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Discourses

# **Female Circumcision And The Politics Of Knowledge African Women In Imperialist Discourses**

To ban excision in Meru, Kenya, Lynn Thomas  
Between 100 and 140 million girls and women have  
been subjected to genital mutilation and each year  
a further 2 million, mostly in Africa, are at risk of the  
practice. Female Genital Mutilation entails severe

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pain and shock, and can lead to long-term physical and psychological damage, including inability to enjoy sexual relations.

Imagine for a moment that you are 6-years-old and you are woken in the early hours, bathed and then dressed in rags before being led down to an ominous looking tent at the end of your garden. And there, you are subjected to the cruellest cut, ordered by your own mother. Forced down on a bed, her legs held apart, Hibo Warderewas made to undergo female genital cutting, a process so brutal, she nearly died. As a teenager she moved to

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London in the shadow of the Somalian Civil War where she quickly learnt the procedure she had undergone in her home country was not 'normal' in the west. She embarked on a journey to understand FGM and its roots, whilst raising her own family and dealing with the devastating consequences of the cutting in her own life. Today Hibo finds herself working in London as an FGM campaigner, helping young girls whose families plan to take them abroad for the procedure. She has vowed to devote herself to the campaign against FGM. Eloquent and searingly honest, this is Hibo's memoir which

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promises not only to tell her remarkable story but also to shed light on a medieval practice that's being carried out in the 21st century, right on our doorstep. FGM in the UK has gone undocumented for too long and now that's going to change.

Devastating, empowering and informative, this book brings to life a clash of cultures at the heart of contemporary society and shows how female genital mutilation is a very British problem.

Female "circumcision" or, more precisely, female genital cutting (FGC), remains an important cultural practice in many African countries, often serving as

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a coming-of-age ritual. It is also a practice that has generated international dispute and continues to be at the center of debates over women's rights, the limits of cultural pluralism, the balance of power between local cultures, international human rights, and feminist activism. In our increasingly globalized world, these practices have also begun immigrating to other nations, where transnational complexities vex debates about how to resolve the issue. Bringing together thirteen essays, *Transcultural Bodies* provides an ethnographically rich exploration of FGC among African diasporas in

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the United Kingdom, Europe, and Australia.

Contributors analyze changes in ideologies of gender and sexuality in immigrant communities, the frequent marginalization of African women's voices in debates over FGC, and controversies over legislation restricting the practice in immigrant populations.

Infibulation

A UK Perspective

The Twilight of Cutting

The Bondo Secret Society

Fashion and Body Politics in Imperial Sudan

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## A Guide to Laws and Policies Worldwide National Healths

"This thesis presents alternate readings of the relevant colonial records. By examining the processes that functioned to exclude women from the political discourse it provides a different interpretation of the controversy as one in which women did indeed play a central political role, indirectly controlling the issue through men, who were regarded by the colonialists as the legitimate representatives of

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tribal interests. The thesis explores indirect methods of eliciting the perspectives of women which are muted or absent from the historical record." -- Women filing gender-based asylum claims long faced skepticism and outright rejection within the U.S. immigration system. Despite erratic progress, the United States still fails to recognize gender as an established category for experiencing persecution. Gender exists in a sort of limbo segregated from other aspects of identity and experience. Sara



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L. McKinnon exposes racialized rhetorics of violence in politics and charts the development of gender as a category in U.S. asylum law. Starting with the late 1980s, when gender-based requests first emerged in case law, McKinnon analyzes gender and sexuality-related cases against the backdrop of national and transnational politics. Her focus falls on cases as diverse as Guatemalan and Salvadoran women sexually abused during the Dirty Wars and transgender asylum seekers from around the world fleeing brutally violent situations.

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She reviews the claims, evidence, testimony, and message strategies that unfolded in these legal arguments and decisions, and illuminates how legal decisions turned gender into a political construct vulnerable to U.S. national and global interests. She also explores myriad related aspects of the process, including how subjects are racialized and the effects of that racialization, and the consequences of policies that position gender as a signifier for women via normative assumptions about sex and

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heterosexuality.

Many transnational campaigns, and particularly the transnational campaign on violence against women, promote international norms that target the behavior of local nonstate actors. But these international norms are often at odds with local practices. What happens when the international and local norms collide? When does transnational activism lead individuals and communities to abandon local norms and embrace international ones? In *When Norms Collide*,

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Karisa Cloward presents a path-breaking theoretical framework for understanding the processes by which individuals negotiate competing demands placed on them by international and local norms. Drawing on extensive fieldwork with local communities in Kenya, she applies the theory to the practices of female genital mutilation and early marriage. Cloward argues that, when faced with international normative messages, individuals can decide to change their attitudes, their behavior, and the public image they present to

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international and local audiences.

Moreover, the impact of transnational activism on individuals substantially depends on the salience of the international and local norms to their respective proponents, as well as on community-level factors.

Thesis (M.A.) from the year 2015 in the subject Women Studies / Gender Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal, course: Masters, language: English, abstract: The purpose of this study was to understand 'What knowledge matters', and 'Whose

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knowledge matters' in the study of African sexuality and in particular female genital circumcision. The Sabiny peoples of Uganda practice the tradition of wonsetapkoruk or wosho as a rite of initiation for girls. This practice is elsewhere understood as female genital cutting, female genital circumcision or female genital mutilation. Discussions on African sexuality and female genital circumcision have taken either a Western perspective or an African point of view. Since the practice is understood differently, the values

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attached to it differ as a consequence of the wide range of opinions. In certain ways it is considered as a determinant of who has a normal sexuality or a normal body; distinguishes girls from women; confers true femininity as opposed to masculinity. Amidst these discussions, the aspect of women's health is peripheral and marginalized. Instead discussions seem to be limited by issues of language, naming, and standpoints by which various bodies of knowledge argue their different positions. Communication between the various sides of

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the debate is also minimal. Despite the claims that female genital circumcision is harmful to women's health attempts to eradicate it are faced by resistances. Through an African feminist approach to the politics of knowledge on African sexualities, in this study I argue that the discourses on African sexualities and in particular those on female genital circumcision affect the understanding of women's health. Second, the different approaches employed in the discussions of female genital circumcision evaluate the



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practice using different scales of values which affect the understanding of health through what they neglect or take for granted.

The Politics of Knowledge on African Sexualities and its Effect on Women's Health. A Case of the Sabinu Female Genital Mutilation

The Female Circumcision Controversy  
Mutilating Khalid

Race and Violence in U.S. Law and Politics  
Culture, Controversy, and Change  
Social Reform Or Placebo Politics

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### Cut

*"This book explores the place of the Bondo secret society, whose precondition for membership is Female Genital Cutting (FGC), in Sierra Leone's post-war politics. The Bondo society is considered a repository of gendered knowledge that bestows members with significant forms of power in the local social context. Members, especially Bondo society leaders, are dedicated to the continued practice of FGC even amidst calls for its eradication"--Abstract.*

*In the first half of the twentieth century, a pioneering generation of young women exited their homes and entered public space, marking a new era for women's civic participation in northern Sudan. A provocative*

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*new public presence, women's civic engagement was at its core a bodily experience. Amid the socio-political upheavals of imperial rule, female students, medical workers, and activists used a careful choreography of body movements and fashion to adapt to imperial mores, claim opportunities for political agency, and shape a new standard of modern, mobile womanhood. Khartoum at Night is the first English-language history of these women's lives, examining how their experiences of the British Empire from 1900-1956 were expressed on and through their bodies. Central to this story is the tobe: a popular, modest form of dress that wrapped around a woman's head and body. Marie Grace Brown shows*

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*how northern Sudanese women manipulated the tucks, folds, and social messages of the tobe to deftly negotiate the competing pulls of modernization and cultural authenticity that defined much of the imperial experience. Her analysis weaves together the threads of women's education and activism, medical midwifery, urban life, consumption, and new behaviors of dress and beauty to reconstruct the worlds of politics and pleasure in which early-twentieth-century Sudanese women lived. By exposing the colonial and imperial discourses that undergird the global debate on female circumcision, this important work creates a space for the marginalized to speak and mount their challenges*

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*and proposes strategies for creating a transnational feminist movement that fosters genuine collaboration and partnership.*

*Infibulation is the most extreme form of female circumci- sion. It plays an important role in the Islamic societies of northeastern Africa. Until now, the social significance and function of this practice has been poorly understood. In this volume, Hicks analyzes female circumcision as a cultural trait embedded in a historically traditional milieu and shows why it cannot be treated in isolation as a single issue destined for elimination.*

*Female Circumcision*

*Medical, Legal, and Ethical Considerations in*

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*Pediatric Practice*

*Women, Reproduction, and the State in Kenya*

*Making the Mark*

*African Women in Imperialist Discourses*

*Transcultural Bodies*

*Female Circumcision and the Politics of Knowledge*

In recent years, aggrieved groups around the world have routinely portrayed themselves as victims of human rights abuses. Physically and mentally disabled people, indigenous peoples, AIDS patients, and many others have chosen to protect and promote their interests by advancing new

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human rights norms before the United Nations and other international bodies. Often, these claims have met strong resistance from governments and corporations. More surprisingly, even apparent allies, such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and other nongovernmental organizations, have voiced misgivings, arguing that rights "proliferation" will weaken efforts to protect their traditional concerns: civil and political rights. Why are certain global problems recognized as human rights

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issues while others are not? How do local activists transform long-standing problems into universal rights claims? When and why do human rights groups, governments, and international organizations endorse new rights? The International Struggle for New Human Rights is the first book to address these issues. Focusing on activists who advance new rights, the book introduces a framework for understanding critical strategies and conflicts involved in the struggle to persuade the human rights movement to move beyond traditional



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problems and embrace pressing new ones. Essays in the volume consider rights activism by such groups as the South Asian Dalits, sexual minorities, and children of wartime rape victims, while others explore new issues such as health rights, economic rights, and the right to water. Examining both the successes and failures of such campaigns, *The International Struggle for New Human Rights* will be a key resource not only for scholars but also for those on the front lines of human rights work. The last three decades have witnessed a

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proliferation of nongovernmental organizations engaging in new campaigns to end the practice of female genital cutting across Africa. These campaigns have in turn spurred new institutions, discourses, and political projects, bringing about unexpected social transformations, both intended and unintended. Consequently, cutting is waning across the continent. At the same time, these endings are misrecognized and disavowed by public and scholarly discourses across the political spectrum. What does it mean to say that

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while cutting is ending, the Western discourse surrounding it is on the rise? And what kind of a feminist anthropology is needed in such a moment? The Twilight of Cutting examines these and other questions from the vantage point of Ghanaian feminist and reproductive health NGOs that have organized campaigns against cutting for over thirty years. The book looks at these NGOs not as solutions but as sites of "problematization." The purpose of understanding these Ghanaian campaigns, their transnational and

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regional encounters, and the forms of governmentality they produce is not to charge them with providing answers to the question, how do we end cutting? Instead, it is to account for their work, their historicity, the life worlds and subjectivities they engender, and the modes of reflection, imminent critique, and opposition they set in motion.

Bolokoli, khifad, tahara, tahoor, qudiin, irua, bondo, kuruna, negekorsigin, and kene-kene are a few of the terms used in local African languages to denote a set of

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cultural practices collectively known as female circumcision. Practiced in many countries across Africa and Asia, this ritual is hotly debated. Supporters regard it as a central coming-of-age ritual that ensures chastity and promotes fertility. Human rights groups denounce the procedure as barbaric. It is estimated that between 100 million and 130 million girls and women today have undergone forms of this genital surgery. Female Circumcision gathers together African activists to examine the issue within its various

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cultural and historical contexts, the debates on circumcision regarding African refugee and immigrant populations in the United States, and the human rights efforts to eradicate the practice. This work brings African women's voices into the discussion, foregrounds indigenous processes of social and cultural change, and demonstrates the manifold linkages between respect for women's bodily integrity, the empowerment of women, and democratic modes of economic development. This volume does not focus narrowly on

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female circumcision as a set of ritualized surgeries sanctioned by society. Instead, the contributors explore a chain of connecting issues and processes through which the practice is being transformed in local and transnational contexts. The authors document shifts in local views to highlight processes of change and chronicle the efforts of diverse communities as agents in the process of cultural and social transformation. This ground-breaking handbook details the present situation with regard to female

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genital mutilation (FGM) in Britain, referring also to other Western nations where FGM occurs. It scrutinises current pathways to eradicating this dangerous, sometimes lethal, form of child abuse and gender-related violence. The cultural and belief systems giving rise to FGM are complex. Further, FGM is an intensely intimate matter often imposed on young and vulnerable children. Approaches to its eradication therefore demand considerable human insight and a competent grasp of inter-/cross-agency working. It is also



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vital that everyone concerned - whether in caring and parental, safeguarding or other roles - understands fully that, regardless of custom or belief, FGM is a serious crime. The vulnerabilities and need for protection of victims and potential victims are paramount, but these pressing priorities do not lessen the requirement that all aspects of FGM be dealt with straightforwardly in accordance with the law. This book makes the case urgently for developing a shared, coherent model - a multi-disciplinary paradigm articulated at

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the highest level - as the basis to achieve the eradication of FGM. The text will be required reading for health, legal, educational and social services professionals, as well as researchers, policy-makers, school governors, journalists and other concerned citizens.

Gender, Identity, and Genital Cutting

Gender, Sexuality and Health in a Cross-Cultural Context

The Futanke's Opposition to the National Ban on FGM in Senegal

Proposals for Change

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Female Circumcision, Torture and Sacred  
Flesh

An Anthropological Perspective

Eradicating Female Genital Mutilation

***Every year 13.3 millions boys and 2 million girls are subjected to circumcision, the involuntary removal of part or all of their external sex organs. Bodily Integrity and the Politics of Circumcision illuminates the vulnerability of human society to medical, economic, and historical pressures. It provides a much-needed, thoughtful, and detailed analysis of the devastating impact of circumcision on bodily integrity and human rights, and it provides hope for***

# Read Free Female Circumcision And The Politics Of Knowledge African Women In Imperialist Discourses change.

***In 2006, a suburban Atlanta jury convicted Khalid Misri Adem, a 31-year-old Ethiopian immigrant, of two counts of aggravated assault and cruelty to children for allegedly circumcising his daughter when she was two years old. However, the trial against Khalid Adem was far from uncontroversial. Mutilating Khalid explores the symbolic politics that surrounded the Adem case, showing how prosecutors, judges, reporters, politicians and activists set out to mould the public's image of Khalid Adem and to appropriate his symbolic values for their own particular purposes.***

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***This report provides an explanation of the practice of female circumcision - its extent, practice, historical antecedents, contemporary practice, medical and social consequences, and campaigns against it (legal, medical and social) in Africa, the Middle East and Europe.***

***This thesis explores the place of the Bondo secret society, whose precondition for membership is female genital cutting (FGC), in Sierra Leone's post-war politics. The Bondo society is considered a repository of gendered knowledge that bestows members with significant forms of power in the local social context. Members, especially Bondo society***

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***leaders, are dedicated to the continued practice of FGC even amidst calls for its eradication. The Bondo is much sought after and overwhelmingly supported by the political elite due to the role it plays in ordering community life and its position as the depository of cultural repertoires (Swidler, 2001:24). Most women gravitate towards the Bondo who also use it to shape and reshape their identity. For example, as part of post war recovery, I argue, the Bondo was employed by political actors to legitimate and extend the hegemony of political movements. This analysis, therefore, examines the complicated interplay of power between politicians and the***

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***Bondo society members in the context of an international outcry against the practice of FGC. The thesis argues that the Bondo society leaders are keen to maintain the status quo because of the forms of power accessible to them in the local socio-economic and political context. Faced with an overarching discourse of eradication and change concerning the FGC procedure, the Bondo society has in turn fashioned a counter-discourse framed in terms of "defending traditional culture" to forestall changes that could affect the "privileges" they access. I explore the tensions of this situation in this thesis. That is, on the one hand, the tension brought***

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***about by opposition between the FGC reform agenda and the Bondo society members' attempts to resist change in the ritual practice. On the other hand, I am concerned with the tension in the patronage they enjoy from politicians who are caught up in a double bind situation: they simultaneously need support from Bondo members but are, at the same time, reliant on international development aid. In exploring power from below, I examine Bondo society's community stock of knowledge and how this symbolic power is employed in Sierra Leonean politics. This does not lead to a vindication of FGC but underscores the complex social, economic and***



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***political meanings embedded in the Bondo and in discourses of power in Sierra Leone. The thesis points out that eradication advocates need to take account of the various dimensions of the Bondo society's embeddedness in relation to both state and society.***

***Women and the Female Circumcision Controversy in Kenya Colonial Discourse***

***Female Bodies, Male Politics [microform] : Women and the Female Circumcision Controversy in Kenyan Colonial Discourse***

***Gender, Agency and the Politics of Female Circumcision in Cairo***

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***Gender, Sexuality and the Construction of Identity***

***Female Genital Cutting***

***Politics of Female Genital Cutting (FGC), Human***

***Rights and the Sierra Leone State***

***African Activism and Life After NGOs***

*"A report on the prevalence of female circumcision and female genital mutilation (FC/FGM). In seeking to help eliminate the practice, the work places it firmly in a human rights and legal framework. The authors: describe FC/FGM, its history, its consequences for health and the reasons used to justify it; examine the history of the movement working to combat it;*

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*and present data from 40 case studies, North and South, covering prevalence, legal measures and other state steps towards eradication, campaigns and prosecutions. The book shows that, in spite of an extensive and growing African movement to combat FC/FGM, its prevalence is still very high indeed. It is primarily the countries of the North which have the most developed and explicit laws against the practice of FC/FGM, but directed only at their immigrant populations - a fact which throws up one of the classic dilemmas of human rights work. The authors suggest a solution through the implementation of human rights*

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*treaties, and make recommendations for action by governments, the international community, and non-governmental institutions."--publishers website.*

*Report of an innovative project with girls and boys in West Africa to explore how using ICTs might contribute to the rejection of female genital mutilation. It shows how putting young people and gender at the centre of development can produce real change.*

*Scenes of violence and incisions into the flesh inform the demand for law. The scene of little girls being held down in practices of female*

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*circumcision has been a defining and definitive image that demands the attention of human rights, and the intervention of law. But the investment in protecting women and little girls from such a cut is not all that it seems. Law's Cut on the Body of Human Rights: Female Circumcision, Torture and Sacred Flesh considers how such images come to inform law and the investment of advocates of law in an imagination of this scene. Drawing on psychoanalytic and postcolonial theory, and accompanying ideas in political theology, Juliet Rogers examines the language, imagery and excitement that*

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*accompanies recent initiatives to legislate against what is called 'female genital mutilation'. The author compliments this examination with a consideration of the scene of torture exposed in images from Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay. Rogers argues that the modes of fascination and excitement that accompany scenes of torture and female circumcision betray the fantasy of a political condition against which the subject of liberal law is imagined; this is subjectivity in a state of non-mutilation, non-prohibition or, in a psychoanalytic idiom, non-castration. To support the fantasy of this subject, the mutilated subject,*

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*the authors suggests, is rendered as flesh cut from the democratic nation state, deserving of only selective human rights, or none at all.*

*The practice of female genital cutting, sometimes referred to as female circumcision and common in a number of African states, has attracted increasing attention in recent years and mobilized strong international opposition. While it typically produces a visceral response of horror and revulsion in Westerners, the practice is widely regarded in some cultures as essential for proper development into womanhood and is defended by women who have themselves experienced it and*

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*who have had the procedure performed on their own daughters. It is also perceived in many Islamic communities as religiously prescribed, although most Islamic clerics do not condone the practice. In this study, sociologist Elizabeth Boyle examines this controversial issue from the perspectives of the international system, governments, and individuals. Drawing on previous scholarship, records of international organizations, demographic surveys, and the popular media, Boyle examines how the issue is perceived and acted upon at international, national, and individual levels. Grounding her*



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*work in the sociological theory of neoinstitutionalism, Boyle describes how the choices made by governments and individual women are influenced by the often conflicting principles of individual human rights and sovereign autonomy. She concludes that while globalization may exacerbate such conflicts, it can ultimately lead to social change.*

*When Culture and Law Clash*

*Female Genital Cutting in Global Context*

*Women, Children, and the Politics of the Body in Northern Ghana, 1930-1972*

*Defying the Law, Negotiating Change*

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## *The Symbolic Politics of Female Genital Cutting Legislating Against Female Circumcision Women and the Female Circumcision Controversy in Kenyan Colonial Discourse*

The first qualitative study into the impact the criminalisation of female genital mutilation has had on diaspora and stakeholder attitudes towards FGM in the UK. It contains survivors' testimonies and explores key themes that emerge from the well-publicised criminal trials in the UK and the barriers that prevent the law from working effectively. In today's globalised world, it is increasingly important to understand the otherness of different societies and their beliefs, histories and practices. This book focuses on a bur

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cultural issue: how concepts and constructions of gender and sexuality impact upon health, medicine and healthcare. Starting from the premise that health is neither a universal nor a unitary concept, it offers a series of interdisciplinary analyses of what sickness and well-being have been, are and can be. The originality of this book is its cross-cultural and trans-historical approach. Bringing together specially commissioned work by both major critical voices and young scholars in fields ranging from anthropology and art history to philosophy, political science and sociology, this volume challenges many traditional assumptions about gender, medicine and health-care. Issues addressed include: the politics and realities of female genital mutilation; sex-work

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and migration; the portrayal of mothering in contemporary African writing; the representation of AIDS in literature, photography and the media; the place of gender in ancient Egyptian health papyri; the dramatisation of morality and sexual over-indulgence in Thai literature; the relationship between myths of menstruation and power in early modern England; the role of anger in traditional Chinese medicine; and the ways in which both disease and sexual identities were redefined by cholera in the nineteenth century. The wide-ranging Introduction provides a historical and theoretical framework for what is defined here as Cultural Medicine, whilst fifteen original essays demonstrate from different perspectives that health is not merely a physiological and

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medical issue, but also a cultural and ethical one. An invaluable research and study resource, this book is written in a clear and accessible style and will be of interest to the general reader as well as to students of all levels, to teachers of a wide range of disciplines, and to specialist researchers in cultural studies and of medicine.

Every year around the world 13.3 million boys and 2 million girls have part or all of their external sex organs cut off. Doctors, parents, and politicians have been misled into thinking that these mutilations are beneficial, necessary and harmless. International respected experts in the fields of medicine, science, politics, law, ethics, sociology, anthropology, history and religion present the latest research

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documentation and analysis of this world-wide problem, focusing on the ethical, political and legal aspects of sexual mutilation; the cost and burden to healthcare systems; the latest medical research; anatomical and function consequences; religious and cultural aspects; psychological aspects; and the world-wide campaign to end sexual mutilation.

The percentage of women aged 15-49 in Egypt who have undergone the procedure of female circumcision, or genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) stands at 91%, according to the latest research carried out by UNICEF. Female circumcision has become a global political minefield with 'Western' interventions affecting Egyptian politics and social

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development, not least in the area of democracy and human rights. Maria Frederika Malmstrom employs an ethnographic approach to this controversial issue, with the aim of understanding how female gender identity is continually created and re-created in Egypt through a number of daily practices, and the central role which female circumcision plays in this process. Viewing the concept of 'agency' as critical to the examination of social and cultural trends in the region, Malmstrom explores the lived experiences and social meanings of circumcision and femininity as narrated by women from Cairo. It is through the examination of the voices of these women that she offers an analysis of gender identity in Egypt and its impact on women's sexuality.

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Female Genital Mutilation

Gendered Asylum

Female Bodies, Male Politics

Male and Female Circumcision

The Politics of Female Circumcision in Egypt

Politics of the Womb

Local Responses to Activism Against Female Genital  
Mutilation and Early Marriage

***Why do female genital cutting practices persist? How does circumcision affect the rights of girls in a culture where initiation forms the lynchpin of the ritual cycle at the core of defining gender, identity, and social***



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***and political status? In Making the Mark, Miroslava Prazak follows the practice of female circumcision through the lives and activities of community members in a rural Kenyan farming society as they decide whether or not to participate in the tradition. In an ethnography twenty years in the making, Prazak weaves multiple Kuria perspectives—those of girls, boys, family members, circumcisers, political and religious leaders—into a riveting account. Though many books have been published on the topic of genital cutting, this is one of***

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***the few ethnographies to give voice to evolving perspectives of practitioners, especially through a period of intense anticutting campaigning on the part of international NGOs, local activists, and donor organizations. Prazak also examines the cultural challenges that complicate the human-rights anti-FGM stance. Set in the rolling hills of southwestern Kenya, Making the Mark examines the influences that shape and change female genital cutting over time, presenting a rich mosaic of the voices contributing to the debate over this***

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***life-altering ritual.***

***To the Western eye, there is something jarringly incongruous, even shocking, about the image of a six-year-old girl being held down by loving relatives so that her genitals can be cut. Yet two million girls experience this each year. Most Westerners, upon learning of the practice of female circumcision, have responded with outrage; those committed to improving the status of women have gone beyond outrage to action by creating various programs for "eradicating" the practice. But few***

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***understand the real life complexities families face in deciding whether to follow the traditional practices or to take the risk of change. In The Female Circumcision Controversy, Ellen Gruenbaum points out that Western outrage and Western efforts to stop genital mutilation often provoke a strong backlash from people in the countries where the practice is common. She looks at the validity of Western arguments against the practice. In doing so, she explores both outsider and insider perspectives on female circumcision,***

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***concentrating particularly on the complex attitudes of the individuals and groups who practice it and on indigenous efforts to end it. Gruenbaum finds that the criticisms of outsiders are frequently simplistic and fail to appreciate the diversity of cultural contexts, the complex meanings, and the conflicting responses to change. Drawing on over five years of fieldwork in Sudan, where the most severe forms of genital surgery are common, Gruenbaum shows that the practices of female circumcision are deeply embedded in Sudanese cultural***

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***traditions—in religious, moral, and aesthetic values, and in ideas about class, ethnicity, and gender. Her research illuminates both the resistance to and the acceptance of change. She shows that change is occurring as the result of economic and social developments, the influences of Islamic activists, the work of Sudanese health educators, and the efforts of educated African women. That does not mean that there is no role for outsiders, Gruenbaum asserts, and she offers suggestions for those who wish to help facilitate change. By***

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***presenting specific cultural contexts and human experiences with a deep knowledge of the tremendous variation of the practice and meaning of female circumcision, Gruenbaum provides an insightful analysis of the process of changing this complex, highly debated practice.***

***Originally presented as the author's thesis (doctoral)--Queen's University, 2014.***

***By examining the political significance of reproductive controversies in 20th century Kenya, this book explores why and how control of female initiation, abortion,***

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***childbirth and premarital pregnancy have  
been crucial to the exercise of colonial and  
postcolonial power.***

***The Cultural Politics of Female Genital  
Mutilation***

***Khartoum at Night***

***Just Like Couscous***

***Female "circumcision" in Africa***

***The Case of Bondo Secret Society***

***When Norms Collide***

***Female Circumcision and the Sierra Leonean  
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A collection of speeches and writings by political



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activist Angela Davis which address the political and social changes of the past decade as they are concerned with the struggle for racial, sexual, and economic equality.

Cultural Conflict in the Global Community

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Confronting Female Genital Mutilation

Female Mutilation in Islamic Northeastern Africa