

Neither Gender Nor Development? Decolonial Options for Rethinking Gender and Development

Lecturer: Dr. Epifania Amoo-Adare

Lecture

Date: 8 December 2014

Time: 9:00 – 12:00

Location: Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung, Walter-Flex-Str. 3

1. Overall objectives:

- To disrupt normative narratives of gender and development through feminist decolonial critique.
- To formulate a basic understanding of the social construction of the colonial/modern gender system within a linear narrative of development.
- To comprehend the researcher's role in the re-articulation or the subversion of gender and development narratives.

2. Short description of overall objectives and goals of the lecture

In this class, we will utilize perspectives derived from feminist decolonial thinking (and being) to discuss questions such as:

- How does decolonial thinking (from critical, feminist and spatially-oriented perspectives) disrupt normative narratives of gender and development?
- What is the relationship between spatiality, knowledge and power?
- How does (hegemonic) knowledge production arise as a consequence of struggles over (academic) place?
- How is the researcher implicated in appropriating, re-constructing and/or dismantling existing concepts of knowledge and their related structures?
- How can decolonial options inform alternative social constructions of knowledge(s) on "developing" societies?

The premise of this class is that a critical pedagogy on gender and development, especially the forces involved in the production and reproduction of both, is a necessary condition for better comprehension of any society and the effects (physical, social, economic or cultural) of various development interventions in the quest for modernity. Consequently, we will deconstruct widespread understandings of gender as a given analytical construct for interrogating conditions in "developing" societies, which are in turn seen as set in specific places that are bound by fixed categories, e.g., the nation-state as a structure developed for and not a context that is developed by society. We will also look at how the "colonial matrix of power" (Quijano 2000, 2007) is highly implicated in these ideological processes. We contrast this with an

understanding of “gender” and “development” as performative; i.e., as manifestations, as well as vehicles, of the productive relations of power by various bodies acting on, from, within and across (the interplay of) both these constructs.

Compulsory Reading

Bouteldja, H. (2010). White Women and the Privilege of Solidarity. (Speech at the 4th International Congress of Islamic Feminism, Madrid)

Lugones, M. (2007). Heterosexualism and the Colonial/ Modern Gender System. *Hypatia* 22 (1): 186-209.

Momsen, J. (2004). *Gender and Development*. New York: Routledge (Intro, pp 1-20)

Further Reading

Grosfoguel, R. (2013). The structure of knowledge in westernized universities: Epistemic racism/sexism and the four genocides/epistemicides of the long 16th century. *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 11 (1), 73-90.

Grosfoguel, R. (2008). Transmodernity, border thinking, and global coloniality: Decolonizing political economy and postcolonial studies. Retrieved at <https://www.eurozine.com>

Lind, A. (2010). Querying globalization: Sexual subjectivities, development, and the governance of intimacy. In M. H. Marchand & A. S. Runyan (eds.) *Gender and Global Restructuring: Sightings, Sites, and Resistances* (pp. 48-65). New York: Routledge.

Lugones, M. (2010). Toward a Decolonial Feminism. *Hypatia* 25 (4), 742-759.

Lugones, M. C. & Spelman, E. V. (1983). Have I got theory for you? Feminist theory, cultural imperialism and the demand for ‘The Woman’s Voice’. *Women’s Studies International Forum* 6 (6), 573-581.

McClintock, A. (1995). *Imperial leather: Race, gender and sexuality in the colonial contest*. New York: Routledge.

Mohanty, C. T. (1988). "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," *Feminist Review* 30: 61-88.

Momsen, J. (2004). *Gender and Development*. New York: Routledge

Oyewumi, O. (1997). *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*. Minneapolis, MA: University of Minnesota.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. (2013). *Coloniality of Power in Postcolonial Africa: Myths of Decolonization*. CODESRIA. Retrieved at: <http://www.codesria.org/spip.php?article1791>

Quijano, A. (2007). Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality. *Cultural Studies* 21 (2), 168-178.

Quijano, A. (2000). Coloniality of Power, Eurocentricism and Latin America. *Neplanta: Views from South* 1 (3), 533-580.

Staudt, K. (2002). Dismantling the Master's House with the Master's Tools?: Gender Work in and with Powerful Bureaucracies. In K. Saunders (ed.) *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Postcolonialism & Representation* (pp.57-68). London: Zed Books

Syed, J. & Ali, F. (2011). The white woman's burden: from colonial *civilisation* to Third World development. *Third World Quarterly* 32 (2), 349-365.

Tlostanova, M. (2010). *Gender Epistemologies and Eurasian Borderlands*. Comparative Feminist Studies Series. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Online Resources

GDRC Women and Development Resources on the Internet: <http://www.gdrc.org/gender/link-resources.html>

Gender Inequality Index: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/gii/>

UN Women: <http://www.unwomen.org/>

Women Watch: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/>

World Bank (Gender & Development): <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/gender>