

Vénus Noire: A (Post)Colonial Gaze

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Abstract : Over his first three films, Abdellatif Kechiche established himself as one of the most celebrated directors at work in twenty-first-century French cinema. While his first three movies, *La Faute à Voltaire* (2000), *L'Esquive* (2003), and *La Graine et le mulet* (2007) tell stories about individuals of the Maghrebi origin or descent struggling to find their place in the contemporary French Republic, his 2010's movie, *Vénus noire* (2010) recounts the true story of the so-called 'Hottentot Venus', Saartjie Baartman, who became famous after her stage appearances in London and Paris in the early eighteenth century. The movie shows the complex ways in which gender and ethnicity can combine in exclusionary discourse. This paper studies gender and racial identities, the irony of science theorisation about ethnicities through the male colonial gaze on a heavily exhibited woman. This paper explores how *Vénus Noire* engages the spectator's own corporeal awareness of violence and calls attention to the othering practices of (post)colonial times.

Keywords : gender, (post)colonial gaze, other, violence

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