September 2024 | Version 2

Training on Religions and Development Research Course

Module 1:
Topics in Religions and Development

Session 6:
Decolonisation, Religions, and Development

Joint Learning Initiative on Faith & Local Communities

Homework (pre-session)

Essential reading
(everyone is required to read this)

- Nye, M. (2019). Decolonizing the study of religion. Open Library of Humanities, 5:1. https://olh.openlibhums.org/article/id/4580/. Students are required to read this article and summarise each of its subsections (denoted by the subheadings) in 1-3 sentences (e.g. "In the first subsection (under the subheading 'Outlining the parameters of the study of religion'), the author makes the following key points: X, Y, Z. In the second subsection (subheading 'Colonialism and decolonisation'), the author shows that X, Y, Z").
- Students are also required to bring at least five newspaper headlines, short articles, or pictures to class that they think represent an aspect of decolonisation, development, or religion. If not everyone brings enough, the instructor should bring several old newspapers or magazines for students to use. Other required materials include scissors and glue.

Optional readings I
(advanced readings)

- Agyeman, A. M. M., & Ranawana, A. (2023), "From Development to Repair: Dismantling Racism and Its Role in Shaping Poverty Today," Christian Relief, Development, and Advocacy: The Journal of the Accord Network, 5:1. https://crdajournal.org/index.php/crda/article/view/581
- Bowers-Du Toit, N. (2020) 'Contested development (s)? The possible contribution of the African Independent Churches in decolonizing development,' African Initiated Christianity and the Decolonization of Development, pp. 311-322. https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/22812/9780367358686_text.pdf
- Buys, C. (2023), "Abundant Community Theology: A Case Study in Decolonial Theological Research," Christian Relief, Development, and Advocacy: The Journal of the Accord Network, 5:1. https://crdajournal.org/index.php/crda/article/view/577.
- Chiviliu, C. L. P., Lesniewski, J., Sosof, J. D., Tacaxoy, M. M., and Wyngaarden, S. (2023), "Along the Road of Decolonization: Shared Priorities in Development Justice," Christian Relief, Development, and Advocacy: The Journal of the Accord Network, 5:1. https://crdajournal.org/index.php/crda/article/view/575.

- Hawthorne, S. and Van Klinken, A. (2013), "Catachresis: religion, gender, and postcoloniality," Religion and Gender, 3:2, pp. 159-167. https://dspace.library.uu.nl/bitstream/handle/1874/284553/9170-17532-2-PB.pdf;sequence=2
- Istratii, R. (2017), "Mainstream gender and development concepts and theories at the interface with local knowledge systems: some theoretical reflections," The Journal of Development Practice, 3:1, pp. 1-13 https://journals.dbuniversity.ac.in/ojs/index.php/jdp/article/view/305
- Istratii, R. and Ali, P. (2023), "A Scoping Review on the Role of Religion in the Experience of IPV and Faith-Based Responses in Community and Counseling Settings," Journal of Psychology and Theology, 51:2, pp. 141-173. https://doi.org/10.1177/00916471221143440
- Jaiyebo-Okoro, T. (2023), "Critical Enabling Factors for Decolonisation in Christian Development Organisations," Christian Relief, Development, and Advocacy: The Journal of the Accord Network, 5:1. https://crdajournal.org/index.php/crda/article/view/585
- Kuperus, T. (2023), "Decolonizing Global Development Theory and Practice through "Centering" the Work of Robtel Neajai Pailey," Christian Relief, Development, and Advocacy: The Journal of the Accord Network, 5:1. https://crdajournal.org/index.php/crda/article/view/591
- Kurlberg, N. and Hoksbergem, R. (2023) "Decolonizing Practice: Pathways, Insights, and Experiences from the Field of Christian Relief, Development, and Advocacy," Christian Relief, Development, and Advocacy: The Journal of the Accord Network, 5:1, pp. 1-6. https://crdajournal.org/index.php/crda/article/download/579/517
- Mahdi, B., and Ncube, T. (2023), "Tearfund's Decolonisation Journey—from Jubilee to the Present," Christian Relief, Development, and Advocacy: The Journal of the Accord Network, 5:1. https://crdajournal.org/index.php/crda/article/view/573
- Nye, M. (2022), "Critical Race and Religion: Unpacking Whiteness and Decolonizing the Study of Religion," Implicit Religion, 25:1, pp. 127-151. https://www.doi.org/10.1558/imre.23813
- Omer, A. (2020) "Decolonizing religion and the practice of peace: Two case studies from the postcolonial world," Critical research on religion, 8:3, pp. 273-296. https://doi.org/10.1177/2050303220924111
- Shah, R. (2023), "Decolonizing Data and Recovering the Person in Christian Relief and Development Organizations," Christian Relief, Development, and Advocacy, The Journal of the Accord Network, 5:1, pp. 65-81. https://crdajournal.org/index.php/crda/article/view/583
- Tizon, A. (2023), "Mammon and Empire: Confronting the Root of All Evil," Christian Relief, Development, and Advocacy: The Journal of the Accord Network, 5:1. https://crdajournal.org/index.php/crda/article/view/587

- Van Klinken, A. (2020) "Studying religion in the Pluriversity: decolonial perspectives," Religion, 50:1, pp. 148-155. https://doi.org/10.1080/0048721X.2019.1681108.
- Weaver, A. E., and Cain, E. S. (2023), "Outside Agencies Do Not Bring Development: Mennonite Central Committee and the Decades-Long Challenge of Decolonizing Aid," Christian Relief, Development, and Advocacy: The Journal of the Accord Network, 5:1. https://crdajournal.org/index.php/crda/article/view/569.

Focus on Kenya

- Muasya, J. N. (2021), "Decolonizing religious education to enhance sustainable development in Africa: Evidence from literature," East African Journal of Education Studies, 3:1, pp. 77-86. https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.3.1.320
- Munyao, M. and Tanui, P. (2021), "Whiteness in Christianity and Decoloniality of the African Experience: Developing a Political Theology for 'Shalom' in Kenya," Religions, pp. 12:11, https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/12/11/1006.
- Van Klinken, A. (2022), "Wangari Maathai's Environmental Bible as an African Knowledge: Eco-spirituality, Christianity, and Decolonial Thought," Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies, 8:3, pp. 156-175. https://doi.org/10.1080/23277408.2021.1922129

Focus on Malawi

- Chagunda, C. (2021), "Development Aid, Democracy and Sustainable Development in Malawi—1964 to date," Cadernos de Estudos Africanos, 41, pp. 145-164. https://journals.openedition.org/cea/6446
- Mvula, M. H. (2022), "Toward a Theology that Responds to Governance and Political Processes in Malawi: A Biblical Perspective on Good Governance from the Book of Deuteronomy" in Decolonizing the Theological Curriculum in an Online Age, pp. 285-308. https://books.google.com/books
- Tengatenga, J. (2006), Church, state, and society in Malawi: an analysis of Anglican ecclesiology, African Books Collective. https://books.google.com/books

Focus on Sri Lanka

- Daskon, C. and Binns, T. (2012), "Practicing Buddhism in a development context: Sri Lanka's Sarvódaya movement," Development in Practice, 22:5-6, pp. 867-874. https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2012.686601
- Jegathesan, M. (2018), "Claiming Ūr: Home, Investment, and Decolonial Desires on Sri Lanka's Tea Plantations," Anthropological Quarterly, 91:2, pp. 635–670. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26646215

Focus on South Africa

- Atabongwoung, G., Lütz, J. and Austin, D. (2023), "Invigorating Interfaith Consciousness for the Common Good: Reimagining the Role of African Religion and Pentecostalism in Contemporary South Africa," Religions, 14:4, pp. 486. https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/14/4/486
- Bowers DuToit, N. (2018), "Decolonizing development? Re-claiming Biko and a black theology of liberation within the context of faith-based organizations in South Africa," Missionalia: Southern African Journal of Mission Studies, 46:1, pp. 24-35. https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.7832/46-1-219
- Nadar, S. and Maluleke, T. (2022), "Of Theological Burglaries and Epistemic Violence: Black Theology, Decoloniality, and Higher Education," The Ecumenical Review, 74:4, pp. 541-560. https://doi.org/10.1111/erev.12730

Focus on the Philippines

- Aguilar Jr, F. and Sy, N. (2017), "Horacio de la Costa, Foreign Missionaries, and the Quest for Filipinization The Church in the Age of Decolonization," Philippine Studies Historical & Ethnographic Viewpoints, 65:3, pp. 267-314. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26621921
- Milligan, A. (2003) "Teaching between the cross and the crescent moon: Islamic identity, postcoloniality, and public education in the Southern Philippines," Comparative Education Review, 47:4, pp.468-492. https://www.journals.uchicago.edu
- Acabado, S. and Martin, M. (2020), "Decolonizing the past, empowering the future: Community-led heritage conservation in Ifugao, Philippines," Journal of Community Archaeology & Heritage, 7:3, pp 171-186 https://doi.org/10.1080/20518196.2020.1767383

Optional readings II
(easy readings)

- Bishop, J. (2011), What is Decolonization and the Decolonizing of Religious Studies?, Bishop's Encyclopedia of Religion, Society and Philosophy, 20th May https://jamesbishopblog.com/2021/05/20/what-is-decolonization-and-the-decolonizing-of-religious-studies/
- Eggert, J. E. (2023), Decolonisation, violence, and faith: Reflections on Israel, Palestine and beyond, Religion in Public blog, University of Leeds. https://religioninpublic.leeds.ac.uk/2023/12/22/decolonisation-violence-and-faith/.
- Fuzzy Theory (2021) Decolonization - Three Minute Theory, 28th July. https://youtu.be/nuuI2GJpKew

- Global Development Institute (2018), Decolonizing development – what, how, by whom and for whom?, Global Development Institute, 28th November. https://blog.gdi.manchester.ac.uk/decolonising-development/
- Khan, R. (2020), Decolonizing Development Is Difficult. It Is Also Overdue, International development, 19th September. https://www.aspeninstitute.org/blog-posts/decolonizing-development-is-difficult-and-overdue
- Lumumba, PLO (2020) Decolonization of Religion, Culture and Economy, 13 Nov. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQGkwTYlYDw&pp=ygUicmVsaWdpb24gYW5KiGVjb25vbWljIGRldmVsb3BtZW50IA%3D%3D
- Mohamed Saleem, A. (2023a), Decolonising the international development sector requires a disruption (part 1): A focus on the past can mask the colonial present. Religion in Public blog, University of Leeds. https://religioninpublic.leeds.ac.uk/2023/08/10/decolonising-the-international-development-sector-requires-a-disruption-part-2-engaging-with-faith-actors-to-transform-colonial-power-structures/.
- Mohamed Saleem, A. (2023b), Decolonising the international development sector requires a disruption (part 2): Engaging with faith actors to transform colonial power structures. https://religioninpublic.leeds.ac.uk/2023/08/10/decolonising-the-international-development-sector-requires-a-disruption-part-2-engaging-with-faith-actors-to-transform-colonial-power-structures/.
- Nye, M. (2018), Decolonizing the Study of Religion: where to start? Religion Bites, 22nd June. https://medium.com/religion-bites/decolonizing-the-study-of-religion-where-to-start-f8af41b3d34c
- Oh, I. (2010), Decolonizing Religion: The Future of Comparative Religious Ethics, University of Notre Dame, 29th May. https://contendingmodernities.nd.edu/decoloniality/decolonizing-cre/
- Rumsby, S. (2023), Grappling with ethnoreligious politics, double colonialism and positionalities in Vietnam, Religion in Public blog, University of Leeds. https://religioninpublic.leeds.ac.uk/2023/09/05/grappling-with-ethnoreligious-politics-double-colonialism-and-positionalities-in-vietnam/.
- Wilkinson, O., Tomalin, E. and Eggert, J. P. (2022), Decolonization, development and faith, Religion in Public blog, University of Leeds, 20th January. https://religioninpublic.leeds.ac.uk/2022/01/20/decolonisation-development-and-faith/.

Focus on Kenya

- Karuri, A. (2023), Speaking Truth to Power: Christian Faith Actors and Kenya's Liberation Movements. Religion in Public blog, University of Leeds. https://religioninpublic.leeds.ac.uk/2023/01/11/speaking-truth-to-power/.

Focus on the Philippines

- Poka, L. (2006), Processes of Decolonization, San Jose State University, May 30th https://www.sjsu.edu/people/marcos.pizarro/courses/maestros/s0/Laenui.pdf

Engaging with the readings
(1 hour)

This part of the session aims to engage with the readings that the students did as part of their homework in more detail. It aims to give the students a chance to discuss the readings, share their reflections, and consolidate their understanding of the texts.

1. **Individual reflection (5 min):** The instructor asks all students to individually reflect on the following three questions and write down their answers. Students do this on their own without consulting others. They are allowed to consult the text if they find it helpful.
    * One thing I came across in the readings that I agree with
    * One thing I came across in the readings that I disagree with
    * One thing I came across in the readings that I am not sure if I agree or disagree with

2. **Definitions work—small group work (15 min):** Students work in groups of three. Based on their homework readings, but also consulting the texts in class if they wish to do so, students discuss the definitions of decolonisation introduced in the texts: What is decolonisation for the authors? What is part of it? What is not decolonisation for them? The discussion focuses on the texts and compares the positions of the different authors.

3. **Mind map (10 min):** Based on their discussions, students draw a mind map (on a flipchart or Manila paper) of how decolonisation is approached in the texts on the reading lists, focusing, for example, on the questions discussed during the group work.

4. **Group presentations and big group discussions (25 min):** Each group presents its mind map to the other students. The instructor allocates 3-5 minutes per group, depending on the number of groups. After each presentation, the instructor invites students to ask the presenters questions and allows for discussion if it arises. If there is no debate, the instructor asks questions to stimulate discussion.

5. **Group vote (5 min):** The instructor asks students to move across the room and stand next to the mind map they think best represents the issue. The instructor then asks 2-3 students why they have chosen a particular mind map.

Contextualising the learning
(1 hour)

The aim of this part of the session is for students to apply what they learned from the readings and the first part of the session to their local contexts. It encourages them to think critically about the extent to which the debates from the readings are relevant to their everyday lives, studies, or work.

1. **Break (5 min)**
2. **Individual reflection (10 min):** The instructor invites students to reflect on how the topics of religion, development, and decolonisation are relevant to their communities. Why is it not enough to just speak about decolonising development? Why is it important to also include religion? What are the benefits and challenges of doing that? Each student thinks about this on their own and makes a list of at least 3-5 points.
3. **Small group work—discussion (25 min):** Students work in four groups. Each group is allocated one of the following questions and discusses it in their group. The instructor writes the questions on the whiteboard or hands them out to the students.
   - Where have we achieved so far in our faith community when it comes to grappling with colonisation, its legacies, and neocolonial practices?
   - What still remains to be addressed in our faith community when it comes to grappling with colonisation, its legacies, and neocolonial practices?
   - Who is currently involved in grappling with colonisation, its legacies, and neocolonial practices in our faith community? What are the dominant voices, and who is missing?
   - What can we learn from others (from whom?) when grappling with colonisation, its legacies, and neocolonial practices in our faith community? And what can others (who?) learn from us?
4. **Small group work—written summary (20 min):** Students draw the findings of their discussion on one poster. They are only allowed to use drawings, not words or writing.
5. **Big group quick check-in (5 min):** The instructor encourages each student to quickly share how they feel about the discussion by asking them the following questions and asking them to respond by raising their thumbs up (good) or down (not good):
   - Did you find this exercise interesting?
   - Did you learn anything new?
   - Would you like to learn more about this topic?
   After each question and thumb is shown, the instructor asks one or two students why they answered that way. If anything needs addressing, the instructor can do so during the next exercise.

Creative task
(1 hour)

The third part of the session is aimed at engaging with the content covered in parts 1 and 2 of the session in a creative manner. This part of the session acknowledges the fact that there are different types of learners. It also aims to expose students to creative and arts-based forms of learning and teaching.

1. **Break (5 min)**

2. **Collage—individual prep (10 min):** The instructor lays out the newspapers and magazines they brought to class in the middle of the room and encourages students to look at them and cut out any pictures, headlines, or words related to development, decolonisation, or religion.

3. **Collage—small group discussions (15 min):** Students are divided into four groups. In the groups, students take turns sharing the pictures or words they brought to class or cut out at the beginning of the exercise. They explain why they have chosen these and how they view them as related to the topic of religion, development, and decolonisation in their communities.

4. **Collage - putting the picture together (15 min):** Students in each group put their pictures or words together and stick them on a flipchart/manila paper to make one big collage. They can add additional drawings or written keywords. The aim is to make one big display of how religion, development and decolonisation play out in their communities.

5. **Collage—gallery walk and discussion (15 min):** All collages are displayed, and students walk together from one to the next, taking turns to look at each other's work, ask questions, and discuss what they see on the collages. If necessary, the instructor asks prompting questions and encourages students to compare the displays.