

HI079 - Gender, Sexuality, and Decolonization in the Global South

Autumn Semester, 2020-2021

Thursdays, 10:15 – 12:00

Course Description

This course will examine the intersections of gender, sexuality and nationalism within the context of decolonization movements in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean from the late 19th century to the postcolonial period, with a particular focus on the 1920s to 1970s. Case studies will range from analysis of Gandhi's approach to women's mobilization in India to the involvement of women in armed rebellions in Africa to reproductive politics in the Caribbean. Students will consider how nationalist movements worked to either include or exclude certain genders and sexualities from their discourses and projects, how a variety of actors resisted these prescriptions and tried to pursue different agendas, and how these struggles shaped society, politics, and state-building in postcolonial societies.

> PROFESSOR

Nicole Bourbonnais

Nicole.bourbonnais@graduateinstitute.ch

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10:00-12:00, by appointment (see relevant week on Moodle to choose a time slot)

In-person in P2-535 or via Zoom

TA

David Motzafi-Haller

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Office hours : Tuesdays, 12:00-14:00

Syllabus

This course is organized thematically, with case studies for each week drawn from across a variety of decolonizing societies in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. After addressing some of the main theoretical perspectives on nationalism, gender, and sexuality, we will focus in on the following themes: the construction of “femininity,” “masculinity” and “tradition” in colonial and anti-colonial discourses; male nationalist leaders' views on women's emancipation; women's political activism and thought; feminism, nationalism, and internationalism; the gendered dynamics of armed liberation movements; gender, violence and dislocation; body politics; reproduction; sex and the state; and possibilities for sexual decolonization/feminist nationalism.

A course schedule with a weekly reading list is provided below, along with more details on course requirements and policies. All readings will be made available through the course Moodle page.

Movies are also available through the course Vimeo account:

<https://vimeopro.com/graduateinstitutelibrary/gender-sexuality-and-decolonisation>

Password: HI079

COURSE SCHEDULE

I. Introduction

Week 1, Sept 17: Introduction

Optional Background Readings:

- Mark Philip Bradley, "Decolonization, the Global South, and the Cold War, 1919-1962" in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War Volume 1, Origins, 1945-1962*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012): 464-485.
- Kathleen Canning, "Gender History: Meanings, Methods, & Metanarratives," in *Gender History in Practice: Historical Perspectives on Bodies, Class & Citizenship*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006): 3-62.
- Students are also encouraged to listen to Kwame Anthony Appiah's Reith Lecture on the history of nationalism, entitled "Country"
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07zz5mf> (This is part of a four part lecture series on "Mistaken Identities" which also covers religion, race, and culture)

Week 2, Sept 24: Core Concepts: Gender, Sexuality and Nation

Required Readings:

- Mrinalini Sinha, "Gender and Nation," in *Women's History in Global Perspective*, ed. Bonnie G. Smith (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004): 229-274.
- Kumari Jayawardena, "Introduction," in *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*, (London: Zed Books, 1986): 1-24.
- Amina Mama, "Sheroes and villains: Conceptualizing colonial and contemporary violence against women in Africa," in *Feminist genealogies, colonial violences, democratic futures*, ed. M.J. Alexander and C.T. Mohanty (New York: Routledge, 1997): 46-62.
- Nicole Bourbonnais, "Sexual Hierarchies and Erotic Autonomy: Colonizing and Decolonizing Sex in the Caribbean," in Dagmar Herzog and Chelsea Schields, eds. *Routledge Companion to Sexuality and Colonialism*, forthcoming.

Optional:

- Attend Pamela Ohene-Nyako's online presentation for the Gender Seminar Series: "Black-European Women's Internationalism Against Racism and Sexism, 1968-2001" 24 September, 12:30-13:45

<https://graduateinstitute.ch/communications/events/black-european-womens-internationalism-against-racism-and-sexism-1968-2001>)

II. Women and Gender in Nationalist Struggles

Week 3, Oct 1: Gender and Tradition in Colonial and Nationalist Discourses

Required Readings:

- Ann McClintock, “No Longer in a Future Heaven?: Women and Nationalism in South Africa,” *Transition* 51 (1991): 104-123.
- Uma Chakravarti, “Whatever happened to the Vedic Dasi? Orientalism, nationalism and a script for the past,” in *Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History*, eds. Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid (Rutgers University Press, 1990): 35–114.
- Honor Ford-Smith, “Unruly virtues of the spectacular: Performing Engendered Nationalisms in the UNIA in Jamaica,” *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 6(1) (2004): 18-44.

Week 4, Oct 8: Nationalist Leaders and Women’s Emancipation

Required Readings:

- Madhu Kishwar, “Gandhi on Women,” *Race & Class* XXVIII, 1 (1986): 43-61.
- Karen Bouwer, “Introduction: the Gender of Decolonization,” and “Chapter 1: Lumumba on Women: From Domesticity to Political Mobilization,” in *Gender and Decolonization in the Congo: The Legacy of Patrice Lumumba* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010): 1-37.

Optional:

- Watch the movie *Gandhi* (Colombia Pictures, 1982) and/or *Lumumba* (Zeitgeist Films, 2000).

Week 5, Oct 15: Women’s Political Activism

Required Readings:

- Susan Geiger, “Tanganyikan Nationalism as 'Women's Work': Life Histories, Collective Biography and Changing Historiography,” *The Journal of African History* 37(3) (1996): 465-478.
- Judith A. Byfield, "From Ladies to Women: Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti and Women’s Political Activism in post-WW II Nigeria" in *Toward an Intellectual History of Black Women*, eds. Mia Bay, Farah Griffin, Martha Jones and Barbara Savage (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015): 197-213.
- Annette K. Joseph-Gabriel, “Introduction,” and “Chapter 1: Suzanne Césaire: Liberation Beyond the Great Camouflage,” *Reimagining Liberation: How Black Women Transformed Citizenship in the French Empire* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2020): 13-55.

Optional:

- Listen to Annette K. Joseph-Gabriel’s interview about *Reimagining Liberation* for the New Books Network at: <https://newbooksnetwork.com/annette-joseph-gabriel->

[reimagining-liberation-how-black-women-transformed-citizenship-in-the-french-empire-illinois-up-2020/](#)

Week 6, Oct 22: Feminism, Nationalism and Internationalism

Required Readings:

- Mrinalini Sinha, "Suffragism and internationalism: The enfranchisement of British and Indian women under an imperial state," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 36(4) (1999): 461-484.
- Imaobong D Umoren, "Anti-fascism and the Development of Global Race Women, 1928-1945," *Callaloo* 39(1) (2016): 151-165.
- Katharine McGregor, "Opposing Colonialism: the Women's International Democratic Federation and Decolonisation struggles in Vietnam and Algeria 1945–1965," *Women's History Review* 25(6) (2016): 925-944.

Optional:

- Listen to Keisha Blain's interview for the New Books Network on her book: [Set the World on Fire: Black Nationalist Women and the Global Struggle for Freedom](#) (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018): <https://newbooksnetwork.com/keisha-n-blain-set-the-world-on-fire-black-nationalist-women-and-the-global-struggle-for-freedom-u-penn-press-2018/>

Week 7, Oct 29: Gender and Armed Struggle

Required Readings:

- Luise White, "Separating the Men from the Boys: Constructions of Gender, Sexuality, and Terrorism in Central Kenya, 1939-1959" *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 23(1) (1990): 1-25
- Aaronette M. White, "All the Men are Fighting for Freedom, All the Women are Mourning their Men, but Some of us Carried Guns: A Raced-Gendered Analysis of Fanon's Psychological Perspectives on War," *Signs*, 32(4) (2007): 857-884.
- Sita Ranchod-Nilsson, "(Gender) Struggles for the Nation: Power, Agency and Representation in Zimbabwe," in *Women, States and Nationalism*, eds. Sita Ranchod-Nilsson and Mary Ann Tetreault (New York: Routledge, 2000): 168-185.

Optional:

- Watch the films *The Battle of Algiers* (Rialto Productions, 1966) and *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* (Roco Films International, 2008).

Week 8, Nov 5: Gender, Violence and Dislocation

Required Readings:

- Urvashi Butalia, "Community, State and Gender: On Women's Agency during Partition," *Economic and Political Weekly* 28(17) (1993): 12-24.
- Pippa Virdee, "Remembering partition: women, oral histories and the Partition of 1947," *Oral History* 41(2) (2013): 49-62.
- Tanya Lyons, "Chapter Ten: The Telling of History in Zimbabwe," in *Guns and Guerilla Girls: Women in the Zimbabwean Liberation Struggle* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2004): 251-279.

Optional:

- Watch the films *Flame* (California Newsreel, 1996) (discussed in Lyons' chapter) and *Earth* (Eros Entertainment, 1998) (on partition in India).

Week 9, Nov 12: No class, paper proposals due.

III. Bodies and Sex

Week 10, Nov 19: Body Politics

Required Readings:

- Thomas, Lynn M., "Introduction," and "Chapter 3: Mau Mau and the Girls Who "Circumcised Themselves": The Gender and Generational Politics of the 1956 Ban on Clitoridectomy in Meru, Kenya," in: *Politics of the Womb: Women, Reproduction, and the State in Kenya* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003): 1-20, 79-102.

Week 11, Nov 26: Reproductive Control

Required Readings:

- Amy Kaler, "A Threat to the Nation and a Threat to the Men: The Banning of Depo-Provera in Zimbabwe, 1981," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24(2) (1998): 347-376.
- Laura Briggs, "Discourses of "Forced Sterilization" in Puerto Rico: The Problem with the Speaking Subaltern," *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 10(2) (1998): 30-66.

Week 12, Dec 3: Sex and the State

Required Readings:

- Marc Epprecht, "The 'Unsayings' of Indigenous Homosexualities in Zimbabwe: Mapping a Blindspot in African Masculinity," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24(4) (1998): 631-651.
- M. Jacqui Alexander, "Not Just (Any) Body Can Be A Citizen: The Politics of Law, Sexuality and Postcoloniality in Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas." *Feminist Review* 48 (1994): 5-23.

Week 13, Dec 10: Towards Sexual Decolonization and a Feminist Nationalism?

Required Readings:

- Andil Gosine, "CAISO, CAISO: Negotiating sex rights and nationalism in Trinidad and Tobago," *Sexualities* 18(7) (2015): 859-884.
- Ashley Currier, "The Aftermath of Decolonization: Gender and Sexual Dissidence in Post-Independence Namibia," *Signs*, 37.2, (January 2012): 441-467.

Week 14, Dec 17: Wrap-up and Paper Discussion

- No readings: we will reflect on the course as a whole and students will have the opportunity to discuss their final projects.

Final Papers due Dec 21 at 10:00am.

REQUIREMENTS

Participation: 25%

Students are expected to complete the required readings listed for each week and to participate actively in weekly class discussions. Participation includes regular attendance: students should inform the TA when unable to attend class. It also consists of active listening: phones should be put away at all times, and computers used only for note-taking.

While reading, students should pay attention to both the content of the reading and the sources and methodologies employed by the author. See the “Short Paper Assignment” guidance below for some questions you might think of during your reading.

Reading Commentary: 30%

Students will sign up for **one week** from Weeks 3-13 in which they will provide a more detailed commentary on the course readings (max 2 students per week). This assignment consists of two parts:

(1) Short Paper: 1200-1500 words (excluding bibliography, 12 pt Times New Roman font, double-spaced, Word document), due the Tuesday before class at 10:00, submitted online through Moodle.

For the paper, students will write a comparative analysis of the required readings for the week, exploring both their *content* and their underlying *methodologies*. Some *content* questions to consider while reading: What are some of the author’s key/most interesting points? What does the text tell us about the interactions between gender, sexuality, and nationalism? How does the author’s arguments, conclusions, and approaches compare/contrast to other readings assigned for that week and/or previous weeks? Some methodological questions to consider include: What underlying questions is the author trying to answer and how do they narrow their subject matter down? What kind of history/analysis is this (for example cultural, social, political, biographical, collective)? Who are the key actors (ex. political leaders, organizational members, specific communities)? What primary historical sources does the author use to answer their questions (ex. state archival sources, private collections, public speeches, private letters, monuments, myths/stories, oral histories)? What are the strengths and limitations of these sources? What is left unanswered, and how might this affect the story they have told?

Note that you will not have the space to cover every aspect of the readings in your paper, nor should it simply be a summary of each reading one after another. Instead, you may want to identify 2-3 central points to trace through the readings, exploring how different readers converge/diverge in their arguments and methodological approaches.

(2) Presentation (maximum 10 minutes per student)

After the introductory class lecture by the professor, 1-2 students will briefly introduce the week's readings, highlight a few key points from their papers, and pose questions for discussion. (If two students are presenting during the same week, they will have to decide how they want to divide up the themes/readings for the purposes of the presentation, but each must cover all readings when writing the paper). These presentations will be done in-class for students in attendance, and through Webex for those attending remotely.

Final Paper: 45%

Students will submit a final paper of 3500-4000 words exploring a topic of their choosing relating to the course themes through a critical analysis of a primary source. This could include, for example, the speeches of a nationalist leader, a memoir of a guerrilla fighter, transcripts from a UN debate or conference, a series of newspapers articles, a film, or some other source that is relevant in some way to the theme of gender, sexuality, and nationalism. Your paper should begin by reviewing the relevant theories and historical context, and then explore how the themes and arguments we've encountered play out in terms of your selected topic/source. Do you find evidence to support the claims scholars have made regarding the gender/sexual politics of nationalism, or does your analysis challenge some of their core assumptions? In what ways? What are the implications and limits of your analysis? What new questions might it raise? For guidance on analysis of primary sources, please consult the "Course Resources" section of the Moodle page.

The assignment includes:

(1) Proposal – due November 12 at 10:00am, submitted online through Moodle – The proposal should provide a 1-page intro to the topic/source you are going to analyze and a 1-2 page bibliography of secondary sources.

(2) Final Paper – due December 21 at 10:00am - 3500-4000 words excluding footnotes and bibliography (12 pt Times New Roman font, double-spaced, Word document), submitted online through Moodle

Reference style: Chicago footnotes (see guide on Moodle).

Resources for final paper: In addition to resources that might be available online or in print, students are encouraged to consult the **database "Women and Social Movements, International."** The collection includes over 4000 historical documents from across the globe, and can be searched in multiple ways (source type, country, theme...etc). The database is fully accessible when connected to the Graduate Institute Intranet: <http://wasi.alexanderstreet.com/> .

Policies

All written work must be submitted to the course Moodle page as a **Word document, double-spaced, 12 pt Times New Roman font, with standard 2.5cm (1") margins.**

Students may choose to submit their work in either English or French. Late submissions of assignments will be penalized at a rate of -0.25 per day. Students seeking an extension due to illness or family emergency must contact the professor as soon as possible and provide documentation indicating the impacted time period.

Papers should use **footnotes in the Chicago citation style**. Please see Purdue OWL's [Chicago Manual of Style](#) and the sample paper provided on Moodle for guidelines on how to use this format and sample citations.

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Cheating includes any action in disregard of the rules and standards governing evaluation or re-using, all or part, of coursework for which credits or a degree have already been obtained and presenting it as an original piece of work. Plagiarism includes appropriating the work of a third party and presenting it as one's own work, copying text, data, figures, images, etc. from external sources without citing the source or presenting ideas of other authors as original work. In the event that cheating or plagiarism are found to have occurred, a "0" grade will be attributed. Depending on the severity of the offence, the student may be excluded from the Institute. Please see the Institute's ["Internal Guidelines"](#) for further information.