

Decolonising Economics

Module Code: 6YYD0034

Term 1 - 2023/24

Module Overview

Course Team

Module Convenor:

Dr Ingrid Harvold Kvangraven - ingrid.kvangraven@kcl.ac.uk Office Hours: Tuesdays 3.30-4.30pm

Dr Devika Dutt - <u>devika.dutt@kcl.ac.uk</u> Office Hours: Tuesdays, 15.30 - 17.00

Administrative Support:

UG-DID@kcl.ac.uk

Teaching

Teaching Weeks [Term 1]:

- Monday 25th September Friday 8th December 2023
 - o Reading Week: Monday 30th October Friday 3rd November 2023

Please note that **during** the "**Reading Week**" there are no classes taking place. This time is given to students so that they can catch up with their study materials and assessment.

Teaching Dates & Locations: timetabling and rooms may be subject to change please check <u>your timetable</u> weekly in case of any last-minute room changes.

On **KEATS**, students will also find more learning resources, including videos and additional readings, that will be posted each week.

Assessment

Components that make up this module:

Formative Assessment:

- 500 word essay plan (0% of total module weighting)
 - Due date: Monday, 13 November 2023 by 15:00PM

Summative Assessment:

- 3,000-word essay (100% of total module weighting)
 - o Due date: January 17th, 2023

The marking criteria for this level 6 module is available here

The module specific component details will be uploaded onto KEATS under the 'Assessment' section. This will detail kind of assessment, its question/s, assessment weighting, submission deadline, submission method & duration/length.

For further information regarding marking practice and procedure, please refer to Chapter <u>4.4</u> in the International Development: Undergraduate Programme Handbook [2023/24], available on the International Development KEATS page.

For further information and guidance on department assessment submission practice, late or non-submission procedure and word count penalties please go to the Department of International Development: UG Programme Handbook [2023/24] on KEATS.

If you wish to discuss any of your marks and feedback with the Module Convenor you are welcome to make an appointment for this during their office hours.

Module Description

Economics is a very powerful discipline and is often considered to be the 'queen' of the social sciences. It has immense influence on policymaking, including in emerging economy contexts. It plays a substantial role in shaping ideas about behaviour, institutions, society, and development in the image of its theories. This module aims to enable students to understand the colonial baggage that is inherent in much of economic theory and policymaking, allowing them to develop the skills to both critique existing economic policies and concepts and propose alternative, anti-colonial policies. More concretely, the module explores how economics may be conceived of as a colonial, racialised, and patriarchal science from both a theoretical and historical perspective. This is done by engaging with the debates about colonialism in economics so that students can grasp how often-taken-for-granted economic concepts may have colonial roots and colonial implications. Economics concepts and their history are explained in an easily accessible manner, catering to students from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds.

The module discusses major theoretical explanations for colonial, racial, and gendered characteristics of the economics discipline – including, for instance, theories of Eurocentrism, post-colonialism, social reproduction theory, and the Black Radical Tradition. In addition, students would learn how to think about the economy more critically, by centring structures of power that shape our world. In the module, students will have the opportunity to scrutinise these theories by applying them to real-world economic problems that are relevant for international development.

The module is organised in a way that allows the learning outcomes to be achieved through a range of teaching and learning activities. The workshops will give an outline of the key schools of thought and ontological approaches that can help us understand the (de)colonisation of economics, while also providing a space for students to engage critically with the module material and debate the topics at hand.

Educational Aims / Learning Outcomes

The module will enable students to:

- Develop an understanding of the concepts and theories underpinning debates about the colonisation and decolonisation of Economics.
- Develop and understanding of the history of the economic field and how it relates to colonialism, capitalism, and imperialism.
- Develop skills in analysing economic concepts, methodologies, and policies from a critical and decolonised perspective.
- Acquire an understanding of the uses of anti-colonial frameworks for understanding economic processes.

Employability Skills

This module will contribute to students' personal and enabling skills and their employability by:

 requiring students to apply economic theory to real-life issues, identifying challenges faced by policymakers

- providing opportunities for students to reflect on and take responsibility for their own learning
- requiring students to formulate and pursue critical questions about economics and policy problems
- enhancing students' understanding of social issues from a decolonised perspective
- develop written and verbal presentation skills through class discussions and coursework
- develop insights into the impacts of colonisation of economics in emerging economy contexts and be able to reflect on the particular challenges faced in emerging economy contexts

Weekly Course Outline and Reading List

Week 1 - What is decolonisation? Why Economics?

This week introduces the basic conceptual building blocks of the module: What is decolonisation? What is economics? What does decolonisation of economics entail? We ask you to reflect on these questions based on your prior experience and training in international development and development economics and introduce different scholarly and political perspectives on the issue that will be elaborated on throughout the course, include the post-colonial critique, the relationship between decolonization and capitalism, and the problems with the way the economics discipline positions itself as neutral, objective, and rigorous.

Core Readings

Kayatekin, Serap. 2009. "Between political economy and postcolonial theory: First encounters." Cambridge Journal of Economics 33(6): 1113–1118.

Kvangraven, Ingrid Harvold and Surbhi Kesar. 2022. "<u>Standing in the way of rigor?</u> <u>Economics' meeting with the decolonization agenda.</u>" Review of International Political Economy.

McInerny, Peggy. 2021. "What does it mean to "decolonize" economics?" UCLA International Institute (interview with Dr Devika Dutt)

Further Readings

Ake, Claude. 1979. Social Science as Imperialism. the Theory of Political Development. Ibadan, Nigeria: Ibadan University Press.

Bhambra, Gurminder, Dalia Gebral and Kerem Nişancıoğlu. 2018. Decolonising the University. London: Pluto Press.

Diversifying and Decolonising Economics – Mission Statement

Hountondji, Paulin J. 1990. '<u>Scientific Dependence in Africa Today</u>.' Research in African Literatures 21 (3):5–15.

LeBaron, Genevieve, Daniel Mügge, Jacqueline Best and Colin Hay. 2021. "<u>Blind spots in IPE: marginalized perspectives and neglected trends in contemporary capitalism</u>." Review of International Political Economy 28(2): 283-294.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, Sabelo J. 2023. "<u>Intellectual imperialism and decolonisation in African studies.</u>" Third World Quarterly.

Okoth, Kevin Ochieng. 2021. "<u>Decolonisation and its Discontents: Rethinking the Cycle of National Liberation.</u>" Salvage September 22, 2021.

Patnaik, Utsa. 2022b. "On Political Economy and its Fallacies: Why Critiques and Rethinking Matter." Agrarian South: Journal of Political Economy 11(3): 333–351.

Rodrik, Dani. 2021. "<u>Economics Has Another Diversity Problem</u>" Project Syndicate Aug 9, 2021.

Tuck, E., and Yang, K. W. 2021. "<u>Decolonization is not a metaphor.</u>" Tabula Rasa (38), 61-111.

Zein-Elabdin, Eiman O. 2004 "Articulating the postcolonial (with economics in mind)." In Eiman O. Zein-Elabdin and S. Charusheela (Eds) Postcolonialism Meets Economics. New York and London: Routledge.

Week 2 - Challenging Eurocentrism in Economics

A fundamental problem associated with the decolonization of the economics discipline is its Eurocentric foundation. In this week, we look at various ways that Eurocentrism has been understood in the social sciences and how it can be applied to understand issues of economic development in particular.

Core Readings

Amin, Samir. 1988/2009. "The Construction of Eurocentric Culture" In Eurocentrism, 2nd edition. New York: Monthly Review Press. (pages 165-188)

Smith, Michael Nassen and Claire-Anne Lester. 2023. "From "dependency" to "decoloniality"? The enduring relevance of materialist political economy and the problems of a "decolonial" alternative". Social Dynamics

Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1997. "<u>Eurocentrism and Its Avatars: The Dilemmas of Social Science</u>." Sociological Bulletin 46(1): 21-39.

Further Readings

Cadahia, Luciana and Valeria Coronel. 2023. "The Department of Decolonialism." Jacobin April 16th 2023.

Chibber, Vivek. 2017. "Rescuing Class from the Cultural Turn." Catalyst 1(1).

Dirlik, Arif. 1999. "Is There History after Eurocentrism?: Globalism, Postcolonialism, and the Disavowal of History." Cultural Critique 42: 1-34.

Grosfoguel, Ramón. 2000. "<u>Developmentalism, Modernity, and Dependency Theory in Latin America</u>." Nepantla 1 (2): 347–374.

Haile, Fikir. 2023. 'Africa in IPE theorization: exclusion, oversight, and Eurocentrism in the field's past and future.' Review of International Political Economy.

Hobson, John. 2013. "Part 1 – Revealing the Eurocentric foundations of IPE: A critical historiography of the discipline from the classical to the modern era." Review of International Political Economy 20(5): 1024-1054.

Hull, George, 2023. "Varieties of intellectual decolonisation: an introduction" Social Dynamics, 49(2): 185-195. See also the whole special issue on this theme.

Kapoor, I. 2002. "Capitalism, Culture, Agency: Dependency versus Postcolonial Theory." Third World Quarterly 23 (4): 647–664.

Keita, Lansana. 2020. "<u>Eurocentrism and the Contemporary Social Sciences.</u>" Africa Development / Afrique et Développement 45(2): 17-38.

Lazarus, N. 2004. "The Fetish of 'The West' in Postcolonial Theory." In Marxism, Modernity and Postcolonial Studies, edited by C. Bartolovich and N. Lazarus, 43–64. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mills, Charles. 1997. The Racial Contract. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, Sabelo. J. 2020. *Decolonization, Development and Knowledge in Africa: Turning Over a New Leaf.* Oxon: Routledge.

Patel, Kamna. 2020. "Race and a Decolonial Turn in Development Studies." Third World Quarterly 41(9): 1463–1475.

Sud, Nikita and Diego Sánchez-Ancochea. 2022. "Southern Discomfort: Interrogating the Category of the Global South." Development and Change 53(6): 1123-1150.

Vartija, Devin. 2021. "Revisiting Enlightenment racial classification: time and the question of human diversity." Intellectual History Review 31(4): 603-625.

Wilson, J. 2022. '<u>The Insurgent Universal: Between Eurocentric Universalism and the Pluriverse.</u>' Nordia Geographical Publications 51(2): 153–162.

Week 3: The development of capitalism, colonialism, and the slave trade

This week we explore different views of the relationship is between colonialism, the slave trade, and capitalism. We contrast how on the one hand, radical historians and social scientists acknowledge the importance of the slave trade and colonialism for the development of capitalism – and therefore, for our understanding of political economy –, while on the other hand, the way the economics discipline has developed has precluded those kinds of questions about changes in social relations from even being asked.

Core Readings

Bhambra, Gurminder K. 2021. "Colonial global economy: towards a theoretical reorientation of political economy." Review of International Political Economy 28(2):307-322

Bailey, Ronald. 2014. "Out of sight, out of mind: The Struggle of African American Intellectuals Against the Invisibility of the Slave(ry) trade in world economic history." in Thomas D. Boston (Ed). A Different Vision: Race and Public Policy. London and New York: Routledge.

Rodney, Walter. 1972. "Africa's Contribution to European Capitalist Development – The Pre-Colonial Period." in How Europe Underdeveloped Africa. Baltimore: Black Classic Press. (pages 75-91).

Further Readings

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson and James A. Robinson. 2001. "<u>The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation</u>" American Economic Review 91(5): 1369-1401.

Ankarloo, Daniel and Giulio Palermo. 2004. "<u>Anti-Williamson: a Marxian critique of New Institutional Economics.</u>" Cambridge Journal of Economics 28(3): 413- 429.

Blaney, D. L. 2020. "<u>Provincializing economics: Jevons, Marshall and the colonial imaginaries of free trade.</u>" Review of International Political Economy 28(6): 1533-1554.

CORE, 2021. <u>The Economy</u> [see Unit 2, pages 43-48 on "How improvements in technology happen, and how they sustain growth in living standards."].

Jenkins, Destin and Justin Leroy. 2021. Histories of Racial Capitalism. Columbia University Press.

Dilawri, Shikha. 2023. '<u>The Worldmaking of Mobile Vernacular Capitalists: Tracing Entanglements Between Race, Caste and Capital</u>.' Millennium: Journal of International Studies.

Getachew, Adom. 2019. "Introduction" In Worldmaking After Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press (pages 1-14).

Koram, Kojo. 2022. Uncommon wealth: Britain and the aftermath of empire. London: John Murray.

Mies, Maria. 1986. Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale. London: Bloomsbury.

Pradella, Lucia. 2017. "Marx and the Global South: Connecting History and Value Theory." Sociology 51(1): 146-161.

Williams, E. 1944 (1994). Capitalism and slavery. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Week 4: How science evolves- from political economy to the discipline of economics

We delve into how the economics discipline became what it is today by tracing the history of economic thought and exploring the key characteristics of contemporary economics. Connecting with the previous weeks, we will now we able to delve deeper into the question of how the economics field is Eurocentric.

Core Readings

Fine, Ben. 2000. "Economics Imperialism and Intellectual Progress: The Present as History of Economic Thought?" History of Economics Review 32(1): 10-35.

Fourcade, Marion, Etienne Ollion, and Yann Algan. 2015. "The Superiority of Economists." Journal of Economic Perspectives 29 (1): 89-114.

Mearman, Andrew, Danielle Guizzo and Sebastian Berger. 2018. "Whither Political Economy? Evaluating the CORE Project as a Response to Calls for Change in Economics Teaching." Review of Political Economy 30(2): 241-259.

Further Readings

Blaug, Mark. 2003. "<u>The formalist revolution of the 1950s.</u>" Journal of the History of Economic Thought 25(2): 145-156.

Fourcade, Marion. 2009. Economists and Societies. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Giraud, Yann. 2014. "Negotiating the 'Middle of the Road' Position: Paul Samuelson, MIT, and the Politics of Textbook Writing." In E. R. Weintraub (Ed.), MIT and the Transformation of American Economics (pp. 134–152). Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press.

Lee, Fred. 2009. A History of Heterodox Economics: Challenging the mainstream in the twentieth century. Routledge.

Madra, Yahya. 2017. "Introduction: Making sense of an emergent heterogeneity" in Late Neoclassical Economics: The restoration of theoretical humanism in contemporary economic theory. London and New York: Routledge (pages 3-24).

Mirowski, P. 1984. "Physics and the 'marginalist revolution." Cambridge Journal of Economics 8: 361–379.

Stein, Howard. 2021 "<u>Institutionalizing neoclassical economics in Africa: Instruments, ideology and implications.</u>" Economy and Society 50(1): 120-147.

Weintraub, E. R. 2017. "McCarthyism and the Mathematization of Economics." Journal of the History of Economic Thought 39, 571–597.

Week 5: Economics as a racist science

This week we interrogate to what extent economics can be considered a racist science, by contrasting how discrimination is approaches in mainstream economics with theories of racial capitalism and arguments from the Black Radical Tradition reviewed in week 3.

Core Readings

Arrow, Kenneth J. 1998. "What Has Economics to Say about Racial Discrimination?" The Journal of Economic Perspectives 12(2): 91-100.

Getachew, Adom. 2019. "Introduction" In Worldmaking After Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press (pages 1-14).

Koechlin, Tim. 2019. "Whitewashing Capitalism: Mainstream Economics' Resounding Silence on Race and Racism." Review of Radical Political Economics 51(4): 562-571.

Further Readings

Becker, Gary.1957. The Economics of Discrimination. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Chelwa, Grieve, Darrick Hamilton, and James Stewart. 2022. "Stratification Economics: Core Constructs and Policy Implications." Journal of Economic Literature 60 (2): 377-99.

Fine, Ben. 2009. "The economics of identity and the identity of economics?" Cambridge Journal of Economics 33(2): 175–191.

Hudson, Peter James. 2018. "Racial Capitalism and the Dark Proletariat." Boston Review Feb 20th 2018.

Kundnani, Arun. 2023. What Is Antiracism? And Why It Means Anticapitalism. London: Verso.

Ouma, S. 2021. "Challenging the Orthodoxy: Race, Racism and the Reconfiguration of Economics." Developing Economics.

https://developingeconomics.org/2021/07/11/challenging-the-orthodoxy-race-racism-and-the-reconfiguration-of-economics/

Listen to a podcast with Ouma on this topic here.

Táíwò, Olúfémi O. Reconsidering Reparations. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tilley, Lisa and Robbie Shilliam. 2018. "Raced Markets: An Introduction." New Political Economy 23(5): 534-543.

Watson, Matthew. 2018. "Crusoe, Friday and the Raced Market Frame of Orthodox Economics Textbooks." New Political Economy 23(5): 544-559.

Zuberi, Tukufu and Eduardo Bonilla-Silva. 2008. White Logic, White Methods - Racism and Methodology. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Week 6: Economics as a Gendered Science

We will explore the ways in which dominant theorizing in Economics is built on gendered dichotomies, where masculinity is valorized and is projected as the ideal or the norm, while femininity is devalorized and is viewed as aberrant. The implications for economic theory, the economy, household and market production are considered.

Core Readings

Nelson, Julie. A. 1995. "Feminism and Economics." Journal of Economic Perspectives 9(2): 131-148.

Waring, Marilyn. 2015. Counting for Nothing: What Men Value and What Women are Worth, Second edition, University of Toronto Press, 2015.

Bhattacharya, Tithi. 2017. "How Not To Skip Class: Social Reproduction of Labour and the Global Working Class" in Bhattacharya, Tithi (ed.) Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression. London: Pluto Books.

Further Readings

Bhattacharya, Tithi. 2017. "Introduction: Mapping Social Reproduction Theory" in Bhattacharya, Tithi (ed.) Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression. London: Pluto Books.

Charusheela, S. 2013. "Intersectionality." In Deborah M. Figart and Tonia L. Warnecke (Eds) Handbook of Research on Gender and Economic Life. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Criado-Perez, Caroline. 2010. Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men. London: Vintage, 2020.

Fraser, Nancy. 2017. "Crisis of Care? On the Social Reproductive Contradictions of Contemporary Capitalism" in Bhattacharya, Tithi (ed.) Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression. London: Pluto Books

Ossome, Lyn. 2023. "Gender and Uneven Development" in Reinert, Erik S. and Kvangraven, Ingrid H (Eds). A Modern Guide to Uneven Economic Development. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Week 7: Anti-Colonial and South-Centred Approaches to Economics

We will discuss what we can we learn from a non-Eurocentric and anti-colonial understanding of economic processes, by centring the experience of the peripheries to provide a more complete, rather than a partial, account of the development of capitalism, when taking colonization into account.

Core Readings

Amin, Samir. 1988/2009. "The Culturalist Evasion: Provincialism and Fundamentalism" In Eurocentrism, 2nd edition. New York: Montly Review Press. (pages 195-204)

Nkrumah, Kwame. 1965. "Introduction" in Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism. London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd.

Sultana, F. 2023. Whose growth in whose planetary boundaries? Decolonising planetary justice in the Anthropocene. Geo: Geography and Environment, 10.

Further Readings

Charusheela, S., and Eiman Zein-Elabdin. 2013. (Eds). "Part IV: Towards a non-Modernist Economic Analysis" in Postcolonialism meets economics. Routledge.

Fraser, Nancy. 2016. "Expropriation and Exploitation in Racialized Capitalism: A Reply to Michael Dawson." Critical Historical Studies 3(1): 1-180.

Kvangraven, Ingrid H. 2020. "Beyond the Stereotype: Restating the Relevance of the Dependency Research Programme." Development and Change 52(1), 76-112.

Kay, Cristóbal. 2010. Latin American theories of development and underdevelopment. Vol. 102. Routledge.

Sanyal, Kalyan. 2014. Rethinking capitalist development: Primitive accumulation, governmentality and post-colonial capitalism. Routledge.

Patnaik, Utsa, and Prabhat Patnaik. 2016. A theory of imperialism. Columbia University Press.

Younis, Musab. 2022. On the Scale of the World – The Formation of Black Anticolonial Thought. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Okoth, Kevin Ochieng. 2023. Red Africa: Reclaiming Revolutionary Black Politics (released 3 Oct. 2023). London: Verso.

Week 8: Development Economics- A Failed Attempt to Break from Colonial Roots

Development Economics was formalized as a subfield in the wake of political decolonization movements around the world as the newly independent countries were politically and intellectually engaged in charting their own sovereign paths for economic development. However, these efforts were ultimately insufficient at moving the field away from its colonial

roots, with it becoming subsumed under rules defined by the Global North. We will discuss how the anti-colonial project of development economics was displaced by a largely technocratic seemingly apolitical project.

Core Readings

Duflo, Esther. 2010. "Social Experiments to Fight Poverty." TED Talk. Esther Duflo: Social experiments to fight poverty.

Kvangraven, Ingrid Harvold. 2020. "Nobel Rebels in Disguise — Assessing the Rise and Rule of the Randomistas." Review of Political Economy 32:3, 305-341.

Levitt, Kari Polanyi. 2005. "Raul Prebisch and Arthur Lewis: The Two Basic Dualities of Development Economics." In Jomo KS (Ed) The Pinoeers of Development Economics – Great Economists on Development. Zed Books (Pages 109-123).

Further Readings

Zein-Elabdin, Eiman O. 2009. "Economics, postcolonial theory and the problem of culture: institutional analysis and hybridity." Cambridge Journal of Economics 33, no. 6, 1153-1167

Chamola, Bikalp. 2023. "Whither Ethics in Research? Randomized Controlled Trials at the Nexus of Technocratization and Eurocentrism." Review of Development Economics.

Kothari, Uma. 2006. "From Colonialism to Development: Reflections from Colonial Officers." Commonwealth & Comparative Politics 44(1), 118-136.

Mkandawire, Thandike. 2001. "Thinking about Developmental States in Africa." Cambridge Journal of Economics 25(3), 289-314.

Cooke, Bill. 2003. "A new continuity with colonial administration: participation in development management." Third World Quarterly 24, no. 1: 47-61.

Week 9: Implications of Decolonisation for Development Policy and Practice Economics is a very powerful discipline and plays an outsize role in determining policies of development all over the world. As a result, we also need to explore how development policy and practice may be based on Eurocentric ideas and interrogate how they may support structural oppression.

Core Readings

Babb, Sarah, and Alexander Kentikelenis. 2021. "<u>Markets Everywhere: The Washington Consensus and the Sociology of Global Institutional Change</u>." Annual Review of Sociology 47, 521-541.

Hickel, Jason. 2020. "Apartheid in the World Bank and the IMF." Al Jazeera 26 November 2020.

Perry, Keston K. "The new 'bond-age', climate crisis and the case for climate reparations: Unpicking old/new colonialities of finance for development within the SDGs." Geoforum 126 (2021): 361-371.

Selwyn, Percy. 1985. "Costs and benefits of a modest proposal." World Development 13(5): 653-658.

Further Readings

Khan, Themrise, Dickson, Kanakulya. and Sondarjee, Maika. 2023. "Introduction" in White Saviorism in International Development: Theories, Practices and Lived Experiences. Wakefeld, Canada: Daraji Press.

Kabeer, Naila. 2020. <u>Women's empowerment and economic development: a feminist critique of storytelling practices in "randomista" economics</u>. Feminist Economics, 26(2), pp.1-26.

Week 10: Which Way Now – How to Decolonise (Co-created with the class)
In this week we will synthesize what we have learnt so far about Decolonising Economic Development. We will seek your guidance about the specific topics, articles, concepts, events, or theories you would like to analyse from the decolonization framework developed in this module.