

No feminism without anticolonialism: towards a just feminist international thinking

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That some strands of dominant feminisms (including academic feminist work) have consistently been unable to grapple with the liberationist pasts and presents of feminist thinking and solidaristic organising is not a new story. These silences among 'feminists' become even more pronounced in times of imperial wars, settler coloniality and genocidal violence, and often emerge as a wilful refusal to build bridges across struggles or identify the intertwined nature of gender with racialisation and coloniality. This critique comes alive in a 2023 protest poster calling for ceasefire in Gaza that reads 'Feminist Silence on Palestine, Sudan, Congo is Patriarchal Violence'.

Decolonial feminist thinker Yuderkys Espinosa-Miñoso has carefully demonstrated how often the interests of feminists in Latin America and beyond diverge from anti-racist and anticolonial struggles, and insists that we map these 'feminist' silences and expose 'feminist' complicities that have failed to recognise that liberal frameworks and agendas are often ungirded by colonial frames of thinking. Within IR, this is reflected in how analysing the gendered effects of war are often delinked from the root causes of why wars are waged, or how occupations often take hold because of the imperial, racist, ethnonationalist and violent conceptions of state sovereignty. Further, the persistence of 'women-centric' or even 'peace and security' discourses have failed to sufficiently account for the violence of coloniality that most of the world continues to live with. Differential processes and effects of war and occupations not only impact women but also marginal racialised subjects including men who are stripped of their humanity. Or how discourses around queer and gender liberation are often co-opted by violent states to further their colonial agendas.

Thinking through feminism as a project of collective liberation, this roundtable refuses liberal, imperial and racist feminist iterations, and engages with anticolonialism as both imperative and urgent for a feminist politics of planetary social justice. This roundtable brings together scholars working with communities and issues rendered marginal within dominant critical studies of the international, and how they imagine feminism as always entangled with the politics of anticolonialism. In thinking with the questions of ethics, location, accountability and creative methodologies, this roundtable directly responds to the BISA theme of 'whose international studies?' by locating the place of anticolonial feminisms in the international we are thinking with/towards.

The roundtable features early career scholars engaging with gender, state, human/non-human, borders, de/anti/postcolonial feminisms, war and coloniality who will discuss how we can weave anticolonialism in our feminist praxis, and how we can collectively imagine a 'just' international that centres collective liberation.

Track Classification: Colonial, Postcolonial and Decolonial Working Group