



Alternative Imaginaries: Feminist Transformative Politics in the Global South

Conference Convener

Dr Fatemeh Sadeghi

Co-Conveners

Dr Sertaç Sehlíkoglu, Dr Yuan He, Burcu Kalpaklioglu

18 May 2024

Institute for Global Prosperity, UCL

Venue: B.3.04 – Lecture Theatre 1, Cruciform Building,
Gower Street, UCL, London, WC1E 6BT

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Introduction

This conference is organized to examine the ways in which feminist imagination is changing the face of the Global South by challenging gendered political structures, legal systems, and development trajectories in the Global South. On the one hand, the existing normative attitudes around gender are protected by advocating misogynist tradition and law, thus leading to feminist critique of constitutionalism, especially in Malaysia, India, Iran, and Afghanistan. On the other hand, feminists in the Global South, including Africa, Asia, and South America, encounter the challenges of colonial feminism.

We are keen on understanding feminists' response to this situation: What are the prospects that feminists in the Global South offer for addressing democratic, social, epistemological, cultural, and political relations? How do feminists in the Global South imagine a more egalitarian future for themselves and the younger generations, and how do they build solidarity networks and future collaboration? What are the backlashes and responses to gender equality demands? How do feminists deal with them?

The participants of this conference aim to understand these tensions: First, the existing norms being appropriated to the new politics and thus deepening normative attitudes, including gender inequality, misogyny, gender-based violence, and pro-natalist policies; second, the invisibility of feminists of the Global South and the forms of resistance towards changing their society and politics, and third, the masculinist backlash against them exemplified in right-wing populism, religious fundamentalism, and conservative politics.

Based on 1) several years of collaborative work with scholars across Balkan-to-Bengal-Complex working in TAKHAYYUL Project¹, norms and challenges to legislations in the Muslim contexts, and 2) a number of scholarly conversations drawing parallels across Islamic and non-Islamic contexts of the Global South, this conference is to understand the tensions between the gender norms and the new politics.

¹ Imaginative Landscapes of Islamist Politics Across Balkan-to-Bengal Complex, Starting Grant (2019), no.853230.

Provisional Conference Schedule

9.30 - 10.00

Welcome, Coffee, and Introduction

Join us for a warm welcome and a cup of coffee and pastries with an introduction to our exploration of feminist perspectives in the Global South

10.00 - 11.45

Opening Panel: Feminist Futures: An Introductory Conversation

Chair: Dr Juliana Demartini Brito, UCL

- Feminist Alternative Imaginaries in the Global South (Dr Fatemeh Sadeghi, UCL)
- Not So Gender-Neutral: The New Right and Its Populism (Dr Sertaç Sehlükoglu, UCL)
- Women's Sense of Their Hak (Rights), Divine Justice, and Economies of Divorce in Istanbul (Burcu Kalpaklioglu, University of Amsterdam)
- A Silent Reproductive Revolution: "We are the last generation" (Dr Yuan He, UCL)

11.45 - 13.15 Lunch Break

13.15 - 15.00

Panel 2: Politics of Intimacy: Gender, Law, and the Perpetuation of Inequality

Chair: Prof. Silvia Suteu, UCL

- Beyond Imagining: Shifting Paradigm in the Iranian Protest Culture and an Inclusive and Women-centric Constitution (Prof. Homa Hoodfar, Concordia University)
- Who's Afraid of Marriage Equality? India's Same-Sex Marriage Decision and Its Implications for Women (Prof. Vrinda Narain, McGill University)
- Women's Rights Reform in North African Constitutions (Prof. Aili Mari Tripp, University of Wisconsin)
- Feminist Resistance Against Undemocratic Structures in Iran and Turkey (Prof. Mona Tajali, Stanford University)

15.00 - 15.15 Afternoon Tea Break

15.15 - 17.00

Panel 3: Subaltern Forms of Feminist Resistance

Chair: Prof. Alex Hyde, UCL

- Challenge of Islamic Feminism (Prof. Ziba Mir-Hosseini, SOAS)
- Political Imagination through Kurdish Women's Movement (Dr Nazan Ustundag, independent scholar)
- Rethinking Violence, Emerging Subjects: Indigenous Perspectives in Central America (Dr Silvia Posocco, Birkbeck University of London)
- Anti-Racism, Intersectionality, and the Struggle for Dignity (Prof. Mónica G. Moreno Figueroa, Cambridge University)

17.00 - 17.15 Afternoon Tea Break

17.15 - 18.30

Roundtable: Future Collaborations and Publications