



COLONIAL TOXICITY

SAMIA HENNI

DISCUSSANT: IAIN CHAMBERS

CHAIRER BY: DANIELA GIUDICI

04 May 2026
4 PM CEST

IN PERSON AT:
Sala Vigliano, DIST
Castello del Valentino
Viale Mattioli, 39, Torino

ONLINE SEMINAR REGISTRATION:
<https://polito-it.zoom.us/join/9876543210>

More info at:
www.beyondinhabitation.org

The lecture discusses Samia Henni's research on the French nuclear weapons testing programme (1960–1966) in the Algerian Sahara, which unfolded in three public outcomes: a series of translations of testimonies of nuclear victims, a traveling exhibition "Performing Colonial Toxicity," and a published book, titled *Colonial Toxicity: Rehearsing French Radioactive Architecture and Landscape in the Sahara*. Whereas the traveling exhibition is an immersive multimedia installation presenting an assemblage of materials that trace and name the spatial, atmospheric, and geological impacts of France's atomic bombs in the Sahara, the printed manuscript brings together nearly six hundred pages of materials documenting the intersections of spatial, social and environmental justice.

Samia Henni is a historian and an exhibition maker of the built, destroyed and imagined environments. She is the author of the multi-award winning books Architecture of Counterrevolution: The French Army in Northern Algeria (2017, 2022, EN; 2019, FR), and Colonial Toxicity: Rehearsing French Radioactive Architecture and Landscape in the Sahara (2024, 2025, EN; 2026, FR); and the editor of Deserts Are Not Empty (2022, 2025, EN; 2024, IT) and War Zones (2018).