

## Local Answers to Global Transitions

### Challenges to Women's and Gender Studies in Plurilocal Perspectives.

## Celebrating 20 Years of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Women's and Gender Studies

Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg, May 2022, 19 – 21

Campus Haarentor, BIS-Saal (Building B/ University Library)



### Abstracts and Bionotes

ANTELAK AL-MUTAWAKEK

#### **Yemeni Women's situation during War March 2015**

More than seven years of armed conflict in Yemen has made Yemen one of the world's largest humanitarian crises and at the brink of famine, displaced millions of people from their homes destroyed the economy, and fostered the spread of diseases, including COVID-19 and natural disasters, and climate change. The collapse of the economy, basic services, and public institutions, coupled with persistent import restrictions, are further eroding the resilience of people in Yemen, who are already enduring one of the world's largest humanitarian crises and its fourth-largest displacement crisis. What is the situation of women in such a catastrophe and in rooted gender discrimination against women? During those seven years, Yemeni women were the most victims of a man-made humanitarian crisis and war; Women are among the most vulnerable in the Yemen crisis. Female-headed households are generally more at risk of food insecurity and face more challenges in accessing humanitarian assistance, especially outside their communities. Displacement and the breakdown of protection mechanisms, driven by more than seven years of conflict, have drastically increased the vulnerability of women. At the same time, Yemeni women are also agents of empowerment and change. They have been the "peace bees" across Yemen. Yemeni women have been excluded from the decision-making positions in the process of peace but they have been the most important agents that helped society and their families on the ground protecting social cohesion. Despite the shrinking public space and more authoritative restrictions, Yemeni women have been the leading voice of civilians' needs and human rights violations. Yemeni women have been involved in new business entrepreneurship and so the approach of varied gender roles that were not accepted by the society before the war.

*Dr. Antelak Al-Mutawakek is a co-founder and head of Youth Leadership Development Foundation (YLDF) which was founded in 1998 and which has become one of the prominent and accountable civil society organizations in Yemen working for the empowerment through education & training of youth and women in all fields strongly believing in the vision of YLDF "a Yemen in which skilled, well qualified and active young women and men play leadership roles in all domains of society and enable Yemenis to contribute to a better world." Dr. Antelak brings more than 20 years of experience in working in Education, Youth, and Gender in private, public, and governmental sectors. She has a great interest in civil society and played several roles in the growth of Yemeni civil society aiming to make positive change in society. She is a co-founder of several civil society coalitions and*

Networks. Dr. Antelak is an academic person who has been working as an assistant teacher at Sana'a University. She has been very much interested in promoting women's situation particularly in Yemen. She holds a Ph.D. from Tilburg University, Holland in Gender and Literature. She is a co-founder of the Master's program in International Development and Gender (MIDG) at the GDRSC- Sana'a University and the director of the Higher Study Dept. from 2005-2012. Dr. Antelak was an active member of the Community Coalition for Effective Participation of Women in the National Dialogue and the Transitional Period and a member of the National Dialogue. In the NDC Dr. Antelak was one of the civic components that played a leading & effective role in the draw of new Democratic Yemen and the negotiation of the current power conflicts. In March 2014, she was selected as a member of the constitution drafting committee working for 9 months in the Yemeni new constitution. From July 2019-May 2020, she has worked as a gender and women's human rights consultant at UNOHCHR. Recently due to the war in Yemen, she is active in peacebuilding being a member of Development Champions, the Tawfiq (PACT sponsored by UN-Women), and other women and peacebuilding networks.

BALGHIS BADRI & MAI EZELDEEN

### **Sudanese Women Activism: Challenges, Impact and Prospects**

This paper has three sections, where the first presents women in different categories of activists. The emphasis is on their demands and their discourses or challenges they faced before the 2018 revolution. The second section elaborates on the diversity of women's groups since January 2019 to date. The demands, agenda, intersectionality and diversity of these groups and challenges they face to date are highlighted. The third section discusses how the diversity of the agenda reflects women's needs and aspirations in different parts of Sudan as well as a divide between elitist demands and other grass-root groups' perspectives. A disguised conflict and divide between these groups became evident. The way forward to amalgamate these diversities and unify women's several demands and how to be met will be discussed. Sudanese women activism started by forming a Sudanese women union in 1952 before Sudanese independence in 1956. The main demands were equal pay for equal work and later the right for voting and equal political participation. These demands were met in 1964 they also contributed to literacy education. In the 80s and during this century, several women's groups and associations were formed addressing many aspects of women's needs at strategic levels such as in legal reforms and mainstreaming gender in policies and programmes. Further, few addressed eradications of female genital mutilation. Moreover, issues of violence against women and patriarchy are openly discussed. Despite that activism, the results of demands were minimal as the regime since 1989 to 2019 was of an Islamist ideology, reluctant to accept such feminist demands and emphasized that women needs, and rights could be addressed through an Islamic ideology. The divide between women groups thus became prominent. The narrow space given to women freedom and movements as well as economic pressure and conflicts in several parts of the country lead both elitist women groups and those in conflict and rural zones to have solidarity to protest against the regime and to be effective parts of the revolution of December 2018 to date demanding for freedom, peace and justice. The justice demand is both a socioeconomic one as well as a legal transitional justice for all crimes undertaken by the previous regime. The youth women groups of ages from 18-35 played

the substantial role in the revolution and formed a divide from the older generation activists. Currently age, class, ethnicity, and placement in which regions of the country played important roles to diversify voices, techniques used to call for demands and address priority needs. Further, political affiliation is also prominent in creating diversity of agenda and priorities. The last section will highlight this diversity of voices of women's movements/categories. The scene is complicated both at women's specific level as well as at national levels demanding a true civil lead democratic regime through which women's diverse agenda can be met and the country will adhere to global human rights and democratic values and principles.

**Prof. Dr. Balghis Badri** is professor of sociology and gender studies. Currently, the director of the Regional Institute for Gender, Diversity, Peace and Rights at Ahfad University for Women, Sudan. Former head of the research section at the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research, Tunisia. Former head of department of the women section of the department of sociology and social work at the King Saud University at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Former associate professor at the department of Social Anthropology and Sociology, University of Khartoum, Sudan. Former president of the Babiker Badrie Scientific Association for Women Studies.

**Dr. Mai Izelddeen Osman** is an Associate Professor in gender and development 2005 to date. Deputy Director of the regional institute of gender diversity peace and rights. (2018 - Present) and coordinator of the Gender, Peace and Development master program. She graduated from Ahfad University for Women, school of psychology, 1996. She holds a PhD in Social Psychology, Juba University (2005) and a MSc in Gender and Development Studies AUW, RIDPR-(1999). Her main areas of specialization and research include women and gender studies, Feminism theories and concepts, Gender; Culture; and social transformation, Gender and development, Gender analysis and gender Mainstreaming, Gender planning and project design.

PAULA BANERJEE

### **To Celebrate or Not to Celebrate? A History of WSRC<sup>1</sup> in India**

We've braved the belly of the beast,  
We've learned that quiet isn't always peace,  
and the norms and notions  
of what just is  
isn't always just-ice.  
And yet the dawn is ours<sup>2</sup>

This is an essay on the evolution of Women's Studies in the University of Calcutta. In this paper I explore the stated purpose of beginning women's studies in India and then go on to study why the University of Calcutta was considered as one of the two suitable universities

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<sup>1</sup> This paper would not have been possible without the support of the present Director of WSRC, my colleague and friend Professor Lipi Ghosh. I am also grateful to all members of WSRC past and present for supporting my endeavours in all possible means.

<sup>2</sup> Amanda Gorman, recited this poetry that she composed during President Joe Biden's Inauguration. Amanda Gorman, The Hill we Climb: An Inaugural Poem (Chatto and Windus, London, 2021)

in West Bengal to begin a women's studies centre. I go on to explore the trajectories that this centre took in furthering feminist agendas and try to approximate its successes and failures. I begin my work by exploring how women's studies started in India as a research project in 1974 and then it slowly moved on to become a "discipline". Research on women in a university system began almost a year before the epoch making *Towards Equality Report* that was drafted by Phulrenu Guha, Leela Dube, Lotika Sarkar, Veena Majundar and a few others. It has been argued that: "This report not only offered a reality-check on the condition of women in India, it also unravelled the disenchantment of women with the existing models of development and the process of modernisation in the Nehruvian era."<sup>3</sup> The *Towards Equality Report* was drafted by the *Committee on the Status of Women in India* (1971). This report can be considered as the first chapter in post-colonial feminisms in India.

India was one of the front runners in beginning women's studies within the university system not just in Asia. Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey (SNDT) Women's University, the first women's university in South Asia was also the first university to have a program on women's studies in 1974. In the 1980s the University Grants Commission, 1986 to be precise, started funding and developing women's studies centres in different universities in India to address the low status of women in society. University of Calcutta was among the first group of universities who were beneficiaries of the decision of the Government of India to begin research centres on women's studies. For most part of its known history these centres were run by the funding from University Grants Commission (UGC). Then in 2019 the funding of the central government came to an end abruptly. In between there were huge debates whether women's studies centres could be converted into women and family studies centres and when that plan had to be aborted due to feminist protests, it abruptly stopped getting the right wing Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP's) funding. Why was the GOI, now led by the right wing BJP, so afraid of feminist research? My paper will explore this question. In this paper I will address the history of Women's Studies Research Centre of Calcutta University and try to understand whether it fulfilled the aspirations of women in higher education in West Bengal and whether it had any effect on the feminist movement. I will also address the fate of WSRC in current times. One of the main themes that I address is whether we should celebrate the trajectory taken by WSRC and consider it liberating? Or was this a massive exercise in futility on a grand scale? Did it in any way further the liberational goal of the Indian feminist movement? Since women's studies as a discipline is so dependent on government funding did it contribute to any critical thinking? Among the other critical questions that I address are can women's studies be considered as a discipline? Ultimately what are its successes and failures in furthering research that empowers women and other marginalized groups from a Freirian perspective? We will also address the fate of these centres in current times especially after the pandemic. Did the pandemic lead to reallocation of budgets or did it change society and women's lives in much more fundamental ways?

The paper is based on extensive archival reports from WSRC's own archives including letters from UGC, annual reports, all grants and other endowments. Also I interviewed multiple directors and functionaries of WSRC past and present. Although at the micro-level this research is on the successes and failures of WSRC but on a macro level it is a

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<sup>3</sup> Sanchayita Paul Chakraborty, "Women and Development: Revisiting the *Towards Equality Report*," Amal Mandal and Sidhartha Sankar Laha eds., *Dynamics of Development and Discontent* (Bookwell Publisher, New Delhi, 2015) p. 207.

commentary on how women's studies developed in India and how did it affect, if at all, the development of the feminist movement in India.

The evolution of Women's Studies in the University of Calcutta. In this paper we will explore how women's studies started in India as a discipline in 1974. India was one of the front runners in beginning women's studies within the university system. SNDT was one of the first universities in South Asia to have a program on women's studies. In the 1980s the University Grants Commission started funding and developing women's studies centres in different universities in India to address the low status of women in society. University of Calcutta was among the first group of universities who were beneficiaries of the decision of the Government of India to begin research centres on women's studies. For the most part of its known history these centres were run by the funding from UGC. Then in 2019 the funding of the central government came to an end abruptly. In this paper I will address the question as to why the GOI began women's studies so early and yet ended it abruptly. Also, we will follow the history of Women's Studies Research Centre of Calcutta University and try to understand whether it fulfilled the aspirations of women in higher education and had any effect on women's lives. We will also address the fate of these centres in current times especially after the pandemic. Did the pandemic lead to reallocation of budgets or did it change society and women's lives in much more fundamental ways? One of the main themes that we address is that whether we should celebrate the trajectory taken by WSRC and consider it liberating or was this a massive exercise in futility on a grand scale.

*Prof. Dr. Paula Banerjee*, best known for her work on women in borderlands and women and forced migration, was the former Vice Chancellor of Sanskrit University and the former President of International Association for Studies in Forced Migration. She is a Professor and the Head of the Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Calcutta, one of the largest and oldest universities in South Asia.

Winner of many awards, accolades, and fellowships, in 2013 she was awarded the Fulbright SIR and in 2009 she won the SITRA-CIMO award. Her recent publications include *Gender, Identity and Migration* (2022), *Indian Migrant Workers and the Pandemic* (2021), *Statelessness in South Asia* (2016), *Unstable Populations, Anxious States* (edited 2013) and *Borders, Histories, Existences: Gender and Beyond* (2010). She is the editor of *Refugee Watch* and the editorial board member of a number of international journals such as *Oxford Journal of Refugees*.

PURNA BANNERJEE

**Searching for Maud: Tracing her Feminism, Activism and Cosmopolitanism in Carl von Ossietzky's Public (After)Life**

**Auf der Suche nach Maud: Spuren ihres Feminismus, Aktivismus und Kosmopolitanismus in Carl von Ossietzky's öffentlichem (Nach-) Leben**

Maud Hester von Ossietzky (née Lichfield-Woods), born in Hyderabad (former British India), is an enigmatic figure. The evaluation of her autobiography oscillates between 'admittedly unreliable' and 'charming and straightforward', she is depicted as an depressed alcoholic whose nagging demands have led to Carl's arrest or as the supportive wife and socialite who got behind his causes. But she might also be considered as an example for 'women are everywhere in the colonial archive' with a complex history on her own.

**Prof. Dr. Purna Banerjee** is Professor of English at Presidency University in Kolkata, India. She is a literary scholar, focusing on postcolonial Anglophone literature and literature by women. | Purna Banerjee ist Professorin für Englisch and der Presi-dency University in Kolkata, Indien. Sie ist Literaturwissenschaftlerin mit einem Fokus auf postkoloniale anglophone Literatur und Literatur von Frauen.

CORNELIA BARTSCH

### **Between “New” and “popular”:** How to Decolonise Music(ology)?

The construction of European/ “Western” Music historiography was based on notions of linear progress and closely linked with the idea of individual expression or expressivity which became crucial for the middle European music aesthetics of the “long nineteenth century” – since European Enlightenment. From the beginning of these aesthetics, the concept of the “expressive subject” was constructed by what it excluded: “wild people” (“Wilde Völker”) as Johann Gottfried Herder and others named them, women, people of “natural spirit” (Leute von gutem Naturverstande), children and melancholics. At the end of the long nineteenth century – before World War I – the idea of linear progress and expressivity seemed to come to an end. At the same time new technologies like phonography which allowed the colonizers to import “sound-documents” and made the music of the European others available. Moreover, greater mobility and the touring of US-American Jazz bands or dance companies in Europe – the “jazz-chock” – like several European musicians or theorists like Theodor W. Adorno named it – created a notion of another modernity which was represented by these so called “primitive others” and which seemed to point a way out of the dilemma of (aesthetic) progress being stuck. The premise of the idea that the music of the “primitive others” could reanimate European progress, however, was that the “subjects” of the new modern themselves remained excluded from progress and – more generally – from historical time itself.

Evidence that we are still in the midst of this colonial perspective on music and music history is the “denial of coevalnes” (Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 1983) for instance for Arnold Schönberg and Billy Holliday: The first one being treated a subject of “historical musicology” the other of “popular music studies”. Or the study plan of the music department of the university of Oldenburg declaring subjects like Georg Friedrich Handels operas or the history of the string quartet to be “cultural history of music”, but the history of Tango to belong to “Musiken der Welt” (musics of the world). Another evidence of the structurally colonialist and racist perspective on music is the curating practice of so called “new music festivals” like the international courses of new Music in Darmstadt to name but one. It is only during the last few years that these festivals – who often propagandize their “progressive” and above all “emancipative” character, realize that there are neither women nor people of color ore composers of the global south among the ones who are curated. The paper will examine the history but above all the presence of the colonial structure of these practices and ask for ways of how to decolonize music(ology).

**Prof. Dr. Cornelia Bartsch** studied music, musicology, German language studies, and political science in Berlin (University of the Arts Berlin and Free University of Berlin). She attained a PhD in musicology (*Fanny Hensel, Music as correspondence*) and held posts as musicologist at Music universities in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. From 2011 to 16 she led a

research project “Self-affirmation and othering in European history” co-hosted by the Musicological Institute and the Centre of Gender Studies of the University of Basel. From 2017 to 2020, she was part of the institute of music at the CvO University as “substitute professor” of musicology. Since 2020 she is guest professor for diversity studies at the TU Dortmund. Her research focusses music, gender, and diversity, postcolonial perspectives on music and musicology, production of knowledge on music, music and gesture, music theatre, music aesthetic and historiography of music from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present.

CORINNA BATH & SMILLO EBELING

### **Science Communication for a Response-able Culture of Objectivity**

The Corona crisis has brought scientific-medical knowledge prominently into public discourse. Media reports on Sars-CoV 2 demonstrated „science in the making“ (Latour 1988) on a daily basis. Figures, data and statistics had special relevance for public discourse as well as for political decision making in Germany, suggesting facticity. At the same time, epidemiologists and virologists (probably unintentionally) unsettled a narrow understanding of objectivity, e.g. by communicating knowledge deficits, hypotheses and assumptions. Instead of ‘scientifically proven knowledge’ they publicly discussed their – partly contradictory – positions and adapted scientific judgement to the newest findings. Initially, they explicitly communicated that there is hardly any ‘trusted’ knowledge on Sars-CoV 2 and its impact that cannot be revised.

Starting from the case of Sars-CoV 2, our research project investigates shifts in science communication in times of uncertain and contradicting knowledges from feminist science and technology studies (FSTS) approaches: Are there any signs that suggest change towards a new culture of objectivity indicating ‘situated knowledges’ (Haraway) or ‘response-ability’ (Haraway, Barad)? Drawing upon empirical findings of a discourse analysis of relevant German media contributions, the project aims to develop science communication for a new, “response-able” culture of objectivity as one of its key results. The proposed concept of a response-able culture of objectivity will have impacts on science, the general public, and society as a whole, as it will be fortified against anti-scientific and anti-democratic positions and engage with new, innovative ways of science communication.

Our contribution will give insights into the research project and its empirical results on the knowledge communicated in German media during the pandemic from a gender studies perspective. By focusing on the understanding of objectivity in media discourses, we will mainly analyze epistemological dimensions. Our empirical material indicates that the scientists themselves do not only communicate clear-cut, definite, fact-based knowledge, but also ambiguous knowledge, practical know-how, assumptions and gut feelings. Such ambiguities, uncertainties and contradictions are often conceived as a failure of objective knowledge production. By drawing on feminist theory, particularly Haraway’s concept of situated knowledges, we propose to mobilize these ambiguities, uncertainties and contradictions in knowledge and knowledge production for a response-able culture of objectivity. We assume that a reflection of objectivity, neutrality, facts and the enrollment of the partiality and situatedness of knowledge will contribute to counter anti-scientific, conspiracy theory or anti-democratic positions better than an epistemology that seemingly only relies on facts.

**Dr. Smillo Ebeling** is trained in biology with a doctorate in history of biology. Her research and teaching interests are in feminist science and technology studies, museum and exhibition studies, science education, animal studies, and science communication. She has experience in the digitalisation of teaching and public communication of scientific findings, including communication via cultural events, and she produced open educational resources for the teaching of feminist science and technology studies in STEM education. Currently, she serves as research assistant in the project “Towards a Response-able Culture of Objectivity: Corona Discourses as Situated Knowledges?” at the Technical University of Braunschweig.

**Dr. -Ing. Corinna Bath** chaired the group „Gender, Technology and Mobility “at the institute for flight guidance, TUBraunschweig and taught in the mechanical engineering department at the Ostfalia University for Applied Sciences (2012-2022). 2017-2021 she chaired the interdisciplinary Ph.D. program ‘Gendered configurations of humans and machines. Interdisciplinary analyses of technology’, funded by the Ministry for Science and Culture in Lower Saxony. 18 doctoral researchers with backgrounds in the social sciences and humanities as well as in the engineering sciences explored the question of how the construction of gender is entangled with the construction of machines. Corinna was guest professor at the TU Graz 2016 (“gender & technology”) and the TU Berlin 2012 (“gender studies in engineering”). She studied mathematics (mathematical logic), computer science and political science at the FU Berlin and the CAU Kiel. Since her doctoral thesis on de-gendering computational artefacts at the computer science department of the University of Bremen, 2009, she has investigated technology design methods and practices that might avoid processes of problematic gendering of technologies, with a particular focus on IT, algorithms, and AI.

KERSTIN BRANDES

### **Queering Bodies/Images? In Between Media, Cultures, Species**

Over the past decades feminist research in the field of vision has extensively demonstrated, how images of the gendered, sexed, and racialized human body are by no means to be taken as true or false copies of real bodies but have to be analyzed as constructions that function as identification offerings and projection surfaces. It has also been noted, that nevertheless those very images have repeatedly – and often unintentionally – been mistaken as an expression of nature, an indicator of authenticity or a reflection of social conditions. Since the 1990s, Human-Animal Studies (HAS) have taken shape as a new and interdisciplinary field of research that radically calls into question the categorial and hierarchic distinction between humans and animals. Exploring the social, cultural, political, scientific, and medial interfaces between humans and animals, between human and non-human communities, HAS are concerned with interspecies relationships in multifaceted ways. Images of humans sitting on horses / images of horses carrying humans seem a productive example to link those two discourses. Exploring the codes of ‘naturalness’ and culturality as significations of power and trigger of resistance within politics of representation might also allow to shift perspectives on the equestrian monument that has gained new attention due to the massive anti-racist protests of the recent past.



**Prof. Dr. Kerstin Brandes**, is professor of Visual Culture at the University of Bremen. Prior to that she held interim professorships in media studies and in art history and visual culture at the University of Oldenburg. She has taught at numerous universities and art schools. Furthermore she was visiting professor at Berlin University of the Arts. From 2015 to 2020 she was Director of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Women\*’s and Gender Studies at the University of Oldenburg. She is also co-editor of the journal FKW // Zeitschrift für Geschlechterforschung und visuelle Kultur ([www.fkw-journal.de](http://www.fkw-journal.de)). Her research includes visual culture and the politics of representation; photography and questions of identity; the relationship between image circulations, media histories, and transculturality; cultural gender and queer studies, postcolonial studies, human-animal studies. Select publications: *Fotografie und „Identität“ – Visuelle Repräsentationspolitiken in künstlerischen Arbeiten der 1980er und 1990er Jahre*. Bielefeld 2010; *Die Gans lebt ... Studien Visueller Kultur und feministische Fotografie*forschung. In: *Fotogeschichte. Beiträge zur Geschichte und Ästhetik der Fotografie*. Heft 155. Thema: *Wozu Gender? Geschlechtertheoretische Ansätze in der Fotografie*, hg. v. Katharina Steidl, 2020; *Bilder von Khoikhoi (und anderen) am Kap der Guten Hoffnung – visuelle Migrationen und kulturelle Übersetzung*. In: Sigrid Adorf/ Kathrin Heinz (Hg.): *Zeichen/Momente. Vergegenwärtigungen in Kunst und Kulturanalyse*, Bielefeld: transcript, 2019.

ANDREA D. BÜHRMANN

After studying sociology, philosophy and political science, **Prof. Dr. Andrea D. Bührmann** received her doctorate in 1995 from the University of Münster. In 2003, following a DFG scholarship, she completed her habilitation in general sociology. Afterwards, Andrea D. Bührmann held various professorships in Dortmund, Munich and Münster and was a visiting professor in Salzburg and Vienna. In 2009, she first became an associate professor at the University of Münster and has been teaching at the University of Göttingen since 2011. Since 2013, Bührmann has been director of the Institute for Diversity Research. In 2014, she conducted research as a Research Fellow at the University of California/Berkeley; in 2015, she held a visiting professorship at the University of Klagenfurt. From 2013 to 2015, she was Dean of Research at the Faculty of Social Sciences. Between 2015 and 2021, Andrea D. Bührmann was Vice President for Studies, Teaching Equal Opportunities at the University of Göttingen. In 2018, she was a visiting professor at the German Institute of Japanese Studies Tokyo. In 2021, Bührmann was elected as the first speaker of LAGEN.

ORIANNA CALDÉRON-SANDOVAL

**Dr. Orianna Calderón-Sandoval** is a postdoctoral researcher at the Women’s and Gender Studies Research Institute at the University of Granada, with a contract from the "Junta de Andalucía-Fondo Social Europeo". She was scholarship holder in the 5th edition of the

GEMMA Erasmus Mundus Master's Degree in Women's and Gender Studies. She completed her PhD thesis on feminist practices in documentary cinema at the universities of Granada and Bologna, employed as an Early Stage Researcher for the ITN Horizon 2020 Marie Curie Research Project GRACE – “Gender and Cultures of Equality in Europe”. Among her recent publications are “Implementing Gender Equality Policies in the Spanish Film Industry”, *International Journal of Cultural Policy* (2021), and “Gender-Based Violence and the Performance of Masculinity”, co-written with Adelina Sánchez Espinosa, in *Performing Cultures of Equality*, edited by E. Durán et al. (2022).

KARMA CHÁVEZ

### **The Borders of AIDS: Race, Quarantine, and Resistance**

In this talk, Chávez discusses her recent book, *The Borders of AIDS*, which considers how disease becomes an opportunity to enact what she describes as the nation-state's "alienizing logic." An alienizing logic references a structure of thinking which insists that some are necessarily members of a community and some are recognized as not belonging, even if they physically reside there. Disease has historically been an opportunity to express the state's alienizing logic when associated with particular people, in the US context: Black, migrant, queer, trans, Indigenous, poor, prostitute, of color. Regardless of whether they possess US citizenship, these are alienized people, as in, they are or easily can be made alien to the nation-state. The talk will discuss two expressions of alienizing logic—quarantine and ban—as they manifested in the early days of the AIDS pandemic in the United States, from 1981-1993.

*Dr. Karma R. Chávez* teaches, writes, and currently serves as chair in the Department of Mexican American and Latina/o Studies at the University of Texas at Austin where she also holds several affiliate faculty appointments. She is author or co-editor of seven books, including two released in 2021: *The Borders of AIDS: Race, Quarantine, and Resistance* (University of Washington Press) and *Keywords for Gender and Sexuality Studies* (New York University Press).

BETTINA DENNERLEIN

### **Beyond secular liberalism's 'other': Gender Studies and Islam**

Anti-imperialist feminist critique has rightfully criticized not only the instrumentalization of women's rights in general and women's sexual rights in particular in much of Western anti-Muslim discourse. It has also stressed exclusionary tendencies in mainstream liberal feminism and feminist theory for contributing to the distortion and marginalization of non-Western articulations of women's rights and gender. This is especially the case for those articulations that draw on normative traditions of Islam. There is ample debate on the theoretical level about stakes in and possible ways out of the deadlock of universalism vs. particularism binaries that often ensue from this situation. Yet, when it comes to the question of how to read programmatically Islamic positions by women on sex and gender, despite references to their historical contingency, specificities and concrete differences easily tilt into “difference” in the singular - and thus a placeholder for unwarranted simplifications. How can Islamic positions be critically examined without lapsing into othering tropes of

either “the other” or “the other’s otherness”? From where can contextualization of women’s positions on gender in Islamic debates start without postulating an unquestioned power of “the context”? Which analytical tools allow us to make visible precisely the entangled and interdiscursive character of the making - and the heterogeneity - of Islamic gender discourses? Engaging with the issues raised by this sort of interrogations, the paper will discuss selected examples of women Islamic intellectuals from different periods and different countries of the Arabic speaking world. It intends to enquire into their stances towards women’s rights in Islam stressing the contingency of how both notions (women’s rights as well as Islam) are configured and related to each other as they intervene in ongoing contentious debates. In doing so, the paper will explore challenges for transdisciplinary teaching of gender in the field of Middle East and Islamic Studies.

**Prof. Dr. Bettina Dennerlein** is Professor of Gender Studies and Islamic Studies and Vice Director of the Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies (AOI) at the University of Zurich. Her research covers topics of modern and contemporary social and cultural history of North Africa. Among her publications are “Religion als Reform. Iṣlāḥ und Gesellschaft in Marokko, 1830-1912” (Berlin 2018), “Sexual rights and their discontents. Yūsuf al-Qaraḏāwī on homosexuality and the ‘Islamic family’”, in: *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies*, 17 (2017), and “The Gender of Sainthood. Moroccan Hagiography at the End of the 19th Century”, in: *Hespéris-Tamuda*, LVI (1) (2021). She is a founding editor of the Book Series *Gender and Islam* (Bloomsbury), and a member of several editorial including *Hawwa*, *Journal of Women of the Middle East and the Islamic World* (Brill), *GENDER. Zeitschrift für Geschlecht, Kultur und Gesellschaft* (Budrich), and member of the Comité Scientifique International of the Moroccan historical review *Hespéris-Tamuda* (Université Mohammed V, Rabat).

**Sule E. Egya** (also known in the literary circle as E. E. Sule) is an essayist, poet, novelist, and a leading scholar of contemporary Nigerian writing. He is a professor of African Literature and Cultural Studies at Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai, where he served as Head of Department of English, and Dean of Faculty of Languages and Communication Studies. He teaches Literature, Literary and Cultural Theory, and Creative Writing. At various times he taught at Nasarawa State University, Keffi; University of Abuja, Abuja; Federal University, Dutse; Police Academy, Wudil; Sule Lamido University, Kafin Hausa; and University of Bonn, Bonn.

His research interests include political poetics, feminist aesthetics, the diasporic experience in contemporary African literature, and representation of ecological crises in literature. He is the author of thirteen books and about one hundred-and-thirty academic articles and literary essays, published in journals such as *African Literature Today*, *Research in African Literatures*, *Journal of the African Literature Association*, *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, *African Affairs*, and *Maple Tree Literary Supplement*. Notable among his books are *Nature, Environment, and Activism in Nigerian Literature* (Routledge, 2020); *Power and Resistance: Literature, Regime, and the National Imaginary* (SevHage, 2019); *Makwala* (Paressia, 2018); *Niyi Osundare: a Literary Biography* (SevHage, 2017); *Nation, Power and Dissidence in Third Generation Nigerian Poetry in English* (Unisa Press, 2014); *Sterile Sky* (Pearson, 2012); *Poetics of Rage: a Reading of Remi Raji’s Poetry* (Krat Books, 2011), and *What the Sea Told Me* (Hybun, 2009).

He is the recipient of about twenty-six local, national and international awards, prizes, grants, and fellowships. They include: Codesria Thesis Grant (2007); ANA/NDDC Gabriel Okara Poetry Prize (2009); Alexander von Humboldt Postdoctoral Fellowship (2009); African Humanities Postdoctoral Fellowship (2012); IBB University Management Merit Award for the Most Outstanding Academic Staff (2013); Visiting Fellowship at Cambridge University (2014); TETFUND Manuscript Development Award (2016); Rachel Carson Writing Fellowship (2018); and TETFUND National Research Grant (2019).

ANTKE A. ENGEL

### **Queer\_ing Pedagogy: Un\_learning and Un\_teaching in a Plurilocal Context**

This contribution takes as a starting point the project Gender Bites – Wild Tongues. Queer\_Pedagogy, Pedagogía\_Cuir, Queer\_Pädagogik, a transnational, multilingual online platform striving to queer and decolonize pedagogy. The online platform has been developed in 2021 by a group of people from Mexico City, Edinburgh, and Hagen – and continues to be work-in-project until its second launch in October 2022.

Apart from presenting the platform and some of its contributions, I will reflect on the ideas of un\_learning and un\_teaching as they have been proposed or inspired by Gloria Anzaldúa (border dwelling), Gayatri Ch. Spivak (desire), and Mauro E. Sifuentes (located, transgenerational learning). Read in the context of queer\_pedagogy they value dissident practices, untamed desires and avoid normalcies, but also ask for unlearning what's established as or marginalized by queer\_cuir.

The ‚wild tongues‘ of the title, which also inspire the platform's aesthetic and metaphoric concept of a ‚forest of tongues‘, has been received from Gloria Anzaldúa, who writes: „Repeated attacks on our native languages, diminish our sense of self. [Yet,] how do you tame a wild tongue, train it to be quiet, how do you bridle and saddle it?“ (Anzaldúa: *Borderlands/La Frontera*) In this sense, we promote Gender Bites as a new digital media format for circulating topics of Gender and Queer Studies. Starting from the lifeworlds of their producers, Gender Bites simultaneously explore research and mediating practices in the form of multimedia or transmedial artifacts.

**Dr. Antke A. Engel** is a philosopher (Dr. phil., Potsdam University 2001) and director of the Institute for Queer Theory in Berlin, working in the fields of queer theory, poststructuralist philosophy, and visual cultural studies. A guest professorship in Gender and Queer Studies at the distant learning university FernUniversität in Hagen (2019-2022) provided them with the chance of producing three open access introductory videos to queer theory: BODIES, FIGURATIONS, WORLDS (Engel and Filmfetch, Hagen 2021: <https://genderbites.fernuni-hagen.de/queer-theory-videos/>). Engel held international fellowships (ICI Berlin; LSE London, Asa Briggs, Brighton) as well as guest professorships at TU Darmstadt, ASH Berlin, and the Universities of Vienna and Hamburg. They co-edited *Hegemony and Heteronormativity* (2011) and *Global Justice and Desire: Queering Economy* (2015) and published numerous essays and the monographs: *Wider die Eindeutigkeit* (2002) and *Bilder von Sexualität and Ökonomie* (2009).

PUSPA GHIMIRE & NEERA SHRESTHA

## **Interjection of gender discourse in academia and the Position of Gender Studies at the Tribhuvan University in Nepal: Opportunities and Challenges**

Gender discourse has been gradually interjected in Nepali academia from undergraduate level to the post-graduate levels and across different academic disciplines at the university levels. Thus, the impact of this interjection on teaching learning practices and methods, curriculum development and research, public policy dialogues, among other new academic fields need to be critically analyzed. In Nepal, due to the ever changing political and economic environments, alternative voices with new identities and recognitions (for example queer groups and other socio-culturally excluded groups) are emerging with renewed realities and concerns. Besides, new study/research areas (for example, migrant women workers, informal workers, women in unpaid care works, violence against women and girls, forced trafficking, feminization of poverty) are emerging, and they need immediate attention as a matter of both global and regional discussion. This intervention will explore how the Department of Gender Studies at the Tribhuvan University is addressing or will address these emerging issues in the curriculums, teaching-learning practices, research, and studies. What are its strengths and what are its real challenges? It has been observed that even after more than a decade's journey, the Department of Gender Study is facing severe resource constraints in terms of financial, human, technical and physical resources. There are also other forms of marginalization. Despite the challenges, it has the strength of intellectually sound and politically motivated (feminist) graduates, committed faculties and resource persons, who are contributing for the cause of gender equality and justice throughout their lifetimes. By analyzing all these aspects of opportunities and challenges, this intervention aims to find out a new direction for the Department of Gender Studies through the exchange of ideas, knowledge and experiences with renowned faculties, international experts, other intellectuals, resource persons, students, and other stakeholders at the University of Oldenburg.

*Prof. Dr. Puspa Ghimire Niraula, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics and Women and Gender Studies working under the Tribhuvan University (T.U.) Padma Kanya Multiple Campus in Bagbazaar Kathmandu since 1987. She did a master's degree in 'Economics' from the T.U. in 1984; MSc. in 'Rural and Regional Development Planning' from the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok, Thailand in 1995; and a Postgraduate Research-oriented Studies on 'Women's Studies' in the project area 'Work' at the International Women's University 'ifu' from Hannover, Germany in 2000. She also did a 'Multidisciplinary Women's Studies' course from the Institute of Women's Studies, Lahore, Pakistan in the early 2000. She is a subject committee member of the Department of Gender Studies, T.U. and the Higher Secondary Education Council on Gender Studies. In addition to teaching/learning, she is also involved in doing research/studies and curriculum development on 'Gender and Economics' for the Universities, Curriculum Development Center of the Department of Education and other government and non-government organizations.*

*Neera Shrestha, is an Associate Professor of the Faculty of Management, women's Studies and Gender studies in Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal. She has completed a master's degree in business administration (M.B.A.) from Tribhuvan University (T.U.), Nepal. She has also completed a course on "Multi-disciplinary Women's Studies" at Institute of Women's Studies from Lahore, Pakistan. She is a member of the Marketing subject committee at*

Tribhuvan University. She is also a member of the subject and management committee of Gender Studies at Tribhuvan University. She has presented various working papers on different areas related to management and gender studies both nationally and internationally. Her articles are published in many journals on such areas relating to different areas of management and gender from different publication houses. Apart from her academic activities, Ms. Shrestha is associated and actively involved with many organizations related to woman's rights and research work from gender perspectives. Currently, she is capacitated as a Director of BBA (Bachelor of Business Administration) of the Campus as well.

RANDI GRESSGÅRD

### **Ukraine and East/West sexual geopolitics**

Taking as its starting point the so-called transition processes in Ukraine, this presentation focuses its attention on East/West sexual geopolitics. This intervention aims to highlight the tensions between Europeanization politics involving LGBT rights on the one hand, and political homophobia and anti-genderism on the other, probing the conditions for critique and queer politics in times of conflict and polarization.

*Dr. Randi Gressgård is professor at Centre for Women's and Gender Research (SKOK), University of Bergen. Her research interests span the fields of migration & minority studies, gender & sexuality studies and urban security studies. Among her publications is a co-edited special issue of Intersections: East European Journal of Society and Politics (2020) on 'Struggles over Europe: Postcolonial East/West Dynamics of Race, Gender and Sexuality'.*

SABINE HARK

### **The Political Ethos of Cohabitation – On Community and Belonging, Violence and Borders**

The lecture is dedicated to one of the most urgent questions of our times. And is the question of difference and belonging intensely negotiated in all societies. To whom is it given to come in order to stay and live in community with others, that is, to be able to see oneself as part of a 'we'? It is a question that touches nearly every aspect that concerns our coexistence as finite beings on a finite, heavily populated planet fighting for breath. How we economize and budget, both with our own energies and with those that we appropriate. How we live and work, consume and move. Who can settle where, who has access to which infrastructure, from access to clean water and fuel, up to access to digital infrastructure and trash removal and including care in times of sickness and dependency. How we place ourselves in relationship to each other and for one another, how we care and watch out for each other, for the planet, with whom we live, and other species, with whom we share it. What we believe in, what we fight for politically and who we treasure. How and what we want to know and which knowledge we share. Who and what we consider normal and worthy of protection. How we live, how we are in the world, and how we shape our coexistence. I call this an ethos of cohabitation, i.e. a way of living together. My point of departure is Judith Butler's ethics of cohabitation. As I attempt to think through some implications of this ethics, I will suggest a shift. In which I namely do not take

the path of an ethics, but rather draft just an ethos of cohabitation: a practical, democratic way of living that is sensitive to power. A way of living that is founded upon care for the self, for others, and for the world, and that has found its guiding principle in the simple fact that people populate the earth in the plural, which is why everyone is entitled to the same right to thrive in the world, without exception.

**Prof. Dr. Sabine Hark** is Professor for Gender Studies and the Director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Women's and Gender Studies at TU Berlin. Hark is also a prominent public intellectual who regularly intervenes in debates on democracy, racism, sexism, and gender equality. Hark's books include: *deviante Subjekte. Die paradoxe Politik der Identitaet* [Deviant Subjects. Paradoxes of the Politics of Identity] (1996, 1999); *Dissidente Partizipation. Eine Diskursgeschichte des Feminismus* [Dissident Participation. A Discourse History of Feminism]

(2005); *Vermessene Raeume, gespannte Beziehungen. Unternehmerische Universitaeten und Geschlechterdynamiken* [Measured Spaces, Tense Relations. Entrepreneurial Universities and Gender Dynamics], with Johanna Hofbauer (2018), and *The Future of Difference: Beyond the Toxic Entanglement of Racism, Sexism and Feminism*, with Paula-Irene Villa (2020). Hark is a member of the editorial board of Germany's leading feminist theory journal, *Feministische Studien*. Hark's

most recent book is: *Community of the Unchosen. Notes on a political ethos of cohabitation* [Gemeinschaft der Ungewählten. Umriss eines politischen Ethos der Kohabitation], published with Suhrkamp (Berlin) in 2021.

AMINA HERSI

### **Compounding inequalities; Africa and the pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a crisis reaching far beyond health, challenging fundamental aspects of the ways in which we have previously arranged our social and economic structures. It has been actively made deadlier, more prolonged, and more damaging to livelihoods because of inequality. The hundreds of millions of people who have suffered disproportionately during this pandemic were already likely to be more disadvantaged: more likely to live in low- and middle-income countries, to be women or girls, to belong to socially discriminated-against groups, to be informal workers. More likely, therefore, to be unable to influence policy. Overall, it has had a regressive impact on the ability of women and girls globally to claim and exercise their rights. For women and girls, this translated to egregious levels of violence against women, unprecedented increase of unpaid care responsibilities on women, and, through rapid and lasting job losses, exposure to deep vulnerabilities of women's engagement in the labourmarket. Overall, it has had a regressive impact on the ability of women and girls globally to claim and exercise their rights. This was no different in Africa.

While Africa has largely avoided severe COVID-19 deaths and infections recorded in other parts of the world, it has not avoided economic, gender and racial catastrophe. Inequalities of income and gender are stronger indicators of whether you will die from COVID-19 than age. Inequality is a killer, contributing to the deaths of at least one person every four seconds. I argue that this violence is rooted in capitalism, white supremacy and patriarchy by drawing links of the present-day divides to historical legacies and contextualising the ways by which Covid-19 has impacted the lives of women and girls across Africa exploring

intersectional inequities that exist and highlighting the cyclical nature of these compounding inequities. These include through disparities in healthcare, economy, public service and social protections and gendered violence. Then exploring intersectional and feminist strategies and approaches from various African stakeholders of holistic and systemic solutions and recommendations that can help mitigate these challenges and pave a way forward towards a gender just covid recovery. One that will undo the structural inequalities that slows Africa's attempt to return to a level of normality.

**Dr. Amina Hersi** is the Head of Gender Rights and Justice for Oxfam International, a global network which fights inequality to end poverty and injustice. Amina is a gender justice, humanitarian, and human rights practitioner who specializes in changing narratives and redefining security. Amina has led several international organisations including Amnesty International in feminist influencing, policy, advocacy, and campaigning.

#### ALMUT HÖFERT

**Prof. Dr. Almut Höfert** is professor for medieval history at the university of Oldenburg. She studied history and Middle Eastern Studies in Bonn, Freiburg and Cairo and obtained her Ph.D. at the European University Institute of Florence in 2001. She worked as Assistant Professor at the University of Basel (2001–2005; 2007–2011), and she has been Visiting Fellow at the American University in Cairo (2005–6) and at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (2006–7). From 2011 till 2017, she held a Swiss National Science Foundation Professorship in Transcultural History of the Latin and Arabic Middle Ages at the Department of History of the University of Zurich. Her research areas include history of religion and power, entanglements and perceptions between Europe and the Middle East, gender history and methods of transcultural history. Her publications include „Den Feind beschreiben. ‚Türkengefahr‘ und Europäisches Wissen über das Osmanische Reich, 1450–1600“ (Frankfurt a. M., 2003), „Kaisertum und Kalifat. Der imperiale Monotheismus in Früh- und Hochmittelalter“ (Frankfurt 2015) and „Celibate and Childless Men in Power: Ruling Bishops and Eunuchs in the Pre-Modern World“. London: Routledge 2018 (co-editor). She is a co-editor of „L'homme. Europäische Zeitschrift für feministische Geschichtswissenschaft“.

#### KATHARINA HOFFMANN

**Dr. Katharina Hoffmann** holds a PhD in history and worked as a historian for projects on remembering the atrocities of National Socialism as well as being a lecturer in gender studies. She worked as visiting lecturer in Armenia, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Uganda, and Sudan. Her main areas of research and teaching as an independent scholar are intersectional and regional perspectives in memory cultures, colonialism, 'transitional justice', migration, and diversity. Currently she is one of the spokespersons for the working group "Colonialism and Continuities in Oldenburg" and involved in an exhibition project.

#### ULRIKE KOOPMANN



**Dr. Ulrike Koopmann** (formerly Lingen-Ali) teaches and researches at the Department of Educational Sciences at Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg, with a specialization on migration and education. Her focus is on social orders in the context of migration and gender relations, migration and family, forced migration, othering and intersectionality. Latest research project: "Refugee Women, Family Dynamics, and Violence. Coping with Trauma, Intervention, and Prevention in the Context of Reception", University of Oldenburg, Subproject of the Joint Research Project "Gender, Forced Migration and Politics of Reception: Processes of Gendered Inclusion and Exclusion in Lower Saxony" (Universities of Osnabrück, Goettingen, Oldenburg). Latest publications: (upcoming, with Carla Schriever) "Intersectional Perspectives on Flight and Recognition", Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, edited volume; (2022) "Refugee Women and Integration – Measures, Critical Inquiries and Needs", in: Farrokhzad, Schahrzad/Scherschel, Karin (eds.): *Refugee women. Life situations, positions and support offers*, Wiesbaden: Springer VS; (2020, with Paul Mecheril) "Gender discourses in Migration Society", Bielefeld: Transcript, edited volume. Beyond academia, she works as a counsellor for anti-discrimination.

DESIREE LEWIS

### **Women's and Gender Studies: Possibilities and Risk**

At one level, I focus on Women's and Gender Studies in southern Africa, arguing that as an academic field linked to intellectual activism, Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) continues to influence critical discourses within and beyond the academy. Motivated by "hope" in the sense that Sara Ahmed defines it, feminist teaching and knowledge-making unsettle ongoing and reconstituted forms of epistemic, political, and psychic damage – affecting sexual minorities and women most, but also limiting the humanity of socially dominant subjects. I focus on a movement driven by a young generation of radical South African women within the #Fees Must Fall movement as a paradigmatic example of the current intellectual activist energy at the heart of WGS. Here I focus on responses to masculinist nationalisms, to the homophobic and patriarchal recuperation of "decoloniality" and to the ongoing violence inflicted on the bodies of those that heteropatriarchal society deems deviant, disobedient or in need of control. At another level that foregrounds global currents, the talk raises the "risk" that WGS currently encounters, especially in the face of neo-liberalism, a globally rapacious knowledge economy and new forms of political struggle that are both liberatory but also inextricably linked to neo-liberal sensibilities. Both in South African and elsewhere, it has been argued that work within WGS currently risks erasing or sidelining struggles for gender freedoms, individuals' liberty to express gender identities different from those that are assigned, queer studies and trans studies. In the face of this charge, I argue for the centrality of feminist sensibilities within WGS, sensibilities that fully take into account decolonial and intersectional thought, which, I argue, offer fundamental critiques of competing claims for the recognition of identities. In this way, I take up Sara Ahmed's provocation: "If we become feminists because...of what the world is not... then what kind of world are we building? Where there is hope there is difficulty...Hope is not at the expense of struggle but animates a struggle...Hope gives us a sense that there is a point to working things out.... Hope is behind us when we have to work for something to be possible."

**Prof. Dr. Desiree Lewis** is a Professor in the Women's and Gender Studies Department at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. The co-editor of *Surfacing, On being Black and Feminist in South Africa* (2021) and the author of *Living on a Horizon: Bessie Head and the*

*Politics of Imagining*, she has taught, written and published on the politics of global feminism and African feminism for many years. Her areas of interest also include literary and cultural studies and critical food studies. She has published numerous articles, essays and book chapters, and has guest edited several feminist journal special issues. She has taught in countries within and beyond Africa, with her fellowships and visiting professorships including holding the Marie Jahoda Visiting Chair at Bochum University in Germany, being Visiting Professor at the African Gender Institute in South Africa, teaching literary and women's Studies at Georgia State University as a Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence, being a visiting speaker at the Centre for the Study of Gender and Sexuality at New York University, and doing a keynote speech at a conference organized by the Berlin Institute of Inquiry. She has also taught at Abo Academy in Finland, Makerere in Uganda University, Addis Ababa in Ethiopia and the Department of Gender Studies at Utrecht University. Lewis is currently the lead principal researcher in an intra-university Programme focusing on humanities approaches to food studies (<https://www.criticalfoodstudies.co.za>). Here she has been focusing on the centrality of postcolonial feminism to food as material culture and to critiques of anthropocentrism.

SHEILA MEINTJES

### **'All has failed so far, so where to next?' Feminist Theorising and Engaging the State for Gender Equality and Gender Justice in South Africa 1992 to 2022**

The key question in this paper, is why feminists in academia and in the women's movement in South Africa in the late 1980s and early 1990s thought that engaging the state was the route to take in order to promote full gender equality. Through the prism of the establishment of the South African Commission for Gender Equality, I explore why and how feminists – both academics and politicians – chose to focus on creating gender institutions in the state rather than concentrating on strengthening and deepening the existing organisations that made up the women's movement. What was the context for this choice? What were the outcomes? In brief, feminist activism during the constitution-making process and the transition to democracy in the early 1990s, led to the establishment of new institutions in the state, in civil society and in academia. The paper explains the consequences of institution-making, how it tended to undermine the activism of the past, and create a new breed of 'professional' feminist experts. University courses taught students to become 'gender experts', consultancies offered training on gender mainstreaming to corporates and to government departments. The very active anti-apartheid women's movement that had been involved in struggle politics morphed into the NGO'isation of civil society. This occurred with surprising speed after the first democratic elections in 1994. Many key feminist activists found their way into Parliament, others into the new 'feminist nests' or women's policy agencies in civil society or the state bureaucracy. In the academy, feminist activist academics turned to fund raising to set up discrete women's studies departments in Universities, Academic Institutes, and research NGOs. Making gender institutions became a veritable industry. Twenty years ago, there was great optimism that institutionalising gender would provide a protected and ongoing framework that would lead to gender transformation. The belief was that the progression from providing women with rights, would lead to gender justice, which in turn would provide fertile ground for gender transformation. Instead androcentric culture has remained essentially intact, gender violence its main effect as women face a backlash against

their empowerment, and the institutions created to promote and protect gender equality fail to grasp the nettle of cultural change. Where they tried to do this, as did the CGE under the leadership of two avowed feminists, one was redeployed and the second vilified. Why has institutionalisation been such a dismal failure? Part of the reason lies in the expectation that the new democratic state led by the African National Congress would be, if not feminist then woman friendly. But in fact, the fraternal politics of the ANC, were just that – in effect submit to women’s participation in politics, and even open the space for women to lead policy-making ‘for women, by women’ but refuse to countenance any politics that would undermine or take on androcentric power and authority. As one analysis explained it, statecraft, the method of governance, or governmentality, involved ‘arranging power, by men, between women’.

*Prof. Dr. Sheila Meintjes is an Honorary Research Associate Professor in the Political Studies Department at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. She’s also a visiting professor at the Centre for Women and Gender Studies (ZFG) at the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg and a part of the project TraGS Transnational Perspectives in Gender Studies. Her teaching and research interests are in Feminist theory, sex, sexuality and Gender politics. She has previously published on colonial history, women’s movements in South Africa and post conflict transformation. At present she is working on feminist institutionalism and gender violence. She was a Commissioner in the Commission for Gender Equality between 2001 and 2004. She has been a member of the boards of several NGOs working for the end to gender violence and substantive equality for women and lgbtqi+ people.*

MONA MOTAKEF

### **Precarious recognition – LGBTQ\*-families in Germany between trends of legal equality, heteronormativity and social inequality**

Over the last 20 years, LGBTQ+-families have become more visible, in politics, law, social science research and everyday life (Peukert et al. 2020). Furthermore, conceptions of what constitutes the family have pluralized and legal recognition of same-sex relationships and families has increased in many democratic countries. In Germany, same-sex marriage is legally recognized since 2017. However, legal barriers for LGBTQ\* and multi-parent families still exist (Teschlade et al. 2020). Starting from these developments and observations, this presentation draws from qualitative interview data conducted as a part of the DFG research project “Ambivalent Recognition Order? Doing Reproduction and Doing Family beyond the ‘Nuclear Family’” (MO 3194/2-1, PE 2612/2-1, WI 2142/7-1, led by Almut Peukert, Christine Wimbauer and Mona Motakef, research assistant Julia Teschlade and Leoni Linek). The research project focuses on how people create, become, and remain a family (or not) against the backdrop of this changing and ambivalent order of recognition. We interviewed LGBTQ+ families who had children or planned to have them. We were interested in how they realize their wish for a child, how they “do” and live family in their everyday lives – and what family means for them. What legal hurdles and other forms of inequality do they still encounter? And how do they navigate them? We conducted qualitative interviews with 13 self-identified non-heterosexual families with a total of 19 family, couple, and individual interviews.

In the presentation, I first focus on the major legal hurdles for LGBTQ+ families and the implications for their Doing Family, looking from the macro perspective of the recognition order and tracing how this affects our interviewees' decision-making. Second, I analyse the micro perspective and zoom in on symbolic normalization practices in response to the ambivalent order of recognition. The work of demonstrating one's family relationship as genuine is more complex and requires more "work" on the part of the LGBTQ+ parents. The need to display family is significantly increased for the families we interviewed. The narrative of "feeling pressure to succeed" is a powerful summary of what many LGBTQ+ families experience in their everyday life.

**Prof. Dr. Mona Motakef** is a professor of sociology of gender relations at TU Dortmund, Germany. From 1996 to 2003 she studied social sciences at Oldenburg University, was a student assistant at ZFG during that time and did her doctoral research at LMU Munich in 2010. Before joining TU Dortmund in 2020, she worked at University of Duisburg-Essen, Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung, University of Tübingen, King's College London and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, where she was a Substitute Professor for Sociology of Work and Gender Relations (2019/2020). Her research interests include precarity of work and life, recognition theory, intimate relationships, gender and queer studies, family and social inequality and qualitative methods. She recently published an edited volume on parenting and family beyond heteronormativity and gender binary (2020, *Elternschaft und Familie jenseits von Heteronormativität und Zweigeschlechtlichkeit*, Gender special issue 5, with Almut Peukert, Julia Teschlade, Christine Wimbauer and Elisabeth Holzleithner) and a monography and various articles on precarious work, recognition and love (see 2020, "Prekäre Arbeit, prekäre Liebe", Campus, with Christine Wimbauer, and "recognition and precarity of life arrangement. Towards an enlarged understanding of precarious working and living conditions", *Distinktion. Journal of Social Theory*, 20).

IHKLAS OSMAN

**Dr. Ikhlas Nouh Osman**, from Sudan, BSc. In organizational management, MA in women; gender; and development studies, PhD in political Science.  
I am a Gender, migration, and development specialist, academician, practitioner and a believer. For the last two and a half decades, in addition to my academic teaching and researching, I have worked (in Sudan and in the region e.g.: Egypt, Ethiopia, and Jordan, and internationally in Germany) on advocacy, teaching, training, promoting and implementing gender equality at cross-cutting gender issues such as; Gender policy and its institutionalization, women participation in decision making and actualizing women empowerment, mainstreaming gender in post conflict situation in Sudan, gender and peace building, gender sensitivity and mapping in different developmental projects, women leadership and political participation, gender and state, migration gender and development, Gender Based Violence including all Traditional Practices, with special focus on FGM, child marriage, rape, Girl, Child and Women Rights etc., profile of Sudanese women in relation to International Conventions (CEDAW, CRC, MDGs and SDGs, SCR 1325) and the national context of Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), Juba Peace Agreement (JPA), and the Sudan Interim Constitution (SIC).  
Publications: "Analysis of Youth political participation in Sudan (2000 – 2015)", "Gender Policy in Sudan with Special Reference to Girls Education and Female Genital Mutilation

(FGM)", "Institutional Strengthen of Sudanese Women", "Domestic Violence among Middle Class women in Khartoum State".

BARBARA PAUL

**Prof. Dr. Barbara Paul** is a professor of art history at the Institute of Art and Visual Culture at the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg, Germany, and deputy director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Women's and Gender Studies. She was chair of the Helene-Lange-Kolleg's research training group "Queer Studies and Intermediality: Art, Music, Media Culture" (2013–16) and chair of the joint research project "Gender Knowledge in and between the Disciplines: Critique, Transformation and 'Dissenting Participation' in (Academic) Knowledge Production" (2017–20). She was previously a professor of art history and art theory/gender studies at the University of Art and Design of Linz, Austria (2003–08).

Recent publications include: „Geschlechterwissen in und zwischen den Disziplinen. Perspektiven der Kritik an akademischer Wissensproduktion“ (Gender Knowledge in and between the Disciplines. Perspectives of Critique in Academic Knowledge Production), co-edited with Corinna Bath and Silke Wenk, Bielefeld: transcript 2020; "Perverse Assemblages. Queering Heteronormativity Inter/Medially", edited et al., Berlin: Revolver 2017; un/verblümt. "Queere Politiken in Ästhetik und Theorie" (un/abashed: Queer Policies in Aesthetics and Theory), Berlin: Revolver 2014, co-edited with Josch Hoenes.

SYLVIA PRITSCH

**Dr. Sylvia Pritsch**, she/her, Dr. phil, member of the academic staff of the centre for interdisciplinary women's and gender studies and coordinator of the study programme BA Gender Studies at the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg/ Germany. Her areas of research include Gender Studies in the context of Cultural and Postcolonial Studies; politics of representation in different media, concepts of subjectivity and identity, (literary) concepts of community; transcultural and transdisciplinary forms of knowledge. Latest article: Idyllische Gemeinschaft in der ‚Willkommenskultur‘? Narrative Krisenbewältigung in Raum und Schrift; in: Nitzke, Solvejg /Jablonski, Nils (Hg): Paradigmen des Idyllischen, Bielefeld: Transcript 2022; Representation of Difference and Mediation: Threshold Positions of the 'Muslim Girl' and the German Nation (2021).

LYDIA POTTS

**Dr. Lydia Potts** is a social scientist with specialisation in migration studies as well as in gender studies. She teaches at Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg, Germany and has vast experience in transnational research, teaching and curriculum development with European, Asian and African partners. Since 2011 she is the primary coordinator of the EMJM European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations (emmir.org). Since 2010 she coordinates the Erasmus Mundus Master Course European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations (EMMIR).

Her main fields of research are global migration and gender, migrant families, migration and ageing, single migrant mothers, and travel literature by women. She was visiting teaching staff in the US and held an HCM-fellowship at the London School of Economics and Political Science. She is co-founder of the Centre of Interdisciplinary Research on Women and Gender at the University of Oldenburg. Her books include: *The World Labour Market: A History of Migration* and a co-authored volume in German on women – flight - refuge (*Frauen – Flucht – Asyl*) Co-edited books include: “Womens’ Studies im internationalen Vergleich” and “Societies in Transition: Challenges to Womens’ and Gender Studies”. There is a volume on women’s travel literature: “Aufbruch und Abenteuer: Frauen-Reisen um die Welt ab 1785” and she also coedited “Mann wird man: Geschlechtliche Identitäten im Spannungsfeld von Migration und Islam”, a publication on masculinity, migration and Islam as well as more recently “Kabbo Ka Muwala: The Girl’s Basket. Migration and Mobility in Contemporary Art in Southern and Eastern Africa”.

FATIMA SADIQI

### **The Status of Gender and Women’s Studies in North Africa in the Aftermath of the Arab Spring**

In the aftermath of the so-called Arab Spring, women in North Africa face several challenges that range from social economic and legal to political. Tunisia and Libya are witnessing ‘continuous revolutions’ that followed regime change while Morocco and Algeria are witnessing contestations and social movements within the framework of their regimes. These challenges/upheavals are further aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic which has disproportionately affected women and increased gender-based violence in and outside home. In this presentation, I aim to address four aspects: First, highlight the main effects of the challenges and upheavals on women and gender in North Africa, with a focus on violence against women, women’s rights, economic participation, and political representation. Second, accentuate the most pressing issues that the new generation of North African researchers encounter, such as diversity issues, marginalization of their work, Islamization of society. Third, underline areas that require more research and are worthy of attention such as new forms of women’s movements and activism, the meaning that women give to their actions, and more importantly, how women tend to reinvent their identities, sometimes through new strategies and methodologies, the use creativity and resilience. Fourth: address the generational gap as a sine qua non condition to safeguard achievement and guarantee continuity.

*Prof. Dr. Fatima Sadiqi* is a Senior Professor of Linguistics and Gender Studies, Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University (Fes, Morocco). In 1998, she founded the first Moroccan Centre for Studies and Research on Women, and in 2000, she established the first Graduate Program on Gender Studies at the University of Fes, the first of its kind in North Africa. In 2006, she founded the Isis Centre for Women and Development with the goal of bridging the gap between academe and activism. In 2018 she was elected President of the Association of Middle Eastern Studies, the first North African woman to be elected to this post. Among her many books are *Women, Gender and Language* (Brill, 2003), *Women’s Activism and the Public Sphere: Local/Global Linkages* (Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies, 2006), *Women and Knowledge in the Mediterranean* (Routledge, 2013), *Moroccan Feminist*

Discourses (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), and *Women's Movements in the Post - "Arab Spring" North Africa* (2016). Sadiqi's work has been supported by numerous prestigious awards and fellowships from Harvard University, The Woodrow Wilson Center, the Rockefeller Foundation, Fulbright, and the Zif Center at Bielefeld University (Germany). She is currently working on the role of Amazigh women's art in the codification of the Amazigh language.

SIGRID SCHMITZ

### **Postcolonial Feminist Science Technology Studies**

Scientific knowledge and related technologies are neither objective nor neutral. They are produced within powerful social contexts. Thus, constructed knowledges and technologies legitimize discriminatory social relations – locally and globally. Science & Technology Studies (STS) point out the entanglements of sciences, technologies, societies and cultures. Scholars of Postcolonial Feminist Science Technology Studies embed the inextricable intersectional and postcolonial facets into STS because “questions of gender, race, coloniality, and indigeneity are not optional variables or analytics that each field can choose whether to consider” (Subramaniam et al. 2017, 422). Furthermore, they uncover the epistemic dominance of euro-centric/western knowledge production, the exclusion and devaluing of “other” knowledge, and the persisting colonial politics of suppression that are legitimized by such epistemic violence. In this talk, I elaborate on the aims and researches of Postcolonial Feminist STS and discuss potentials and challenges for including these perspectives into Gender Studies.

**Prof. Dr. Sigrid Schmitz**, PhD in biology, teaches about Feminist Science & Technology Studies, with a growing focus on Postcolonial Feminist STS. Her research topics cover brain sciences, neurocultures & neurogenderings, and feminist epistemologies. She chaired the Competence Center for Gender in Natural and Computer Science [gin] at the ALU Freiburg (2002-2009), was Professor for Gender Studies at the University of Vienna (2010-2015) and guest professor at the universities of Graz, Oldenburg, HU Berlin, Cologne and recently again at the ALU Freiburg. With her team at the HU Berlin, she developed the open access learning portal Gendering MINT digital (<https://www2.hu-berlin.de/genderingmintdigital/>). Recent publications are *TechnoBrainBodies-in-Cultures: An Intersectional Case* (Frontiers in Sociology, 2021) and *Postcolonial Feminist Science Technology Studies. Inhalt und Strategie zur Dekolonialisierung der Lehre* (in: *Gender Studies: Dekolonisierung der Lehre*, ed. Maisha Auma et al., to appear 2022).

MELANIE UNSELD

**Prof. Dr. Melanie Unsel**d studied musicology, German literature, philosophy, and cultural studies. Since 2016 she has been Professor of Historical Musicology at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna. Previously, she was Professor of Cultural History of Music at the University of Oldenburg, and Director of the ZFG (2009-2015). In 2019, she was elected a corresponding member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Since 2022 she is president of the Austrian Society for Musicology.

ANGELIKA VOß

### **Gender medicine – without alternative mode in pandemic crises?**

The advent of gender (based) medicine was a paradigm shift intended to provide gender sensitive diagnose, avoid maltreatment and take into account women's needs for adequate health care services in general. The well-known positive effects of a gender-oriented approach shows better performance and equity in medical care and treatment in a couple of areas. Although gender medicine cannot be considered as a medical discipline, it can save lives as an interdisciplinary approach. One approach to realise this demand is to open the medical perspective for a biological, psychological and social understanding of health and disease, presented by patients as individuals and in a population. An additional requirement is to address interest in gender-differences affecting the medical status, as well as the understanding of the social acting of healthcare professionals in their gender- and professional roles. Furthermore, the initial impulse for gender medicine to bridge the gender gap in clinical trials and to end inequity in women's health services, is a milestone in medical philosophy. Embedded into evidence-based medicine, including empirical expertise in alternative and integrative medicine, it can support solid scientific foundations. Prior condition is a pool of reliable gender based data in all stages of clinical trials, from hypothesis to study design, enrolment, documentation, interpretation and presentation. The infection disease and the preventative measures taken against the prevalence generated two sides of health damages: becoming seriously ill by virus infection (or by vaccination) and developing mental/psychological disorders caused by mortal fear and bear down on pandemic situation. From the medical perspective, health status is divided into sex (biological/pathophysiological) and gender (psychosocial) specific outcomes, presenting a strong female constitution delivered by sex hormones and xx-chromosomes, and vulnerably gendered women, expressed by psychological weakness.

Focussing the facet of health topics from a gender diversity, and women's perspective, there are some additional issues concerning medical culture, inter- and intra-individuality, the unity of human-organization-technique as source of error in risk management, and the design of clinical trials in the still patriarchal and strong hierarchical structured field of medicine.

In the following, focal points of the Covid 19-pandemic will be discussed. The first examines emphasized sexual dimorphism of differences in symptoms, fatal course of disease with higher levels of fatality in male patients, and more cases of long-Covid diagnosed in females. The second refers to non-invasive (hygiene, mask-wearing, lock-down) and invasive (vaccination) preventative measurements. Despite this strain, health data from all over the world show psychological disorders and traumata with higher levels in women than in men, and probably long-lasting physiological implications. Lack of information concerning intersectional sensitive data refer to effectiveness and safety of vaccination, seriously undesired side effects, and long-term effects of the combined efforts.

**Dr. Angelika Voß**, Frauen- und MädchenGesundheitsZentrum Region Hannover e.V.  
Diploma of Pedagogy, Referee Health Promotion and Management,  
Doctor Humanbiology, Lessons and workshops for professionals and layperson, e.g., Gender Medicine, complementary oncology, gender sensitive pharmacotherapy, women's health between biological and artificial technologies. Her current publications include: *Frauen sind anders krank als Männer*. Irisiana 2007; Angelika Voß



/Brigitte Lohff: Nach-Denkliches zur Gender Medizin., in: Anita Rieder/Brigitte Lohff (Hg.): Gender Medizin. Geschlechtsspezifische Aspekte für die klinische Praxis. Springer Wien New York 2008; Gender differences in Covid 19 pandemic around the world. Netzwerk Frauen, Mädchen und Gesundheit, Nr. 47, 2021, S. 10-14; Der Gender Data Gap und die Gesundheit von Frauen in Zeiten von Corona, Rundbrief Niedersächsisches Netzwerk Frauen, Mädchen und Gesundheit Nr. 46, 2020, S. 11-18.

SAMIERA ZAFAR

### **(Re)framing women & gender studies in South African higher education: radical ruptures with state policy**

The transition to democracy in South Africa in 1994 ushered a landmark rights-based Constitution in which gender equality was embedded in a Bill of Rights. The post-1994 government honoured this commitment by mainstreaming gender equality across all sectors of South African society through wide-ranging policy reform and the implementation of 'national gender machinery'. As a result, notable gains were made post-transition include higher representation of women in parliament and all levels of government, higher enrolment by women in the post-secondary education sector, and a strong civil society. Despite these gains, substantive gender equality for the vast majority of women remains elusive. This is evident in the alarmingly high rates of gender-based violence and the feminization and racialization of poverty, making South Africa one of the most unequal societies in the world. This presentation draws on the situated scholarship of South African women academics and suggests that the mainstreaming of gender equality served as a nation-building project at the expense of substantive gender equality. Furthermore, the gender mainstreaming approach was insufficient to de-centre the 'patchwork of patriarchies' in South African society. As well, this presentation highlights the counter-narratives emerging in women and gender studies programs at South African higher education institutions. Several of these programs engage intersectional approaches, African feminist praxis, and community-based activism to shed light on the gendered social relations, daily struggles, and forms of resistance of Black and racialized women and men. As such, this presentation will explore the possibilities offered by these programs for a nuanced conversation with transnational applications, for the achievement of gender justice.

**Samiera Zafar** is South African, residing in Canada. She is a Policy and Advocacy Advisor at Save the Children Canada focused on advocating for the rights of women, children and adolescent girls in Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy. In her previous role as Director, Programs & Development at Newcomer Women's Services, Samiera had oversight for the implementation of the Employment Ontario program focused on the integration of newcomer immigrant women in Canada. Samiera also worked as Director, Research & Knowledge Management at the National School of Government in South Africa and has first-hand knowledge of efforts to mainstream gender in the South African public service. She is a Ph.D. student in the Social Justice Education program with a collaborative specialization in comparative international and development education at OISE, University of Toronto. Her research focus is on anti-racism and gender justice in education, anchored in decolonial approaches and Black Feminist Thought. She recently contributed a chapter entitled 'An Anti-racism education lens on the School Curriculum in post-Apartheid South Africa' in Afful-Broni,

A., Anamuah-Mensah, J., Raheem, K., & Sefa, D. G. J. (2021). *Africanizing the school curriculum: Promoting inclusive, decolonial education in African contexts*. Myers Education Press.