



**Universität  
Zürich** UZH

**Call For Papers:**

**Decolonising Gender and Sexuality: Learning from Other Voices**

**11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

**University of Zurich**



This two-day conference will explore the theme of decolonisation through different modalities of learning from and generating knowledge with marginalised communities located in former colonies of the Global South. The primary research question is: “How can we constructively work towards problematising and reducing power imbalances in knowledge production between the Global North and the Global South in the fields of gender and sexuality studies?” The central focus of the conference is the contribution to and extension of historical debates around the project of decolonisation. It is now a key framework and theoretical concept for scholars across many social science disciplines, including gender and sexuality studies, critical race studies, social anthropology, cultural studies and sociology. The decolonial framework exposes the project of knowledge production as a homogenised, standardised, positivist endeavour lacking diversity. This conference challenges the universalist understandings of gender, queer and sexuality that the Global North generates in an attempt to generate meaningful potential alliances between the Global North and the Global South. The main themes of the conference will be the interplay between institutions (family, state, socio-political), gender, sexuality and the implications of decolonisation on them; secondly, pedagogical and research approaches centred on decolonial perspectives as ways of understanding gender and sexuality. The relevance of the research lies both in the field of gender and sexuality studies and in the social sciences in general. Because this event will conjure responsible, answerable, enriching and socially aware knowledge by bringing in nuanced perspectives of those who have borne the brunt of the colonial project. In doing so, the organisers, speakers and participants aim to critically reflect on how this category of knowledge about gender and sexuality has come to exist, recognising how the creators of this knowledge are potentially invested in settler and extractive colonial societies.

The conference will be held in person. We seek to encourage interdisciplinary research, particularly from the Global South, that broadens our perceptions and understandings of decoloniality. We invite papers for the following panels. Submissions are also encouraged on topics that cut across and creatively intersect multiple panels:

1) State Law and Policy: Intersections of Gender, Sexuality, Race and Religion  
Using illustrations and examples from disenfranchised identities, the panel encourages papers from a human rights / human insecurity perspective into the decolonial turn in an attempt to dismantle knowledge hierarchies. Papers on the intersectionality of gender, caste, religion, sexuality, race and disability are encouraged. The aim of the panel is to explore and analyse how multiple structural categories constrain and affect the opportunities available to marginalised identities.

2) Decolonising Intimate Encounters: Frameworks for Future Research  
The panel focuses on issues of queerness, intimacy and perspectives on the blurred boundaries of the public/private self from a decolonial framework. Both speakers not only discuss decoloniality but also challenge it with other approaches, such as postcolonial perspectives, which are often seen as chronologically linear. Through this, we understand the potential and limitations of decolonial perspectives within intimate encounters.

3) Decolonising Academia: Methods, methodologies and research ethics:  
Panellists are invited to reflect together on the theme of decolonising academia by discussing subjects that transcend not only the methods we use and how we use them but also the academic space itself. The aim of the day is to acknowledge the myriad ways in which academia has been structured by colonialism, often discouraging indigenous knowledge production by perceiving it as non-universal.

#### SPEAKERS:

Prof. Dr. Bandana Purkayastha (Professor of Sociology and Asian and Asian American Studies, University of Connecticut)

Prof. Dr. Maitrayee Chaudhuri (The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington)

Prof. Dr. Navaneetha Mokkil (Department of Gender Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University)

The deadline for submissions is March 1<sup>st</sup> 2023. Abstracts should be between 500-750 words. Participants are also required to submit a bio of 100-300 words. The conference will result in two special issues, and participants will be required to submit their full papers by April 15<sup>th</sup> 2023. These papers will then be circulated to all speakers, organisers and participants. Participants will be expected to provide detailed reflections and feedback on the papers of all their peers. This intensive two-day event is a collaborative endeavour and we expect participants to be accountable for the work of their peers. Subsistence and travel grants are available for all participants. Submissions are particularly encouraged from early career researchers (PhDs and Postdocs) from marginalised communities and the Global South.

Please send your submissions to: [decol2023@gmail.com](mailto:decol2023@gmail.com)

For further information please contact organisers:

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