

**International Conference  
"Societies in Transition – Challenges to Women's and  
Gender Studies"**

**(28 June – 1 July 2001)**

**Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg  
(Oldenburg i.O./ Lower Saxony, Germany )**

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## Preface

Women and gender studies programmes exist in many countries at this point in time. It is a crucial task for the future of this still emerging discipline to enhance international communication and cooperation between study programmes, students, scholars, activists and professionals. If we consider ideals and concepts of emancipation and participation as core principles of women and gender studies, global networking requires systematically including non-western perspectives at all levels of research, teaching and curriculum development.

Consequently, the invited speakers at this conference come from a variety of countries, including Hungary, Poland, Great Britain, India, Jordan, Nepal, New Zealand, South Africa, Turkey and Yemen. Why that choice? It is quite obvious that this comparatively small conference does not aim at presenting a representative sample of Women and Gender Studies programmes worldwide. But when inviting speakers we were seeking diversity and variety, we were also seeking programmes in countries with dynamic societal developments and – last but not least – we chose to invite those with whom we had existing contacts and in some cases ongoing cooperation looked promising.

The speakers will present inside perspectives of their women and gender studies programmes: their content and curricula, teaching methods and aims. Furthermore, they will analyse and discuss how societal transition influences the emergence and further development of such programmes. Papers will be given by scholars representing women and gender studies programmes, but also by professionals and activists whose work focuses on women and gender.

Questions to be discussed and investigated against this background are:

- What are the societal significance and the impacts of women and gender studies in different countries and different regions of the world? How do we name differences and commonalities of developments?
- What can new forms of international networking and cooperation in the fields of research as well as academic teaching look like?

The conference aims at investigating and developing possibilities for transnational cooperative initiatives and projects, primarily those involving women and gender studies programmes.

In 1993 the University of Oldenburg hosted an international conference on 'Women's Studies im internationalen Vergleich' ('International Perspectives of Women Studies'). It was the very first conference dealing with this topic in Germany. At that time we focused on finding out about and learning from women studies programmes at some of our partner universities (e.g. in the US and in the Netherlands) and on bringing together and

discussing different attempts to institutionalise women studies curricula programmes at different levels of German higher education.<sup>1</sup>

The 2001 Conference goes further. Since then not only did Oldenburg University in 1997 inaugurate two interdisciplinary Women and Gender Studies programmes<sup>2</sup>, but also, at the beginning of 2001, the University officially launched the 'Centre of Interdisciplinary Research on Women and Gender'. Some other German institutions of higher education started Women's and Gender Studies programmes as well, others are planning to do so in the near future. The International Women's University in Hannover, as part of the World Exhibition 2000 in Hannover/ Lower Saxony, Germany, was a great success. This conference hopes to continue the momentum established by these previous events.

The conference takes place under the auspices of the Minister of Science and Culture of Lower Saxony, Thomas Oppermann. We would like to thank the Minister as well as all funding institutions for their considerable support. Together with our colleagues working in the interdisciplinary field of women and gender issues we feel encouraged to intensify our own perspectives of internationalising academic and political work as well as to partake in building fruitful transnational alliances between women of the West, the South, the East, and the North.

Welcome to all the participants to the conference, sincere thanks to all the speakers and to the moderators, who have engaged in the conference. Together with them we are looking forward to some exciting and productive discussions.

Heike Fleßner, Lydia Potts

Oldenburg, June 2001

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<sup>1</sup> See conference documentation: Heike Fleßner, Marianne Kriszio, Rita Kurth, Lydia Potts (Hg.): Women's Studies im internationalen Vergleich. Pfaffenweiler 1994.

<sup>2</sup> 'Women's and Gender Studies'/ 'Frauen- und Geschlechterstudien', a minor as part of the Magister-Studium, and 'Cultural Gender Studies'/ 'Kulturwissenschaftliche Geschlechterstudien' as a postgraduate programme.

# Conference Program

## ***Wednesday, 27 June***

Arrival of international guests and participants

8.00 pm                      Pre-conference-dinner  
(Restaurant 'Ali Baba', Ammerländer Heerstraße 120)

## ***Thursday, 28 June***

10.00 am                      **Opening**  
Ina Grieb,  
Vicepresident of the Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg  
Barbara Hartung,  
Lower Saxon Ministry of Science and Culture, Hannover  
Heike Fleßner, Lydia Potts  
Center of Interdisciplinary Research on Women and Gender at  
Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg

10.45 am                      **Co-option or Transformation? Women and Gender Studies  
Worldwide**  
Gabriele Griffin (Kingston University, United Kingdom)

### **Discussion**

12.00 am                      Lunch  
Guided walk of campus: Students act as guides

2.00 pm                      **Focus: India and Nepal**  
Moderator: Claudia Fuchs

- **Gender Studies at Haryana Agricultural University, Hirna/ Haryana, India**  
Savita Singal, Haryana Agricultural University
- **Women's Studies at Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu/ Nepal**  
Puspa Ghimire-Niraula, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu
- **Strategies of Women's Empowerment:  
Women's Micro Enterprises in Nepal**  
Ira Acharya, Micro Enterprise Development Program, Kathmandu/ Nepal

4.15 pm                      Coffee break

4.45 pm -                      **Focus: Republic of South Africa:**

6.15 pm

Moderator: Claudia Lohrenscheit

- **Gender Studies and Gender Transformation in South Africa: Opportunities and Costs of Gender Mainstreaming**  
Sheila Meintjes, University of the Witwatersrand, Director of the Graduate Gender Studies Programme
- **Does the Policy and Legislative Framework Address the Impact of HIV/AIDS on Women at Work and Girl Learners at Public Schools in South Africa?**  
Samiera Zafar, Centre for Education Policy Research, Evaluation and Management (CEPD)

6.30 pm

Dinner

***Friday, 29 June***

9.00 am

**Focus: Europe (I):**

Moderator: Heike Fleßner

- **Women's and Gender Studies in German Higher Education**  
Silke Wenk, Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg
- **Women's and Gender Studies in Germany – Strategies of Internationalization**  
Sigrid Metz-Göckel, Hochschuldidaktisches Zentrum, Universität Dortmund

10.15 am

Coffee break

10.45 am

**Focus: Europe (II):**

Moderator: Claudia Fuchs

- **Women's and Gender Studies in a Global-Local Perspective: Developing the Frame**  
Susan Zimmermann, Central European University, Budapest
- **Poland: Gender Studies/ Postgraduate Program at University of Warsaw**  
(Bozena Choluj, University of Warsaw and European University Viadrina, Frankfurt/Oder)

12.15 pm

Lunch

1.30 pm

**Focus: Europe (III):**

Moderator: Dagmar Schiek

- **Gender and Power – The European Union as a Masculine Project of Supranational Governance**  
Susanne Schunter-Kleemann, Hochschule Bremen
  - **Strategies and Demands of Women’s NGOs – From Central and Eastern Europe in the Beijing +5 and the European Union Enlargement Process**  
Kinga Lohmann, KARAT KOALITION, Warsaw, Poland
- 3.00 pm Coffee break
- 3.30 pm **Panel:**  
Moderators: Heike Fleßner, Lydia Potts  
**Women’s and Gender Studies -Exchanging experiences**  
Victoria Grace, University of Canterbury, Christ Church, New Zealand and others
- 5.00 pm Coffee break
- 5.30 pm **Middle East (I)**  
Moderator: Lydia Potts
- **The Transitions in the Situation of Women in Yemen**  
Rashida Al-Hamadani; Chairperson of the Women National Committee, Sana’a, Yemen
  - **New Perspectives and Challenges of Women’s Studies at Aden University, Yemen**  
Rokhsana M. Ismail; Women’s Research & Training Center, Aden University, Yemen
- 7.00 pm Dinner
- 8.00 pm **Which Equalities Matter?**  
Anne Phillips, Gender Institute, London School of Economics and Political Science
- Discussion**
- 9.30 pm Reception by the Presidency of the Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg  
(Guest House, Drögenhasenweg)
- Saturday, 30 June**
- 10.00 am **Focus: Middle East (II):**  
Moderator Lydia Potts

- **The Women´s Studies Program at the University of Jordan:  
Current Status and Prospects for the Future**  
Yasmin Haddad, University of Amman, Jordan
  
  - **Women´s Status in Jordan - Progress and Setbacks**  
Josi Salem-Pickartz, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Amman,  
Jordan
  
  - **Women´s and Gender Studies at Middle Eastern Technical  
University,  
Ankara, Turkey**  
*Gamze Ege, Middle Eastern Technical University, Ankara*
- 12.15 pm                      Lunch
- 1.30 pm                      **Final session:**  
**Networking and Cooperating Transnationally – Initiatives  
and Prospects (Plenary discussion)**  
Moderators: Heike Fleßner, Lydia Potts
- 3.00 pm                      **Conclusions**

## Abstracts and biographical notes



Ira Acharya holds an M.A. in Economics from Tribhuvan University, Nepal. She is currently District Programme Manager of the Micro-Enterprise Development Programme, Sunsari, Nepal.

### **Ira Acharya**

(Micro Enterprise Development Programme, Kathmandu/ Nepal)

### **Strategies of Women's Empowerment: Women's Micro Enterprises in Nepal**

With an alarming 42% of people below the absolute poverty line and a majority of them being women, there has been an increasing awareness in the direction of women empowerment. But the empowerment initiatives are challenged by a complex situation for women in prevailing Nepalese society. A Majority of them is illiterate, exploited and discriminated. Their labour and role in economic and other sectors of society has still not received an equal recognition nor share in the economy. Among various approaches of empowerment, programmes of enabling women to improve their chances of income generation in both household and other economic front have been conducted over the years by government, INGO, NGO and private institutions with diverse donor support. Some of these programmes are extended to micro-enterprise creation and development. But fully addressed programmes involving credit, skill training, entrepreneurship development, product development, market promotion are few. The success rates of these programmes are not satisfactory even though there are some local success stories. To reduce absolute poverty, the low income families have to take an active part in economic activities. The degree of women's involvement in such activities decides the significance of these types of programmes. A policy of promoting pro-poor gender focus demand-driven micro-enterprise with enough time to sustain, comprehensive support services, marketing strategies, networking efficient delivery mechanism, appropriateness to local conditions has to be formulated.

As an initiative in this direction, the Government of Nepal has launched the Micro-enterprises Development Programme in collaboration with the UNDP and several national partner agencies. It is designed to support the Ninth Plan (1997-2002) in which poverty reduction through off-farm employment is the key goal. The programme intends to foster establishment of micro-enterprises, which include 70% women and 30% men of low income families in rural areas of Nepal. It has a concept to deliver integrated packages of services including entrepreneurship development, skill training, marketing support, appropriate technology and micro-credit in developing sustainable enterprises and creating additional job opportunities in rural areas. Micro Enterprise Development Programme



(MEDEP) has helped rural women through entrepreneurship training, need based skill training, credit and regular counselling. It has made women able to contribute in the household economy. Rural women are transforming into successful entrepreneurs. These women involved in enterprises have produced encouraging results in generating and increasing income of women in Nepal. As the women have to deal with people who come and buy their products, they have developed interacting capability. Information networks have developed.

It has helped a lot in developing and expanding their enterprises. The women who are supported by MEDEP have successfully been able to improve their position in the home as well as in society. Society too has become more positive towards women as their income-generating capability have increased. Women are getting recognition and are active in effective decision making procedures inside and outside the household.

Now, the Nepalese have a new strategy to empower the economically and socially disadvantaged women in society. This paper provides a glimpse of the empowered status of Nepalese women thanks to micro-enterprise support.



Rashida Al-Hamadani

Qualification: B.A. (Hons) Psychology - Aligarh Muslim University - India 1971. Diploma in Planning & Development - Sana'a University - 1989.

Present Occupation: Chairperson of the Women National Committee and General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Women. Managing Director for Administration and Labour - Office of the Prime Minister, Sana'a, Republic of Yemen.

## **Rashida Al-Hamadani**

(Chairperson of the Women National Committee, Sana'a, Yemen)

### **Transitions in the Situation of Women in Yemen**

Background: The Republic of Yemen is an emerging democracy, formed in May 1990 after unification of its Northern and Southern parts. The new state struggled with many issues. Some are shared with other nations going through similar transitions and others are unique. Yemen has diverse regional, social, political, and religious traditions.

With a predominantly rural population (> 70%) living in isolated communities with limited access to education, health care and other social services, Yemen's health, education and poverty statistics are of grave concern.

Gender Perspective: Many aspects of gender relations are in transition due to rapid urbanisation, trends of immigration and returnees, changing political dimensions and economic challenges that influence gender relations. Economic adversity has increased

male frustration, which has contributed to the increase in domestic violence. Economic hardship has also forced many women to seek employment or income generating opportunities outside the home, increasing their workload, but also their power in family decision-making.

The rights and roles of women are important issues of debate in Yemen. At the core of this dialogue are conceptions about appropriate relations between men and women and how these concepts relate to visions of society. The term "gender" itself has entered the discussion and currently is widely misunderstood and perceived as threatening the centrality of the family and societal values and morals.

Gender and Public Life: Yemeni history includes not only queens and models of female leadership, but also influential mothers, wives, poetesses etc. In general, this has positively influenced conceptions of female leadership and power in the society. With unification, the process of democracy began. It includes commitments to a multi-party system, liberalization of the economic system and development of civil society. This process has dramatically increased opportunities for both men and women although this has not been smooth, it has largely been steady.

Yemeni women were the first, and still are the only, females on the Arabian Peninsula who have suffrage rights.

Two women were elected into the Parliament out of 301 members. Two women were appointed recently into Al-Shura Council out of 101 members. In the first Local Council which concluded in February this year 35 women were elected. The first female minister has been appointed as the First Minister of State for Human Rights.

The Women National Committee was established in 1996 and was restructured last year to become the Supreme Council for Women, headed by the Prime Minister. This government body has been provided with the mandate to oversee all women's issues in the country. It is an advisory body setting up policies, strategies and plans for women.

Advancement of women can be seen in all aspects of life, as pilots, lawyers, doctors, professors, managers, business women etc. Women entered new avenues and started to break away from stereotypes.

Yemen has steadily increased the number of women active in government service (15%), the largest employer. The civil service has a very clear and equitable wage scale based on qualifications and years of service. However, gender inequities do arise within the bureaucracy in promotions, training, missions etc.

Many women are engaging in non-formal activities that are often conducted in private homes, in sex-segregated environments.

A significant proportion of the labour force is employed in the agricultural sector. Over 70% of agricultural work is done by female farmers.

The Yemeni constitution which is based on sharia laws provides women with equal rights with men. There is a discrepancy between practice and the rights that women have. Legal literacy is a major issue for women.

Gender and Health Care : Yemen has high infant, child and maternal mortality rates. This is compounded by high fertility rates, child birth, early marriages, low coverage of maternal care services and the heavy work-load of rural mothers.

Gender and Education: Yemen has made significant progress in education including women. Nevertheless, key gender issues related to education include social attitudes towards girls' education, low female enrollment and high drop-out rates, low numbers of female teachers and lack of schools and inadequate facilities which has a more significant impact on female students.

The final part of the presentation will address future prospects for advancement of women in Yemen.



Gamze Ege is research assistant and graduate student of the Gender and Women's Studies program at the Middle Eastern Technical University (METU). She is a sociologist and currently preparing her thesis on 'Trafficking in Women: The Case of Moldovan Domestic Workers in Turkey'.

## **Gamze Ege**

(Middle Eastern Technical University (METU), Ankara, Turkey)

Women's and Gender Studies at Middle Eastern Technical University



Puspa Ghimire-Niraula is a lecturer of Economics and Women's Studies at Padmakanya Multiple Campus Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu. She got her M.A. in Economics from T.U., Kathmandu, and her MSc. in Rural and Regional Development Planning at the Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand. Research focusses on areas like: Globalization, labor markets and the impact on women's work and employment; Analysis of primary school learning materials from gender perspectives; community based forest resource development and management. Participation in the project area "Work" at ifu, Hannover 2000.

## **Puspa Ghimire-Niraula**

(Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal)

### **Women's Studies at Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu/Nepal**

The one-year Post Graduate Diploma Course on Women's Studies got started in the Central Department of Home Science, Padmakanya Multiple campus, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, for the first time in 1996. The course is designed to provide conceptual and theoretical knowledge on Women and Development and to develop ways to put gender analysis into it. Thus, the main focus of the Program is Gender and Development and it seeks to develop academically qualified and professionally motivated human resources for the achievement of the goal of women's empowerment, gender equality and social justice.

This paper is going to highlight the whole process of introducing a Women's Studies Program in Nepal, how it evolved historically, how the need was felt to conduct a course on Women's Studies, how the program started as a separate discipline, how social (global as well as national) changes have been influencing the perception of people related to this program, what are its challenges and what we are planning for the future.

The major objective of the Women's Studies Program is to promote the advancement of women and to strengthen their role in the development process through gender focused post-graduate education and field-based research.

The Program's Curriculum has four major components:

- I. Gender Concepts and Theories
- II. Women in Development
- III. Women in Politics, Public Policies, Planning and Legal System
- IV. Research Methodology from Gender Perspectives.

Section I includes: Basic concepts and ideology of gender, patriarchy and feminism, socio-cultural aspects of gender, sex and gender in the context of social change and construction of women and development theory.

Section II includes: Introduction to development, women's work: Triple role - theoretical to empirical perspectives, women's role in development, women in sectoral development and women in international development.

Section III includes: Women in politics, women in public policies, women in the legal system, gender gap: Impediments to development and gender planning, programming and implementation.

Section IV includes: Conceptualisation, methodology, proposal development and paper writing, data analysis and interpretation, research paper writing

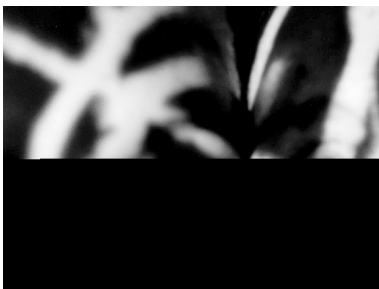
Output: After the completion of this course the students will be able to analyse social structures (economy, society, politics, law, religion, culture, etc.) from gender perspectives and to examine the situation of women in it. They will also be able to face the future challenges and will be qualified enough to undertake development works, research and action projects related to women's issues.

Teaching Methods: In the Women's Studies Program teaching/learning methods are interactive and participatory. The teaching process includes: Lectures, group discussions and presentations, panel discussions, symposiums, participation in seminars/workshops, case studies, role plays, guest speakers, audio-visual presentations, questions and answers, field visit, participatory field research, practices of statistical tools and use of Documentation and Research Centre (DRC/WS) with other extra-curricular activities.

Teachers/Research Consultants: To conduct regular classes there are fifteen specially trained teachers from different Departments of Padmakanya Multiple Campus, T.U. With them some well-known national and international experts, resource persons, academics, scholars, etc. are also facilitating for the program. Women's Studies teachers are involved in various gender trainings/workshops and research activities at home and abroad.

Workshops/Seminars: Interactive workshops and seminars are held on a regular basis on the issues related to women and gender, e.g., participation in decision-making, mainstreaming and empowerment of women, roles and responsibilities of women in Nepalese society and the status of women in Nepal.

DRC/WS Advisory Committee: In the advisory Committee there are members and representatives from GO's, NGO's, Women's Organizations and Women Studies Programs.



Dr. Victoria Grace is senior lecturer in Gender Studies at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand. She has past experience as Head of Department of Gender Studies, and

is currently serving a three-year term as Dean of Arts. Her research interests are in gender, health and embodiment, and feminist theory. She is author of "Baudrillard's Challenge, A Feminist Reading" and co-editor of "Bodily Boundaries, Sexualised Genders and Medical Discourses". She teaches in gender and critical (health) psychology.

## **Victoria Grace**

(University of Canterbury, Christ Church, New Zealand)

### **From "Feminist Studies" to "Gender Studies": Challenges to Gender Studies at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand**

The Department of Gender Studies began at the University of Canterbury as a programme in Feminist Studies in 1987, grew to attain the status of a department of Feminist Studies, and this year has changed its name to Gender Studies. It currently has an academic staff establishment of four continuing positions. This paper will outline the challenges faced during the department's growth, consolidation and now its actions to retain a viable student and research base. I will consider a number of issues in the context of a turbulent national policy framework. The discussion will include the question of relationships with feminist scholarship based in other disciplines and interdisciplinary programmes on the campus, the implications of the rise of interdisciplinarity in social sciences and humanities, the politics of knowledge and academic "territory", issues of autonomy and size, relationship with the broader university and with other universities nationally, issues facing research, the impact/opportunities of the incarnation of student as consumer and of tertiary education as a vocational track, perceptions of feminist scholarship, relationships between academic feminist scholarship and the wider community of women's and feminist interests.



Gabriele Griffin is Professor of English at Kingston University in the south of London. Until 1998 she was Professor of Women's Studies and Head of the School of Cultural Studies at Leeds Metropolitan University. Her research has focused in the main on women's cultural production. Her recent publications include *HIV/AIDS and Representation: Visibility Blue/s* (Manchester University Press, 2000), *Straight Studies Modified: Lesbian Interventions in the Academy* (co-edited with Sonya Andermahr, Cassell, 1997), and *Feminist Activism in the 1990s* (edited; Taylor and Francis, 1995). She is co-founding editor of the journal *Feminist Theory* (Sage). At present she is working on a book on *Contemporary Black British Playwrights* (Manchester University Press, 2002). She is also co-ordinator of a two-year EU-funded project on 'Women's Studies Training and Women's Employment in Europe'. The project has eleven partners from nine European countries, including the University of Frankfurt am Main.

## **Gabriele Griffin**

(University of Kingston, UK)

### **Co-option or Transformation? Women and Gender Studies Worldwide**

The establishment of Women's or Gender Studies as a world-wide phenomenon occurred from the 1970s onwards, resulting in an unprecedented growth of the subject during the 1990s. This development was driven by political and economic agendas of 'widening participation' and of 'access' articulated, among others, in the policies of international organizations such as the United Nations and the World Bank, as a consequence of the recognition that women's exclusion from economic and political participation was detrimental to general productivity rates, and for achieving economic and political change. Analysing the geopolitical distribution of Women's Studies in countries ranging, *inter alia*, from South Africa to Thailand, Russia, and the Scandinavian countries, I shall argue that there is a correlation between the kinds of institution (NGOs; universities; mixed-economy institutions) in which Women's Studies is taught and the kinds of program they offer, suggesting that whilst many programs in northern and western universities have succumbed to what one might describe as the 'cultural turn', many southern and eastern institutions are more focused on the notion of educating their new administrative and professional classes to act as 'catalysts for change'. These differences and their implications raise issues regarding the question of co-option versus transformation, and of academization versus activism, in relation to Women's Studies as it becomes institutionalized, highlighting what are both problems and opportunities for the subject. In conclusion I shall argue that the future prospects for the subject on a global scale are excellent since 'gender' has become a key category in international policy-making, and that Women's Studies as a subject offers an opportunity for women to assume agency in a context where the image of women produced by global statistics such as those of the Sisterhood is Global Institute in Montreal or by the World Bank, is that of a global sisterhood locked together through victimization and a profound lack of agency.



Dr. Yasmin Haddad is Chairperson at the Psychology Department, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Jordan.

## **Yasmin Haddad**

(University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan)

## **The Women's Studies Program at the University of Jordan: Current Status and Prospects for the Future**

The M.A. program in Women's Studies was established in 1999 as one of the first interdisciplinary programs at the University of Jordan. The decision to include this program of study reflects the recognition of/and concern with gender and women issues dominating the social-political scene in recent years. The program aims at developing specialized personnel in the area of women's studies who are capable of conducting research and qualified in planning and implementing policies to strengthen women's role locally, regionally and internationally.

This general goal is translated further in more specific objectives that aim at:

1. Helping students acquire knowledge and skills necessary for understanding and reinforcing women's participation in community and public life.
2. Developing students' awareness of contemporary issues related to women, both locally and internationally to enable them to deal with these issues on a scientific basis.
3. Helping students acquire skills related to quantitative research. Training students in research methods related to women's roles in their community.
4. Emphasizing students' personal development and creativity.

The study plan includes compulsory courses dealing with: Women in Society; Feminist Theory; Research Design; and Women's Psychology. It also includes elective courses dealing with specific areas related to women's lives in the domains of law, politics, development, literature, history and health. In addition the program requires a master thesis to be conducted on the basis of empirical data (in general).

In evaluating the program one should take in consideration cultural-specific (as well as universal) criteria for assessing an academic program in women's studies. To what extent does the program meet the needs of local women being economic, social, political or educational? Are the products of this program, in terms of knowledge and skills acquired readily applicable in the Jordanian locale?

To what extent does the program provide a basis for the prospects of social change needed in this domain.

Future plans should take these issues in consideration to fulfill the further goals stated for the program.



Rukhsana Mohammed Ismail, Ph. D. in Chemistry, is Lecturer in the Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Education at the University of Aden. She is also director of the university's Women Center of Training and Research. In 1997 she was awarded the Women of Color Technology Award / Baltimore's Bicentennial Celebration, USA. Her publications include numerous articles in chemistry journals as well as articles on women and gender in Yemen.



## **Rokhsana M. Ismail**

(Aden University, Yemen)

### **New perspectives and Challenges of women's studies at Aden University, Yemen**

The University of Aden's concern in establishing the Woman's Research & Training Centre was part of the overall organizational framework to place the university in the service of society. The motives for establishing the centre were to raise general consciousness and that of decision-makers, about women issues for achieving participation in the implementing of various recommendations arising out of the various international, regional and local initiatives. The centre's main focus is improving Yemeni women's position as a national question, not merely as a recognition of her role as a human being, a researcher, a mother or a citizen, but also to ensure that all human resources of the society are mobilized and well integrated to participate positively in current world-wide developments. More particularly our concern is to be able to effectively deal with the challenges imposed by the 21 Century.

The centre formed four research groups in the following fields: the socio-economic groups; the health and psychological group; the educational and cultural group and the legal group.

#### The Centre's Objectives

1. To study the condition of women and to closely observe women's role and participation in science and technology, in the social, economic and cultural spheres; to participate in finding solutions to women's problems in those spheres and in developing policy.
2. To develop a resource base for the study of women's problems in society.
3. Cooperative work with corporations from outside the university.
4. Integrate the university curricula with gender concepts and gender issues.

The formation of a specialised centre in women studies and women's activities and the training of cadres in gender issues is not an easy task in a society where pro-male concepts prevail everywhere and at all levels.

The centre endeavours to implement the following strategy:

- Realizing the 'education-for-all' principle and translating this right into good and equal educational opportunities for both sexes. This would necessarily lead to the spread and universality of basic education among the young, as well as the eradication of adult illiteracy, especially among women.
- The participation of women specialists in science and technology (S&T) in applied collective basic research and also in technology development and technology transfer activities.
- Creating a professional information system in the field of science. To supply this system to educational and training establishments to circulate them among women specialists in the sciences and encourage these women to enter the job market in this area through a package of financial and spiritual incentives.

The centre stresses the importance of the relation between science and national development ; women need to be prepared to enter the science field in

view of the fact that science is essential to the development and advancement of society.

The efforts of Aden University to improve technical and scientific education, especially in programmes and subjects related to needs, should continue to be supported.

The Women's Research & Training Centre proposes the establishment of a special prize for women researchers. It is to be awarded annually for the three best researchers. The title and the subjects are to be chosen and announced at the beginning of each year and in a specific month to be agreed upon. The centre proposes that the prize to be awarded on the eighth of March.



Kinga Lohmann: Historian and author of articles on African and religious issues. Lived in West Africa for 14 years. Involved in women's projects in Poland since 1995. Author and editor of documents, reports and other materials on women's issues. Initiator, founder and regional coordinator of the Karat Coalition – coalition of women's NGOs from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Actively involved in formulating a special Central Eastern European vision regarding women's equal status. Contributor to the presence of the CEE point of view at the UN fora.

## **Kinga Lohmann**

(KARAT COALITION, Warsaw, Poland)

### **Strategies and Demands of Women's NGOs - From Central and Eastern Europe in the Beijing+5 and the European Union Enlargement Process**

The Beijing+5 process was a big challenge and a great opportunity for KARAT - an action-oriented coalition of organizations and individuals who work together to change the socio-political position of women in Central and Eastern Europe, and to strengthen women's NGOs in the process of democratization.

The big challenge for KARAT was how to participate actively in the Beijing +5 process. We did not want a repetition of the situation from the Beijing conference, where our region - Central and Eastern Europe - was invisible, and not because our representatives were not there. We were utterly disorganized and a majority of us was lost due to a lack of knowledge of: the mechanisms of UN conferences, the significance of lobbying, the role of NGOs in the process of influencing an international document. We were also not aware how the activities on an international forum can be used in one's country. This lack of active involvement in the work on the Beijing document meant that we were also unaware of the potential significance of documents for the improvement of the situation of women in our countries.

The KARAT took the opportunity of involvement in Beijing+5 to strengthen itself and gain recognition at the international forum. Through active participation, KARAT leadership and member organizations have become increasingly effective in organizing caucuses and workshops, producing policy statements and recommendations, lobbying, working with government representatives, using the media and writing NGOs reports for the United Nations. Thanks to the active participation in this process, the strong points of KARAT are: experience and legitimacy at the international level, particularly within the CEE and the UN and learning the meaning and importance of joint regional action, switching from a single country women's perspective to a regional strategy for the advancements at the national level.

The major KARAT activities in the years 1997-2000 were to remind governments in the Central Eastern Europe of their international commitments, especially those made at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.

The Beijing+5 review of the Platform for Action was extremely important for women from CEE. With the conclusion of this process, the key issues for women in the region were identified: 1) gender awareness is missing at all levels of society, as are the institutional mechanisms needed for promotion of such awareness; the existence and correct functioning of the institutional mechanisms were perceived as very important for development of democracy and promotion of gender awareness; 2) the economy in transition, the process of privatization in the region has often had negative impacts on women - both in terms of gaining access to assets and in terms of practices of the new private sector; 3) one of the most burning questions calling for resolution is the situation of women and girls in armed conflict and peace building.

There is now another process that offers opportunities to address gender equality and to impose and enforce women human rights standards, both political and economic. A new KARAT initiative switches from the UN and CEE forum to the European Union level. So that the KARAT will monitor the implementation of the European Union gender equality standards in the EU enlargement process.

A new Karat initiative is an integrated approach to use the process of European Union Accession to advance gender equality and women's economic rights and to strengthen itself as an institution. The EU offers several invaluable supports:

1. its own gender equality standards
2. an accession process by which the EU has leverage to require changes in candidate countries' legislation and evidence of effective enforcement mechanisms
3. women's organizations as partners and collaborators.

Economic literacy: The European Union standards concerning gender equality deal mostly with equality in the labor market. Hence, the economic literacy among women from CEE is needed to increase their capacity to advocate for economic justice for women through a greater understanding of:

- a) economic theory and policy,
- b) gender implications of laws relating to employment and business,
- c) ways to promote implementation and enforcement of legislation protecting women in the economy.

The approach is to teach and build understanding and capacity regarding the economic aspects of labor codes, employment related and business related legislation.

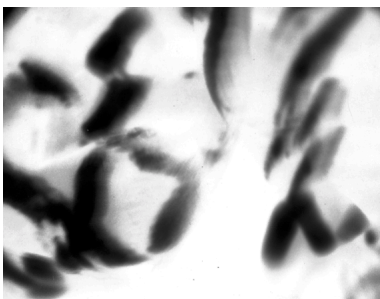
The EU accession: It's the KARAT experience from the Beijing+5 that achieving political and economic justice for women in CEE depends on using mechanisms outside of national governments and legal system. Insofar as the EU Accession process requires candidate countries to pass legislation that meets EU standards, to demonstrate the capability to enforce the law, and to set up mechanisms to transfer EU law into national law, that accession process offers an opportunity to promote the EU's gender equality standards in CEE. But to gain from this process, women in the region must understand the protocol and steps of EU Accession and develop strategic partnerships for advocacy. The objective of women's active participation is that the process of EU enlargement takes account of women's needs and perspectives, and that CEE women are conscious of the consequences of EU Accession.

European Integration: The objective is to use European integration as a way of enhancing gender equality and resources for women in EU and CEE countries - by building new partnerships and understanding between EU and CEE women's NGOs, fostering greater understanding between the citizens of the EU and CEE, and collaborating with EU women to strengthen the 'civil dialogue' about gender equality with institutions of the EU.

KARAT's experience in the Beijing+5 process exposed the serious ignorance of EU women regarding CEE women. Given an international nature of the United Nations process and the people, who were involved, this does not bode well for EU citizens more generally. Therefore, KARAT may play an important role in building EU understanding of the citizens and culture of CEE.

Effective integration into the EU is important for the women in CEE because:

- Citizens of CEE do not want to be second class citizens within EU.
- Women of CEE do not want to be second class women within the EU; do not want to be represented by existing EU women's organizations without having equal partnership with them.



Sheila Meintjes is a Senior Lecturer in Political Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, where she teaches African Studies, Political theory and Feminist Theory and Politics. She has a BA (Honours)(Rhodes), an MA (African Studies) (Sussex) and a Ph.D (School of Oriental and African Studies, London). Her recent research has focused on gender and electoral politics, women and war, gendered violence, and engendering the state. She was active in women's organisations during apartheid, and was part of the Women's National Coalition. In

April 2001 she was appointed to the Commission for Gender Equality as a Full-time Commissioner, a post she takes up in September.

### *Sheila Meintjes*

(University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa)

### **Gender Studies and Gender Transformation in South Africa: Opportunities and Costs of Gender Mainstreaming.**

This paper is an attempt to reflect on Gender Studies in the context of South Africa's monumental shift from authoritarianism to democracy, and the imperatives of a country whose priorities are reconstruction and development. The most remarkable feature of the transition has been in the rapid growth of black students in all South African Universities. At the same time, equity and transformation have been harnessed together in a restructuring of all Universities in the country. This process has dramatically changed the nature of University culture, where vocation and professionalism, linked to costs, have shifted educational priorities. In particular, the demands of the state for skills pertinent to public and social policy have led to significant new curriculum developments in academia that have created new arenas of knowledge production.

The questions which frame the discussion are linked to how feminist academics have engaged in the transformation process in society and in academia? What have been the challenges for Women and Gender Studies in our society, and what have been our strategies? I consider both the ways in which feminist academics have been active and positioned themselves in relation to the broader processes of political change and in the University as well. The paper discusses the context within which Gender Studies have emerged, the debates about the focus on 'women' and 'gender' within that context, and the outcome of those debates. In particular, the paper considers the question of 'gender mainstreaming' that has become the major strategic trajectory of gender policy in South Africa, and what implications and effects this has on gender studies. The discussion focuses upon the experiences at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, and makes no claims to reflect the experiences of all universities in South Africa.



Prof. Dr. Sigrid Metz-Göckel (Sociology) teaches at the University of Dortmund. She is the director of its Centre for Didactics. Research fields: Institutional processes in higher education in regard to women and gender.

Spokeswoman of the postgraduate programme 'Geschlechterverhältnis und sozialer Wandel. Handlungsspielräume und Definitionsmacht von Frauen' (Gender relations

and social change. Women's activity chances and power potential) from 1993-1999 and (since 2001) spokeswoman of the doctoral programme 'Wissensmanagement und Selbstorganisation' (Knowledge management and self-organization).

She initiated numerous women's movement projects at universities and in Women's Studies/Gender research.

Member of several national and federal committees, such as the German Bundestag, the German research association DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft), the Lower Saxon Women's Research Committee (Frauenkommission von Niedersachsen). Director of the ifu evaluation committee. Research stays at CNRS, RESCO, Paris; Women's College Wellesley, MA; Berkeley, CA. Recent publications: *Diplom-Pädagoginnen unterwegs. Riskante Wege auf dem Arbeitsmarkt*. Dortmund 2001 (together with Auferkorte, N./ Honvehlmann, B./ Prochnow-Karl, K.); *Mehr als ein Traum. Zum Evaluationskonzept der ifu*. In: Neusel, A.(Ed.): *Die eigene Hochschule. Internationale Frauenuniversität 'Technik und Kultur'*. Opladen 2000, p. 75-96.

## **Sigrid Metz-Göckel**

(Universität Dortmund, Germany)

### **Women's and Gender Studies in Germany – Strategies of Internationalization**

Besides a prevailing orientation to the US and some European countries, the process of internationalizing Women's and Gender Studies is rather weakly anchored in German institutions and hence remains a project for the future.

Internationalization involves at least two strategies:

- cross-state exchange among female scholars, politicians, and practitioners
- the integration of the categories ethnicity and national particularities into academic discourses - both nationally and transnationally .

Against this background, one must distinguish between the area of and mode of dealing with national or ethnic differences. The area of dealing with national/ethnic differences encompasses three basic categories—internationality, transnationality, and globality. Two major issues of this categories are women's rights as human rights and transnationality; the latter being a phenomenon of migration processes at the individual and national level as well as a political strategy that goes beyond national concepts.

Comparatively, the mode of dealing with national/ ethnic differences engages in how cultural, ethnic, or national differences are interrelated: are they structured equally or hierarchically?

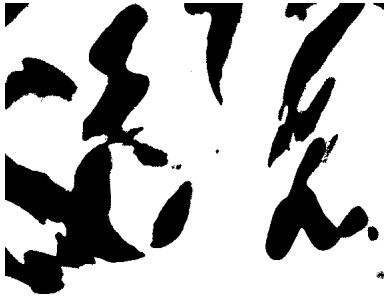
Institutionalizing a discourse on ethnic or cultural differences – within as well as beyond national borders – requires three fundamental aspects: the extension of perspectives, critical self-reflection on one's own implicit and explicit system of categories and mode of discourses, and the ability to think with the minds of the others.

The presentation will trace an overall picture of the various approaches to triggering processes of internationalization, including:

- international exchange among scholars and academic institutions
- joint programmes, such as summer schools and student exchange programmes
- joint research projects within the context of European integration
- global projects, particularly between North and South
- the set-up of institutional contexts as a "third location"

The Internationale Frauenuniversität ifu (International Women's University) 'Technik und Kultur' (Technology and Culture) took place in 2000 as a part of the World Exhibition Expo 2000 at Hannover (Germany). A global and reformist project that successfully brought together young female scholars and practitioners from all over the world (based on major funding by the German Academic Exchange Service DAAD), the ifu constituted a "third location." Freed from any single dominating culture, ifu participants built their "own sphere." They were thus afforded the opportunity and the space, as different women from across the globe, to analyze differences and dissimilarities as well as critically reflect on nationalism, Euro- and North American centrism, and other issues.

Despite considerable criticism, this intercultural communication effort met with lesser problems than communication across disciplines. Moreover, the gender perspective proved to be a key vehicle of integration among participants.



Anne Phillips, Ph.D, is Professor of Gender Theory at the London School of Economics and Political Science. In 1990 she was co-winner of the American Political Science Association's Victoria Schuck Award for Best Book on Women and Politics and in 1999 she was awarded a honorary doctorate, University of Aalborg, Denmark.

Her books include: *Which Equalities Matter?*, Polity Press, 1999; *Democracy and Difference*, Polity Press and Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993; *Engendering Democracy*, Polity Press and Pennsylvania State University Press 1991 (Spanish edition 1994, German edition 1995, Turkish edition 1995, Mexican edition, 1995, Croatian edition 1999); *The Enigma of Colonialism: British Policy in West Africa*, Indiana University Press and James Currey, 1989; *Divided Loyalties: Dilemmas of Sex and Class*, Virago 1987; *Hidden Hands: Women and Economic Policies*, Pluto Press, 1983.

## **Anne Phillips**

(London School of Economics & Political Science, UK)

### **Which Equalities Matter?**

In recent critiques of gender-neutrality, women have argued that equality between the sexes can only be achieved through the recognition of difference: that equality in employment, for example, depends on recognising women's different role in reproduction; or that equality in political representation depends on recognising gender as a salient political characteristic. These arguments have been mirrored in critiques of 'race-blind' or 'ethnicity-blind' approaches to equality, where the notion of equality as assimilation is increasingly under attack. Treating people as if they are already the same - ignoring, that is, their gender, ethnicity or race - usually has the effect of reinforcing existing inequalities. Treating people as if they ought to become the same can also be a problem. It can mean that women are expected to conform to 'masculine' models of employment or politics; and it can reinforce the dominance of ethnic majority groups.

The problem I focus on in this paper is that the critique of assimilation - or 'equality as sameness' - can give added weight to a wider critique of convergence. When this happens, it can encourage a climate in which economic equality is no longer valued as a social objective. In the field of gender studies, this is sometimes discussed as a 'turn towards culture' that threatens to leave behind earlier preoccupations with material equality. I argue here that issues about the distribution of income and wealth should continue to be central to gender studies.





Josi Salem-Pickartz, Ph.D., was born and educated in Germany. She is a clinical psychologist living in Jordan and frequently works as a consultant for UNICEF and UNHCR in Jordan, Iraq and Armenia. Her expertise covers stress and trauma counseling, child protection policy development, health, educational and social services development and women empowerment programmes. She has published widely, forthcoming are: 'Jordanian Women's Situation and Needs' and 'Democratic Leadership training for women', both to be published by Al Kutba Institute for Human Development, Amman, 2001.

### *Josi Salem-Pickartz*

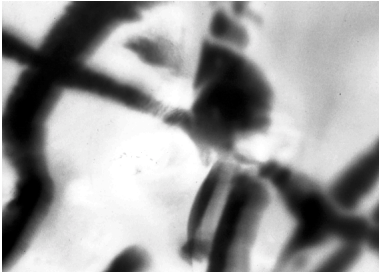
(Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Amman, Jordan)

#### *Women's Status in Jordan - Progress and Setbacks*

Women's status in Jordanian society has undergone considerable change over the last decades that are the outcome of contradictory influences. On the one hand, women have gained nearly equal status with men with regard to education and health service provision, and women constitute a significant percentage of the work force. On the other hand there are strong social traditions, based on patriarchy and tribalism, that reign in both the public and the private sphere and that also reflect on women's legal status, all of these keeping women in the end in a position of inferiority, limited participation and freedom of choice. Jordan's political history has also not led to the development of significant independent institutions of civil society that could help to propel women's cause. The overall situation naturally reflects on women's self- and political awareness and constrains their own potential to act for change.

The presentation will provide an analysis of the status of women in Jordanian society by identifying the impact of (neo-)patriarchy, tribalism and family influence, political history, legal developments and civil society organization. The analysis will refer to three sets of data obtained through the previous research activities of Al Kutba Institute for Human Development: the analysis of the election experience of the 17 women candidates that ran for the parliamentary elections in 1997; a 1998 survey of women activists' perceptions of women's needs, opportunities for and obstacles to change; and a survey on the situation, problems and needs of Jordanian women who live outside the capital Amman, also conducted in 1998.

Finally, the presentation will draft some requirements for women and gender studies programmes in Jordan with regard to women's empowerment.



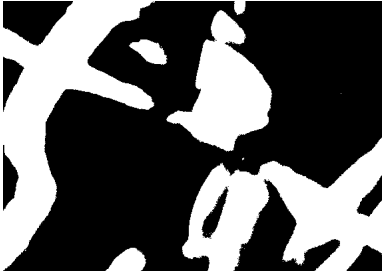
Susanne Schunter-Kleemann is professor of Sociology and Political Science at the Hochschule Bremen, University of Applied Sciences, Department of Economy. She is co-founder of the Scientific Unit for Women's Studies and Women's Research (WEFF). The WEFF is a joint project of a number of professors whose common interest is to integrate the results of women's studies into the teaching and research at the Application oriented University of Bremen. She has conducted several cross cultural studies on women and welfare systems in Europe. She is author of numerous articles on the European integration and editor of *European Single Market – EuroPatriarchy or Uprising of the Women? (EG-Binnenmarkt- EuroPatriarchat oder Aufbruch der Frauen. Bremen WEFF Verlag 1990)* and of *Herrenhaus Europa - Gender Relations in the Welfare State (Herrenhaus Europa - Geschlechterverhältnisse im Wohlfahrtsstaat). Berlin, Edition Sigma 1992.*

## **Susanne Schunter - Kleemann**

(Hochschule Bremen, Germany)

### **Gender and Power - The European Union as a Masculine Project of Supranational Governance**

This paper explores the supranational power structure of the European Union, which in the current political debate often is characterized as a political regime "sui generis". Drawing upon international discourses on the legitimational deficit of the European Union the analysis tries to throw some light on the dynamics of the inner power balance and the inter-organizational bargaining systems as new manifestations of supranational politics. The thesis will be advanced that from the beginnings in the early fifties the EC can be characterized as a masculine project of elite governance. The essential issue of the democratic deficit refers not only to institutional and procedural matters but also contains a gender dimension. To get a better understanding of the subtle mechanisms of exclusion and marginalization of women in the European institutions the specific European forms of lobbying, neocorporatist governance and clientilism which have developed in the last decades are illuminated in a gender-sensitive investigation.



Savita Singal is Professor of Family Resource Management at CCS Haryana Agricultural University. In 2000 she was involved in the International Women's University in Hannover.

## **Savita Singal**

(CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar, India)

### **Gender Studies at Haryana Agricultural University, Hirna/Haryana, India**

Policy documents concerning Indian women have been guided by the Constitution of India. Some of the Directive Principles are women-specific while others concern women indirectly or by necessary implication. A Majority of women are still very far from enjoying the rights and opportunities guaranteed to them by the Constitution.

#### *Gender Issues in Haryana*

Haryana is a relatively small agrarian state with 75% of its population living in rural areas. The state had made rapid strides on the economic front but the status of women in Haryana is still a cause for concern. While the female literacy ratio is only 40.94%, the male-female sex ratio is constantly in decline and is the second lowest in the country. The present maternal mortality rate is about 4 per 1000 live births, whereas average female life expectancy is 61.97 years. The infant mortality rate for boys is 80 per 1000 and for the girl infant, it is as high as 102 per 1000. At least, 1 in 5 married women experience domestic violence, mostly beating by their husband. Crime against women in the form of rape and dowry deaths has shown a constantly rising trend. The relatively poor, static, status of women is in sharp contrast to their constantly busy schedule. They are in fields cultivating grain for survival, rearing cattle to supplement family income, collecting cow-dung to save upon fuel, looking after all household chores, besides bearing and rearing children. Their daughters help them with all these tasks but still they yearn for a son. As in other parts of India, a daughter in Haryana is perceived to be "paraya dhan" (another's wealth).

The paper focuses in brief on the Government of Haryana's response to the deep-rooted social ideology and attitudes that point towards the low status of women and female children. Through its various gender specific innovative and ambitious development programmes, it attempts to improve their status in the family and in the community.

### **Gender Focus At CCSHAU**

CCS HAU has among others, an I.C.College of Home Science, exclusively for women. This institution offers teaching programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate (M.Sc. and Ph.D.) level in various disciplines. In keeping with the need for economic empowerment of women and improved quality of life for women in rural areas, the course curriculum at undergraduate level has been revised recently. Like all other colleges of the University, I.C. College of Home Science also has a strong component of research and extension activities for rural women. The focus is on development and dissemination of low cost appropriate technologies to reduce drudgery, energy conservation, household waste disposal, income generation, health and nutrition, clothing needs for handicapped, childcare and many others. In view of the extensive involvement of rural women in agriculture, the University has an on-going project on Women in Agriculture.

The focus of research over the last ten years and the unique extension network for reaching rural areas within the state shall be elaborated in the text of the paper.



Silke Wenk is professor of art history and gender studies at the Carl von Ossietzky University in Oldenburg, and she is one of the initiators of the postgraduate program in cultural gender studies (Kolleg Kulturwissenschaftliche Geschlechterstudien).

She has published on gender and visual representation of the Politics of the 19th and 20th century and on feminist art history

Books (selection): *Versteinerte Weiblichkeit. Allegorien in der Skulptur der Moderne.* Köln/Weimar/ Wien 1996; *Henry Moore, Large Two Forms - eine Allegorie des Sozialstaates.* Frankfurt a. M. 1997; and, forthcoming: *Erinnerungsorte aus Beton. Bunker in Städten und Landschaften* (2001) and a book about Gender and Memory (coeditor Insa Eschebach, 2002)

### **Silke Wenk**

(Carl von Ossietzky University, Oldenburg)

### **Women's and Gender Studies in German Higher Education**

Since 1997 some German universities have offered a gender studies program. The first ones started at the Humboldt-University in Berlin and Oldenburg

(Magister and postgraduate program in gender cultural studies). Other Universities for example in the South of Germany, followed last year.

These Gender Studies programs are mostly focussed on the humanities but are nevertheless interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary programs. They open questions about the relationship between the natural sciences and the humanities in the history of modernity and their images and constructions of sex and gender. The starting point and aim was to transform the male dominated culture in the production of knowledge towards equal rights and democracy in education and society.

The short history of gender studies programs at German Universities (their beginnings are to be found in earlier efforts to establish professorships in feminist or gender research in some disciplines) is closely connected with the process of restructuring the university system, in a very contradictory way.

On the one hand you can argue that the reconstruction of the academic world with the inherent challenges to old privileges and narrow-minded perspectives of some disciplines is favourable for women, not only in institutions where women were excluded for a long time but also to transform the institution. And it is obvious that women are needed in order to transform, both because of their historically learned (not at all natural!) abilities to act in difficult and marginalized positions and to manage the transformation.

On the other hand, we realise that there are tendencies to suppress gender enquiry that is more theoretical and fundamental (Grundlagenforschung), and also to deflect questions of power relations in academia and in the world of globalisation. What is demanded more and more, and what is sponsored, is research work what we call "Politikberatung", more pragmatic and policy oriented research. This includes support for the natural and technical sciences at the expense of the humanities.



Samiera Zafar completed a Masters in Education in 1996 at the University of Natal-Durban, South Africa. In the last three years she has worked as an education policy analyst at the Education Policy Unit based at the University of Natal and currently at the Centre for Education Policy Development, Evaluation and Management (CEPD), an independent Non-Government Organisation based in Gauteng.

In this capacity she has participated in several research and evaluation studies on education policy and implementation for both the provincial and national Departments of Education.

Her interest is in the area of anti-discriminatory policies, practice and programmes within schooling. She currently serves on the National Forum for Anti-Racism in Education and Training which has been recently established by the South African Human Rights Commission.

She initially trained as a Science teacher and has teaching experience at primary, secondary and tertiary level. Samiera Zafar has previously worked at the SACHED TRUST (South African Committee for Higher Education) as a Co-ordinator of an academic support programme. The programme provided support to adult learners,

predominantly women from disadvantaged communities who were upgrading their qualifications as teachers and nurses. Recent publications: Desegregation in South African public schools: emerging patterns and dominant trends for the National Centre for Curriculum Research and Development, 1999. (with Vally, S.) Racism in the Education and Training Sector (Unpublished) Concept paper presented at launch of the Anti-Racism Forum, Robben Island, October 2000.

## **Samiera Zafar**

(Centre for Education Policy Research, Evaluation and Management (CEPD))

### **Does the Policy and Legislative Framework Address the Impact of HIV/AIDS on Women at Work and Girl Learners at Public Schools in South Africa?**

Since the demise of Apartheid in 1994, post-Apartheid South Africa is undergoing rapid transition in all aspects and at every level of the society. In the past 7 years there has been a sustained commitment by the ANC-led government through a plethora of policies and legislation to achieve equality in all sectors of the society. The commitment to achieve gender justice is also at the core of the policy framework.

However, this transition in South Africa from Apartheid to a fledgling democracy since 1994, is occurring within a crisis of catastrophic proportions. South Africa, as is the rest of sub-Saharan Africa is at the epicentre of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In a survey conducted by Statistics South Africa in 1999, it was estimated that in a population of roughly 40 million people, 4.4 million have been infected with HIV/AIDS. These statistics were reported to be drawn almost exclusively from public sector anti-natal clinics. This study also estimated that approximately 22.4% of women in the population are HIV positive with a very high rate of infection amongst girls between the ages of 15-25.

Therefore, despite the mammoth efforts that are being made to transform this society, these alarmingly high figures for the prevalence of HIV/AIDS amongst young girls and women and in the population at large threaten to breakdown the very socio-economic fabric of this new democracy. An inadequate response to HIV/AIDS may result in the breakdown of the family structure; AIDS orphans threaten the health, welfare and education systems and indeed the economically active sector of the population.

This paper examines the key policies, legislation and programmes on management, infection control of HIV/AIDS, and anti-discrimination of HIV/AIDS sufferers through a 'gender lens'. The National HIV/AIDS Plan; the HIV/AIDS Codes of Good Practice Policy (Department of Labour), the National Policy for HIV/AIDS at Schools (National Department of Education) and other relevant legislation are reviewed with respect to their sensitivity to women at work in general and girl learners at public schools in South Africa, in particular. It reviews the sensitivities in the HIV/AIDS policy framework to gender in a society where gender violence is endemic and rape estimates at Rape Crisis Centres indicate that "a rape occurs every 23 seconds". In addition, the National Policy for HIV/AIDS at schools is reviewed in light of the recently released Human Rights Watch Report on Gender Violence at South African Public Schools.

In summary, this paper poses the critical question:

Is the legislative and policy framework for the management and infection control of HIV/AIDS sufficient for women in a transitional society with marked racial, class and gender inequalities, gender stereotyping, endemic gender violence and a 'culture of silence' on HIV/AIDS?

The paper acknowledges that HIV/AIDS is a national crisis affecting all sectors of the society and should be tackled as such. However, it focuses on legislation and programmes that attempt to empower women and girl learners who seem to be sitting in the "eye of the storm", to combat the disease. It points to the lacunae in the policy and legislative framework and the HIV/AIDS programmes and the mismatch between policy and implementation with respect to gender justice and makes some suggestions for a way forward.

What in this process of transition threatens to fall into oblivion, are feminist perspectives of democratization, and the structures of institutions of knowledge production which are fundamental for transformation.

The reasons for such restrictions can be found in the field of economics and the financial policy of the state with regard to institutions of education. But we must not forget that economic priorities cannot be reduced to fields of economics, they are always also culturally made.

What I would like to argue for are transdisciplinary and cultural study programs which enable women and men to re-vision the gender and power relations in science and in everyday life. And because every knowledge is situated we need transcultural perspectives for international networking which does not exclude differences but works with them.



Dr. Susan Zimmermann is an Associate Professor at the History Department and Director of the Program on Gender and Culture at Central European University, Budapest/Hungary. Habilitation at the Johannes Kepler Universität Linz/Austria. Besides a Ph.D. in history (1993), she holds a post graduate degree in Political Science. She also worked at the Institute for Research on Global Structures, Development and Crises in Starnberg/ Germany. She teaches at the universities of Linz, Vienna and Innsbruck. Major fields of scholarly interest: comparative social change, gender and women's history, theory of history and the construction of knowledge, and comparative history of the welfare state. Recent publications: *Die bessere Hälfte? Frauenbewegungen und Frauenbestrebungen im Ungarn der Habsburgermonarchie 1848 bis 1918* [The Better Half? Women's Movements and Women's Endeavors in Hungary under the Habsburg Monarchy 1848 – 1918], Wien-Budapest 1999; *Sozialpolitik in der Peripherie. Entwicklungsmuster und Wandel in Lateinamerika, Afrika, Asien und Osteuropa* [Social Policy in the Periphery. Trajectories of Development and Change in Latin America,

Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe], Frankfurt/ M.-Wien 2001 (together with J. Jäger, G. Melinz) [forth-coming April 2001]

## **Susan Zimmermann**

(Central European University, Budapest, Hungary)

### **Women's and Gender Studies in a Global-Local Perspective: Developing the Frame**

In a global perspective Women's and Gender Studies have arrived at the cross-roads in a double sense. First, they are on the edge of establishing themselves as a substantial and increasingly institutionalized compartment of academy. This is mirrored in the unfolding of a growing number of full-fledged departments (and comparably independent academic units) for women's and/or gender studies and of full-fledged degree giving programs, especially on the graduate level. In this process old and new questions over the epistemological and (inter-)disciplinary status of Women's and Gender Studies in academy are being translated into questions over the role of Women's and Gender Studies in shaping the academy of the future. Second, if Women's and Gender Studies in the process of their academic globalization wish to insist on their critical intellectual and political potential, they have to unfold a set of correspondent scholarly questions and to translate them into ways of shaping academia. They have to develop academic programs, curricula as well as related scholarly and research perspectives with an intertwined focus on gender and on social and cultural hierarchy, asymmetry, and injustice on the local and the global, the micro and the macro level. The role of Women's and Gender Studies units located in/with a focus on social and cultural relations and change characteristic for the inner and outer peripheries of our globe are of crucial importance in supporting such development.

The paper in a first part outlines some of the approaches to these fundamental issues as currently developed in the Program on Gender and Culture at Central European University, Budapest.

With regard to the status and role of Women's and Gender Studies in shaping academy one productive way of locating/establishing the field epistemologically and institutionally is to constitute it as a subject field of a new order. The expansion of Gender Studies as a field is clearly to be understood as an element and a reflection of an ongoing process of fundamental restructuring of the production of knowledge on a global scale. In this process, academy, being mostly unaware or ignorant of its own historical and societal roots and bonding is undergoing a process of deep fragmentation and destabilization. But the same process is also to be understood as an opening up of academy, involving the emergence of new spaces for scholarly inquiry with strong potentials for the development of new types of knowledge and new epistemologies. These at their best shall allow for truly global perspectives in the sense of developing a range of partial perspectives on the whole. If Gender Studies locate themselves at the cross-roads of the above mentioned ongoing, complex processes they may rightly claim – with all caution and all qualifications which need to be made – the status of an important subject field of a new order, i.e. foreshadowing and taking its part in shaping the academy of the future.



With regard to Women's and Gender Studies as a way of critical intellectual and political thinking in a global perspective one productive frame is to seek for epistemologies and scholarly approaches allowing for diversity and integration. If Gender Studies is being defined as integrative in its scholarly perspectives on local and global, dominant and non-dominant structures, cultures and interests, it is of decisive importance to reflect global asymmetries and hierarchies in the process of the production of knowledge. What is usually perceived as 'global' and 'universal' must be reconstructed as knowledge built on androcentric and eurocentric perspectives and epistemologies, i.e. as one or more dominant scholarly discourses closely related to social, cultural, and intellectual traditions and perspectives rooted in the experience and interest of dominant social groups in the core countries and (to a degree) in the peripheral regions of this globe. In doing so, Women's and Gender Studies can make itself an advocate of a growing influence of scholarly discourse and perspectives rooted in experience from the inner and outer peripheries of the global system on the production and construction of knowledge. It thus may develop new, non-hierarchical, non-normative and non-marginalizing perspectives on the (re-)production of hierarchical and asymmetrical differentiation along the lines of race, gender, and class in the single global system of today and more confined social and cultural systems of the past or within the global system of today.

The paper in a second part presents an outline of how the Program on Gender and Culture seeks to put these and related perspectives into practice. The example used is the prospective PhD Degree Program in Comparative Gender Studies at CEU. The particular feature of the gender studies doctoral program are the foci on integrative perspectives and on comparison in gender studies, both mutually strengthening and carrying each other. The guiding idea is to intertwine theoretical and empirical inquiry into gender as a problem formerly marginalized in academia with inquiry into the patterns of social and cultural change in Central and Eastern Europe (and comparable regions) as a problem marginalized in most of academia. The prospective PhD Degree Program is a most important basis for analyzing gender in/in relation to Central and Eastern Europe on the highest possible scholarly level. Such analysis must be based on a broadening of our perspectives on gender towards inclusive, global-local perspectives which allow for adequate conceptualizations of social and cultural change in the (very diverse) non-core regions of our globe.

The rationale behind building the program on these guiding ideas is theoretical, methodological and practical. The comparative perspective is one important means of translating these guiding ideas into topical research. The PhD Degree Program in Comparative Gender Studies is designed as a 36 months graduate program. Students are required to accumulate 56 credits over three years. With regard to the comparative component of their studies (which is mandatory with regard to the comprehensive exam, but non-mandatory for the PhD thesis itself), students choose to construct two basic fields areas defined by geographic, social, and cultural distance and relationship. Students have the opportunity to choose a specialization within the program which refers to the roots of the chosen PhD topic in one of the more traditional disciplines in the social sciences or humanities.

## Conference Organizers and Moderator

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