VUB Chair in Surveillance Studies Seminar Series

Seminar VI: Surveillance as Spatial Injustice: The Case of Iran

June 17th at 3PM CET – 4.30PM CET on Microsoft Teams

Registration is free:

Introduction:

This seminar theorises surveillance practices in a framework of spatial (in)justice and examines new approaches in understanding resistance against surveillance based on theories of abnormal justice and politics of difference. The research project demonstrates how surveillance curtails, limits and disrupts participation in cyber, urban and physical spaces. The case study on using traffic control cameras’ footage against female drivers with improper veiling in Iran explores the interrelations between policing of women’s clothing in public spaces and their position in the virtual space of datasets, both as spatial injustices. The mutual constitution of physical and virtual is also studied through a thematic analysis of social media of two resistance campaigns against compulsory hijab depicting a continuum of spatial justice between the physical and cyber spaces. The seminar offers an epistemological rethinking of conceptualising regimes of surveillance in the countries of the global South as ‘exceptional’ cases and debates the homogenised theorisation of space and surveillance that leaves many realities outside its narrative.

About the speaker:

Azadeh Akbari is academic staff (post-doc) at the political geography working group at the University of Münster, Germany. Her research conceptualises surveillance as spatial injustice through case studies of surveillance of urban and cyber spaces in Iran. She has received her PhD in human geography from Heidelberg University and her MSc degree in gender research from London School of Economics and Political Sciences. Azadeh was a journalist, feminist activist, and a communication specialist employed by different UN agencies and international organisations in Iran. She is also the founder of ‘surveillance in the global South’ research network.

For all questions related to this seminar, please contact Bram Visser (bram.visser@vub.be).

We are looking forward to welcoming you all!

Warm regards,

Rosamunde & Bram