

SO112-15 International Perspectives on Gender

24/25

Department

Sociology

Level

Undergraduate Level 1

Module leader

Sarah Werner Boada

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Gender seems to be on the mouths of many conservative actors lately. In different regions, such as Latin America or Central and Eastern Europe, the claim is gaining ground that gender is a Western imposition that threatens local values and cultures. Meanwhile, anti-migrant rhetoric in the UK and elsewhere tries to have us believe that letting “non-Western” men in would be dangerous to women or queer people.

Was gender really invented by “the West”? Are feminist and LGBTQ politics any more advanced there? This module challenges these assumptions by showcasing gender and queer mobilisations in the majority world – regions that make up most of the land and population on the planet but are treated as peripheries in global power relations.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

This module introduces students to diverse manifestations of gender politics in places like North and South Africa, Central and Eastern Europe, or Latin America and the Caribbeans, and how they interlocked with and responded to nationalist, socialist, or anti-colonial agendas in recent

history. Importantly, it does so by discussing the role played by colonial ideology in those various local contexts and in how we perceive them in “the West”. We will learn together to question myths of Eastern backwardness, drawing on Romani, Third World, or decolonial feminisms. We will discuss how European coloniality shaped gender as we know it and orientalist representations that stem from it.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

1. Introduction: gender as “stranger danger” in international politics
2. “Why gender?” African epistemologies
3. Reproductive politics in Abya Yala
4. State socialism and the woman’s question in Central and Eastern Europe
5. Orientalism and Romani women
6. Reading Week
7. “The worst place for women”? Gender and imperialism in India
8. Gender, race, and class in post-Apartheid South Africa
9. The colonial politics of unveiling in Algeria
10. Gender, sexuality, and the Global War on Terror in West Asia

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Understand the importance of studying gender in a global perspective and how it is constructed in articulation with other identities and power axes, such as race, class, religion, or ethnicity.
- Centre perspectives which are often ignored or misrepresented in Western/Eurocentric discussions of gender.
- Become familiar with diverse local and historical contexts in which different understandings of gender emerged and be able to compare and contrast them.
- Locate specific case studies within global power relations inherited from European colonialism.
- Make scholarly written presentations, locating, retrieving, processing, and analysing relevant material from the list of sources provided.
- Address the aims and objectives of the module demonstrating close engagement with module materials.

Indicative reading list

"Comparative Perspectives Symposium: Romani Feminisms" Special Issue, *Signs*. 2012.
Bahramitash, Roksana and Eric Hooglund (Eds) (2011) *Gender in Contemporary Iran: Pushing the Boundaries*, New York: Routledge.
Bailey, Paul J. (2012) *Women and Gender in Twentieth-Century China*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
Banerjee, Sikata (2012) *Muscular Nationalism: Gender, Violence and Empire in India and Ireland*,

1914-2004, New York: New York University Press.

Brown, Gavin (2013) 'Unruly Bodies (Standing Against Apartheid)', in Angus Cameron, Jen Dickinson and Nicola Smith (Eds) *Body/State*, Farnham; Burlington: Ashgate, pp. 145-156.

Brownell, Susan and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom (Eds) (2002) *Chinese Femininities, Chinese Masculinities: A Reader*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Chaudhuri, Maitrayee (2004) *Feminism in India*, New Delhi: women unlimited/ Kali for Women
Cirstocea, Ioana. 2022. *Learning Gender After the Cold War*, Palgrave Macmillan.

Fábián, Katalin, Janet Elise Johnson and Mara Irene Lazda. 2022. *The Routledge Handbook of Gender in Central-Eastern Europe and Eurasia*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY;: Routledge. doi:10.4324/9781138347762.

Fodor, Eva, 2022. *The Gender Regime of Anti-Liberal Hungary*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan. doi:10.1007/978-3-030-85312-9.

Gouws, Amanda (Ed.) (2005) *(Un)Thinking Citizenship: Feminist Debates in Contemporary South Africa*, Aldershot: Ashgate Publications.

Greenhalgh, Susan (2008) *Just One Child: Science and Policy in Deng's China*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Heath, Jennifer (Ed.) (2008) *The Veil: Women Writers on its History, Lore and Politics*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hunter, Mark (2010) *Love in the Time of AIDS: Inequality, gender and rights in South Africa*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Irudayam, Aloysius S.J., Mangubhai, Jayshree P. and Lee, Joel G. (2011) *Dalit Women Speak Out: Caste, class and gender violence in India*, New Delhi: Zubaan.

Kozce, Angela, Violetta Zentai, Jelena Jovanovic, and Eniko Vincze. *The Romani Women's Movement: Struggles and Debates in Central and Eastern Europe*. Routledge. Available through the library: <https://pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/record=b3379596~S15>

Krizsán, Andrea and Conny Roggeband. 2021. *Politicizing Gender and Democracy in the Context of the Istanbul Convention*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. doi:10.1007/978-3-030-79069-1

Mernissi, Fatema. 2002. *Scheherazade Goes West: Different Cultures, Different Harems*. Washington Square Press,

Moghissi, Haideh (2004) *Women and Islam: Critical Concepts in Sociology*, London: Routledge.

Oyewumi, Oyeronke. 1997. *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*. University of Minnesota Press.

Rahnama, Sara. 2023. *The Future Is Feminist: Women and Social Change in Interwar Algeria*. Cornell University Press.

Ruspini, Elizabetta, Jeff Hearne, Bob Pease, and Keith Pringle (Eds) (2011) *Men and Masculinities Around the World: Transforming Men's Practices*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Said, Edward (1995) *Orientalism: Western conceptions of the Orient*, London : Pengun (first published 1978).

Sharify-Funk, Meena (2008) *Encountering the Transnational Women, Islam and the Politics of interpretation*, Aldershot; Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Yuval-Davis, Nira (1997) *Gender and Nation*, London: Sage.

Interdisciplinary

The module engages with research produced across a range of disciplines.

International

The module discusses case-studies from several countries across a range of continents.

Subject specific skills

Cognitive Skills

In the process of developing a substantive understanding of diverse international social and cultural manifestations of gender in the twentieth and twenty first centuries, students will acquire the ability to:

1. Assess critically comparative social and cultural manifestations of gender, the complex ways in which gender is constructed in articulation with other social and cultural identities, and the differential impacts this has on individual capacities to exercise agency.
2. Locate, retrieve, process and evaluate a wide range of materials about gender, 'race', ethnicity, age, sexuality, class, religion and nationality in the twentieth and twenty first centuries.
3. Evaluate competing and complementary theoretical frameworks for understanding the interaction of gender with other social and cultural identities.
4. Make scholarly presentations, verbal and written, on the substantive and theoretical issues covered in the module material.

Transferable skills

Students will learn the following transferable skills:

Think analytically

Enhance communication and verbal skills

Develop confidence in teamwork /group work

Increase confidence in presentation skills

Develop leadership skills

Study

Study time

| Type | Required |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Lectures | 9 sessions of 1 hour (6%) |
| Seminars | 9 sessions of 1 hour (6%) |
| Tutorials | (0%) |
| Project supervision | (0%) |
| Private study | 72 hours (48%) |
| Assessment | 60 hours (40%) |
| Total | 150 hours |

Private study description

Reading and other preparation for seminars. Preparation and writing of critical review of article and essay.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A1

| | Weighting | Study time |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Reaction Report | 25% | 20 hours |
| A 500-word “reaction paper”, due after Reading Week, in which students summarise and critically discuss an article, video, or podcast of their choice from the course material. This will prepare them for their final essay. Student preparation and completion time: 20 hours. | | |
| Essay | 75% | 40 hours |
| a 1,500-word essay, in which students will answer a question from a list provided to them at the start of the term, drawing on course material – including the piece they discussed for their reaction paper. | | |

Feedback on assessment

Students will receive written feedback via Tabula on both components of the assessment. The reaction paper aims to assess how students understand and engage with the course material on which they will draw for their final essay, so feedback received before the end of teaching will help them write their essay.

Moreover, students will have the opportunity to receive feedback on their essay plan/outline as formative work (ungraded, optional, due after midterm).

Availability

Pre-requisites

NA

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology
- Year 1 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology
- Year 1 of USOA-L300 Undergraduate Sociology
- USOA-L314 Undergraduate Sociology and Criminology
 - Year 1 of L314 Sociology and Criminology
 - Year 2 of L314 Sociology and Criminology
- Year 1 of UIPA-L3L8 Undergraduate Sociology and Global Sustainable Development
- Available as an outside option
- LL23 BA Politics and Sociology