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Friday Research Seminar in Africa Studies

Madness/alienation/strangeness in North African literature

with **Véronique Simon**

Senior lecturer at Department of Education, Uppsala University

Friday 26 April 2019, 10.15-11.30

House 3, room 2028, Engelska Parken
Thunsbergsvägen 3H, Uppsala

To define madness seems an impossible task. In literature in particular, will one speak of a "crazy way of writing"? Of crazy authors? Of crazy characters? Or rather, of expressions of madness in specific societies?

If madness is characterised by deviations from a norm, it is obvious that this norm is not the same everywhere. The problem with African literature is that this norm can be difficult to define: is it the colonizers' norm? Or tradition? Or, in post-colonial societies, a mix of both, or a "new order"?

Mouralis writes: "Madness [is] a symptom of something no longer working, that an old order has become unsettled": the seminar moves from this premise to track down expressions of madness in texts by, among others, Bey, Ben Jelloun, Cardinal, Dib, Djébar, Khadra, Khatibi, Memmi, Sebbar.

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afrikastudier@antro.uu.se
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