

# WHAT ABOUT THE GLOBAL SOUTH? TOWARDS A FEMINIST DECOLONIAL DEGROWTH APPROACH

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## THE RESEARCH QUESTION

How does degrowth need to be pursued to promote intragenerational socio-ecological justice without falling into the trap of reproducing (neo-)colonial continuities?

## STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER

1. Introduction
2. Theoretical Lens: A Postcolonial Reading of Feminist Standpoint Theory
3. Degrowth and its Claim for Consequential and Deontological Justice
4. The Coloniality of Degrowth
5. Towards a Feminist Decolonial Degrowth Approach
6. Conclusion

## TOWARDS A FEMINIST DECOLONIAL DEGROWTH APPROACH

Building bridges with 'fellow travelers' (Escobar 2015) both carefully *and* courageously, on the ground of deontological *and* consequential inter- *and* intragenerational justice in opposition to the growth-progress-development triad is an imperative in the face of the ecological crisis. Postcolonial feminisms are important allies in making degrowth more feminist *and* decolonial.

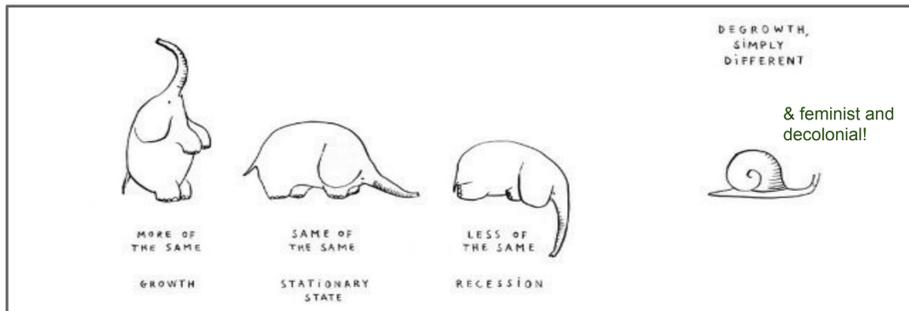


WE ARE SITTING IN DIFFERENT BOATS, THESE BOATS ARE HIT BY DIFFERENT WAVES, BUT ON THE BASIS OF OUR SHARED RESISTANCE, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO FIGHT THE COMMON STORM THAT ALL OF US ARE QUITE LITERALLY FACING.

**ONTOLOGY** integrative, relational ontologies + de-ontologization of prevalent dichotomies

**EPISTEMOLOGY** from 'epistemic violence' (Spivak 1988) and the 'asymmetric possibility to ignore' (Castro Varela / Dhawan 2009) to 'epistemic interculturality' (Walsh 2012), acknowledging situatedness and partiality

**METHODOLOGY** participatory methodologies that disrupt fact/value, theory/practice, science/activism divide



Original retrieved from: <https://www.degrowth.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Degrowth-simply-different-klein.jpg>

## THE COLONIALITY OF DEGROWTH

Section discusses two criticism raised by renowned scholars from the Global South at the 'Sustainability, Ecology, and Care' Workshop in Berlin in January 2017.

1. In a global, capitalist system, degrowth in the Global North necessarily affects the Global South and might lead to adverse effects. The 1993 US Child Labour Boycott in Bangladesh was used to illustrate the case.  
→ example is a weak analogy, as degrowth is a gradual, bottom-up transformation. Criticism is however valid in its core and degrowth needs to take adverse (short-term?) effects into account to a greater extent.
2. Degrowth reproduces longstanding (neo-)colonial asymmetries by (once again!) setting the agenda on what ought to be done to solve problems of global relevance in the Global North.  
→ many Southern concepts (e.g. buen vivir, radical ecological democracy), movements (e.g. EJ / transition movement) and lines of thought (e.g. post-development) complement and actually have informed degrowth in the first place.

### SOURCES MENTIONED ON THE POSTER:

- Castro Varela, M., Dhawan, N., 2009. Europa Provinzialisieren? Ja, bitte! Aber wie? *FeminaPolitica* 2, pp. 9-18.  
Escobar, A., 2015. Degrowth, Postdevelopment, and Transitions: A Preliminary Conversation. *Social Sciences* 10, pp. 451-462.  
Spivak, G.C., 1988. Can the Subaltern Speak?, in: Nelson, C., Grossberg, L. (Eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Macmillan Education, Basingstoke, pp. 271-313.  
Walsh, C., 2012. 'Other' Knowledges, 'Other' Critiques: Reflections on the Politics and Practices of Philosophy and Decoloniality in the 'Other' America. *Transmodernity* 1/3, pp. 11-27.