



In memoriam Martine Spensky (1946-2020)

Emeritus Professor of British civilisation and history of ideas (XIX-XX century) at Université Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand, and former Senior Lecturer in the Département d'études des pays anglophones (DEPA) at the Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint Denis.

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of our colleague and friend, Martine Spensky on 11 April 2020. She had contracted Motor Neuron Disease which left her paralyzed and which she fought courageously. When we last saw her in November 2020 at a lunch organized for the retirees of the department she participated with a smile. She was our friend and colleague for over 25 years and we extend our deepest sympathy and sincere condolences to her son and her partner. Our hearts go out to her grandchildren who loved her tenderly and are going to find it difficult to accept her absence.

She taught language courses and British cultural studies, and more particularly gender studies, covering the United Kingdom, Ireland and the British Empire. She specialised in the struggle of women for citizenship, their equal access to employment in British and colonial society and their demands for more wide-ranging liberties, such as the control over their own bodies. Another of her fields of study was the family and children born to single mothers. In 1998 she defended her thesis entitled « The evolution of social policies towards single mothers and their children in 19th and 20th century England ». She subsequently turned to new themes including slavery, slave labour, segregation, questions of identity and bio-politics. We attach a list of her publications.

In 1999 at the Université Blaise Pascal she founded a research group, the CRCEMC (Centre de recherche sur les civilisations étrangères dans le monde contemporain) which she first directed, and then co-directed when the Centre merged with the EHIC research group in Limoges (Espaces humains et interactions culturelles). She was the director of the “Politiques et Identités” Collection, Presses universitaires Blaise Pascal.

Martine was an excellent and inventive researcher; her numerous activities bear witness to her creativity. Her research on women and on gender relations are highly respected. Martine was an academic and a researcher, but also a militant and a feminist who was politically active in the defence of rights and values of solidarity.

Martine Spensky was an extremely popular colleague: friendly, cheerful, always with a smile and a keen sense of humour, ready to help others but independent at the same time.

Martine has left us but she remains very much alive in our hearts and minds.

Mireille Azzoug, former Head of the DEPA and colleagues.

(Translated from French by Kristin Couper)

Select Bibliography

Martine Spensky was the author of numerous essays and articles published in various journals (*Cahiers Charles V, Encrages and Cahiers d'Encrages, La Mazarine, Les Cahiers de l'Observatoire...*), and the editor or coeditor of the following publications :

Les Cahiers d'Encrages « Politiques sociales et rapports sociaux de sexe en Europe », DEPA, Paris 8, 1991.

Actes du colloque « Féminisme et mouvement ouvrier en Europe : France, Grande-Bretagne, Pologne », *Cahiers d'Encrages*, DEPA, Paris 8, 1992.

Universalisme, particularisme et citoyenneté dans les îles Britanniques, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2000.

Les femmes à la conquête du pouvoir politique : Royaume-Uni, Irlande, Inde, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2001.

Citoyenneté(s) perspectives internationales, Presses de l'Université Blaise Pascal, 2003.

Citoyenneté, empires, mondialisation, Presses de l'Université Blaise Pascal, 2006.

Citoyenneté et diversité, Presses de l'Université Blaise Pascal, 2009.

Le contrôle du corps de femmes dans les empires coloniaux, Paris, Karthala, 2015.