

policies not be discussed as fully embedded in the bureaucratic settings and constraints in which they functioned? Should interviewees' narratives not be interpreted with due reference to archival research, rather than the other way around? And should one not avoid women's history in the Second and the Third Worlds once again (!) serving as a foil to debates in American feminism first and as a worthy historical research topic in itself only second?

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TAMALE, SYLVIA. *Decolonization and Afro-Feminism*. Daraja Press, Ottawa 2020. xv, 411 pp. Ill. Cad. \$40.00. (E-book: Cad. \$10.00)

Decolonization and Afro-Feminism by Sylvia Tamale is a comprehensive intervention that bridges decolonial analysis with intersectionality from an African standpoint. It therefore has the potential to satisfy scholars, students, policymakers, and actors of civil society who are in search of critical approaches from an African standpoint for an African context in particular, and a decentred worldview in general. The author's main argument is a call for a thorough understanding of how the histories of colonization, globalization, and neoliberalism have operated, and continue to operate, as mechanisms of othering, exploitation, and dehumanization of the people and heritage of Africa. Tamale stresses the necessity of undergoing a historically based decolonial approach in order to unpack the issues at stake when it comes to social and environmental justice in Africa. Furthermore, the author insists that any decolonial approach should be combined with an Afro-feminist analysis. By focusing on decolonization, the emphasis is placed on the need to deconstruct epistemologically and practically the ideas, systems, and practices that have been historically imposed since the European penetration in Africa in the fifteenth century. In line with scholarship on decoloniality arguing that these historical events have resulted in a coloniality of power, Tamale demonstrates how this colonial mindset remains pregnant in contemporary African settings, whether perpetrated through external instances or through internalized colonization by Africans, and people of African heritage themselves. If decoloniality is the way to deconstruct the mechanism of oppression, Tamale not only argues for an intersectional approach to processes of global capital, othering, and discrimination, but also calls for an Afro-feminist praxis that is built transnationally and collectively, and that considers how the lived experiences of inter alia gender, race, class, disability, religious, sexuality, and age discrimination can effectively be challenged.

Among the examples the author uses in her argument is the mediatized case of South African athlete Caster Semenya, which is detailed in Chapter Four of the book. Through a comparative analysis of the discourses and data produced by global athletic organizations and international and local media around and about Semenya and Michael Phelps, Tamale convincingly shows not only how the case of Caster Semenya speaks about injustice in

matters that intersect with categories of race, class, gender, and sexuality, but also how the lack of knowledge that some African indigenous gendered approaches have been erased or marginalized when, in fact, they could enable inclusive and African-based ways of acknowledging non-binary people and assuring their integrity. Thus, one of Tamale's main points is that in order to produce relevant analysis and attain social justice in praxis, all layers of society, and even more so the *wananchi* – the civilians – should draw from knowledge of indigenous history and practices in order to excavate approaches of life and community that will set the foundations to build new epistemologies and approaches to social justice on the African continent. As the author states: “The best visionaries are non-academics [...] Africa sits at the tip of the geopolitical margins, which means that its worldview is like no other; marginalized groups within Africa such as women have an even more unique worldview.”

Tamale emphasizes the concept of *ubuntu*, drawn from the Zulu language, and more broadly known as a philosophy whose expression and praxis can be found in many African contexts, as the author reminds us. The concept of *ubuntu* – “I am because we are” – can be interpreted in many ways. Nevertheless, the author insists on its encompassing concepts of humanness and interconnectedness despite differences that make community. To demonstrate her point, Tamale uses legal case examples, namely the contexts of legal pluralism (Chapter Five), international legal regimes of human rights (Chapter Six), and family law in Uganda (Chapter Eight). Departing from an individualist standpoint, which the author argues is a capitalist, Westernized, and imposed colonial approach to understanding personhood and human rights, *ubuntu* would suggest a middle ground where the individual is considered a unique person, yet significantly dependent and constitutive of community. Therefore, since the good of the community relies on the well-being and respect of the humanness and integrity of the individual, the community would be more inclined to adjust its legal, political, economic, and social basis. According to the author, this approach would reverse an individual-based approach stipulating that all human beings are equal, while erasing structural differences and inequities that are existent.

In alignment with other critical scholars, Tamale argues that colonization has created particular ways of knowing and practices that are often far from the concept of *ubuntu* and other potentially emancipatory African-based philosophies. She therefore advocates a decolonization of education, both at an institutional level and a personal, internalized level. This decolonization should, according to Tamale, be combined with Afro-feminist approaches to reconfigure the curriculum, staff recruitment, and to make academia an inclusive space of knowledge sharing and production following emancipatory and critical pedagogy. The author also insists that this knowledge not only serves and remains in African contexts, but also that it circulates globally through scholarly journals and open access that are accessible and favourable to Africans.

In her last chapter, Tamale elaborates on the need to accompany the decolonial project with a pan-African praxis that is intertwined with Afro-feminism. The author deplores the erasure of African and Afro-diasporic women's key contributions to pan-Africanism from historical and contemporary narratives. As she demonstrates, former and contemporary African feminists have contributed significantly to the decolonial pan-African project by networking transnationally and creating collectively debated intersectional agendas, such as the African Feminist Forum founded in Accra in 2006. Yet again, Tamale highlights the ways in which women and other minorities are sidelined and culturally depreciated, as exemplified by the Dakar-based Monument de la Renaissance Africaine, as well as by global institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the New Partnership for

African Development (NEPAD). She analyses how these different actors undermine feminist advancements, by marginalizing them from discussions and negotiations pertaining to regional agendas and forward-looking policies. Thus, the author calls for a non-state actor-based pan-Africanism that builds on the well-being and social justice and the most socially deprived: “At the end of the day, the uniting decolonial ideology for pan-Africanism must be anti-imperialist, anti-patriarchal and anti-militarist. It must jealously safeguard the interests of those who suffer from intersectional oppression on the basis of their gender, social status, ethnic and cultural origin, sexuality, disability, age, and other grounds.”

The author concludes with what she calls the current digital colonization, namely the extraction of digital data from African utilizers in order to serve the profits of multinational corporations outside the continent. Following an analysis of this process, the author restates the need to be vigilant about these processes and calls for decolonial and feminist ways of utilizing digitization by women of Africa following transnational and inclusive practices that serve the emancipation of the whole.

Through the different examples and analyses covered, *Decolonization and Afro-Feminism* proves to be a valuable contribution to critically engage with local, regional, and international policies and attempt at constructing new social realistic utopias, in addition to contemporary scholarship on decoloniality and intersectionality. As a scholar working on Black European women’s mobilizations, and being aware of the debates pertaining to the scope of Afro-feminism, one question unresolved for me is the extent to which the category of race – which Tamale sees as constitutive of Afro-feminism – is relevant to African settings outside of international interactions and countries that were highly marked by European settlers’ structural racism. It would be interesting to follow up by considering if and what kind of racialization mechanisms play a role at an interregional level, and in countries that have been marked by colonization without having been as structurally marked by racism in post-colonial settings. My question to the author would thus be should Afro-feminism be reconceptualized from an African standpoint that reconsiders the meanings and operability of race according to the different continental expressions? And if yes, what new conceptualizations of race can the multiple African contexts provide to enhance our general understanding of decolonization and intersectionality?

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SURKIS, JUDITH. *Sex, Law, and Sovereignty in French Algeria, 1830–1930*. [Corpus Juris: The Humanities in Politics and Law.] Cornell University Press, Ithaca (NY) 2019. xvi, 335 pp. Ill. Maps. \$115.00. (Paper: \$29.95; E-book: \$14.99.)

The French Sénatus Consulte of 1865 on the Status of Persons and Naturalization in Algeria begins by stating that “the Muslim native is French, nevertheless he will continue to be governed by Islamic law”. Article I goes on to differentiate between French nationality and