can make a change during these times by learning from each other and elaborating on women's struggles, experiences and perspectives.

With this conference we aim to stay together within these 2 ½ days and discuss as women from different parts of societies, branches, struggles and geographical regions in order to take another step towards each other and to build our alternative way of thinking and living.

We are looking forward to see you at the conference!

Best regards
Women of the preparation committee
January 2014