

Gender and Multiculturalism: North-South Perspectives



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Multiculturalism is a concept that has been stretched to include a variety of political conditions, mainly in countries that have liberal democratic political systems and traditions. In this North/South 'comparison' we illuminate remedies pursued by governments and various political interests to address the binary. Tensions of culture and rights may not be the same everywhere. An interesting point of comparison is in the treatment of liberalism – often assumed in the global North to be the universal norms to be defended, whereas in the global South, liberalism itself may be viewed as the problem. Colonial histories are fraught with discriminatory legislation aimed at accommodating indigenous populations, often a trade-off for more structural redistributive justice through, for example, land reform. In Africa, for example, the codification of customary law has reinforced misogynistic and static interpretations of 'African culture'.

This book will show how varied and complex the embodiment of multiculturalism as a political practice, or policy discourse in different political contexts can be, and how often the outcome of multicultural discourses creates a binary between culture and universal human rights. The aim of this book is to grapple with dislodging this binary.

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