

DECOLONIZING ESD IN ADVERSE CONTEXTS

A collective intelligence boost

ELENA BERINGER

Centre of Global change and Sustainability, BOKU; Alliance of Sustainable Universities, Austria

CHARLOTTE VOIGT

Institute of Development Research, BOKU

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Outline

10:00

03	Brief Introduction
04	BOKU Guide
05	Group discussions
04	Collective Harvest and closing

11:30

Adverse contexts

“non-colonial” settings



Façade of the former Julius Meinl store in 1010 Vienna
<https://www.suedwind-magazin.at/spazierend-wien-dekolonialisieren/>

Coloniality largely understood in the context of colonial occupation

Confrontation with colonial continuities in countries *without* former colonies is delayed (e.g. Austria, Switzerland)

- Austrian academics used colonial networks for research
- Brief, unsuccessful territorial claims (Delagoa/Maputa Bay, Mozambique; Nikobar Islands, India)
- ‘Internal colonization’ during the Habsburg reign (Sauer, 2024; Feichtinger et al., 2003)

Coloniality persists

The ways of thinking and being that are associated with Eurocentric domination (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2019)

Coloniality in Universities

Places of where knowledge is produced, reproduced and legitimized

- What forms of (producing) knowledge are legitimate

Adverse contexts

“non-colonial” settings



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“Austria is particularly positioned to engage in partnerships with African Universities, because it was not a colonial power”

Paraphrased statement made by speaker at the opening ceremony for the Africa UniNet General Assembly

Adverse contexts

Ontological and epistemological challenges

Modern science and academic structures developed together with European expansion and imperialism

(Harding, 1998; Quijano, 2000; Mignolo, 2011; Mbembe, 2016)

Hegemony of universalist and positivist approaches across academia

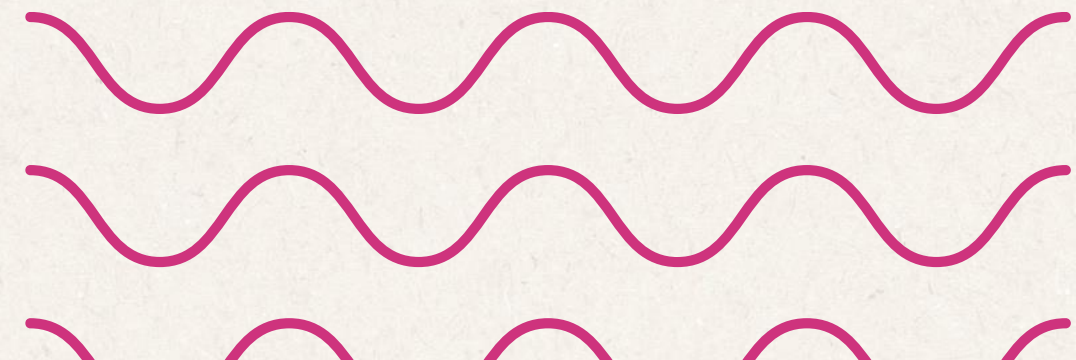
(Smith, 1999)

Positionality, values, cultures and relationships largely considered to be outside of scientific inquiry

(Haraway, 1988)

Decolonial approaches challenges notions of culturally neutral science foregrounding positionality, agency, power and plurality

(Smith, 1999)

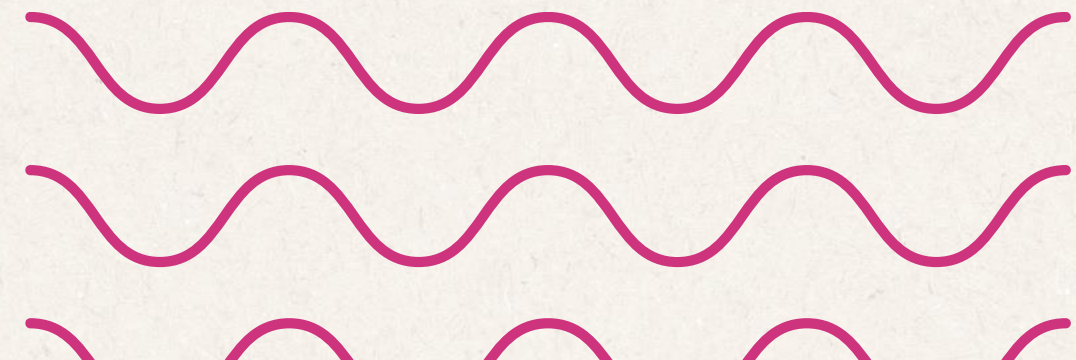


Adverse contexts

Ontological and epistemological challenges

“This is very interesting, but it doesn’t apply to our discipline”

(Comment made by a veterinary scientist after a presentation about decolonizing higher education, own translation)



Decolonizing Universities and Colleges

Possibilities for Reflections and Actions

Elena Beringer, Charlotte Voigt

Support and Review: Julia Männle, Gabi Slezak, Stefanie Lemke, Birgit Huebener, Maciej Palucki, Caroline Hammer, Sarah Siemers, Melanie Kandlbauer

- 7 areas of action
- Reflection questions, possible actions and resources for each area

Why Decolonization?

Decolonization in Austria

Decolonization in Universities

Actions at Universities

Historical Involvement and its Reflection

Diversifying and Revising Curricula

Decolonial Pedagogies and Awareness-Building

Promote Decolonial Research Approaches

Development and Exploration of the Arts

Access to Knowledge, Knowledge Transmission, and Archiving

Exchange and Partnerships

Further Readings and Resources

Group discussions



Discussions in three groups



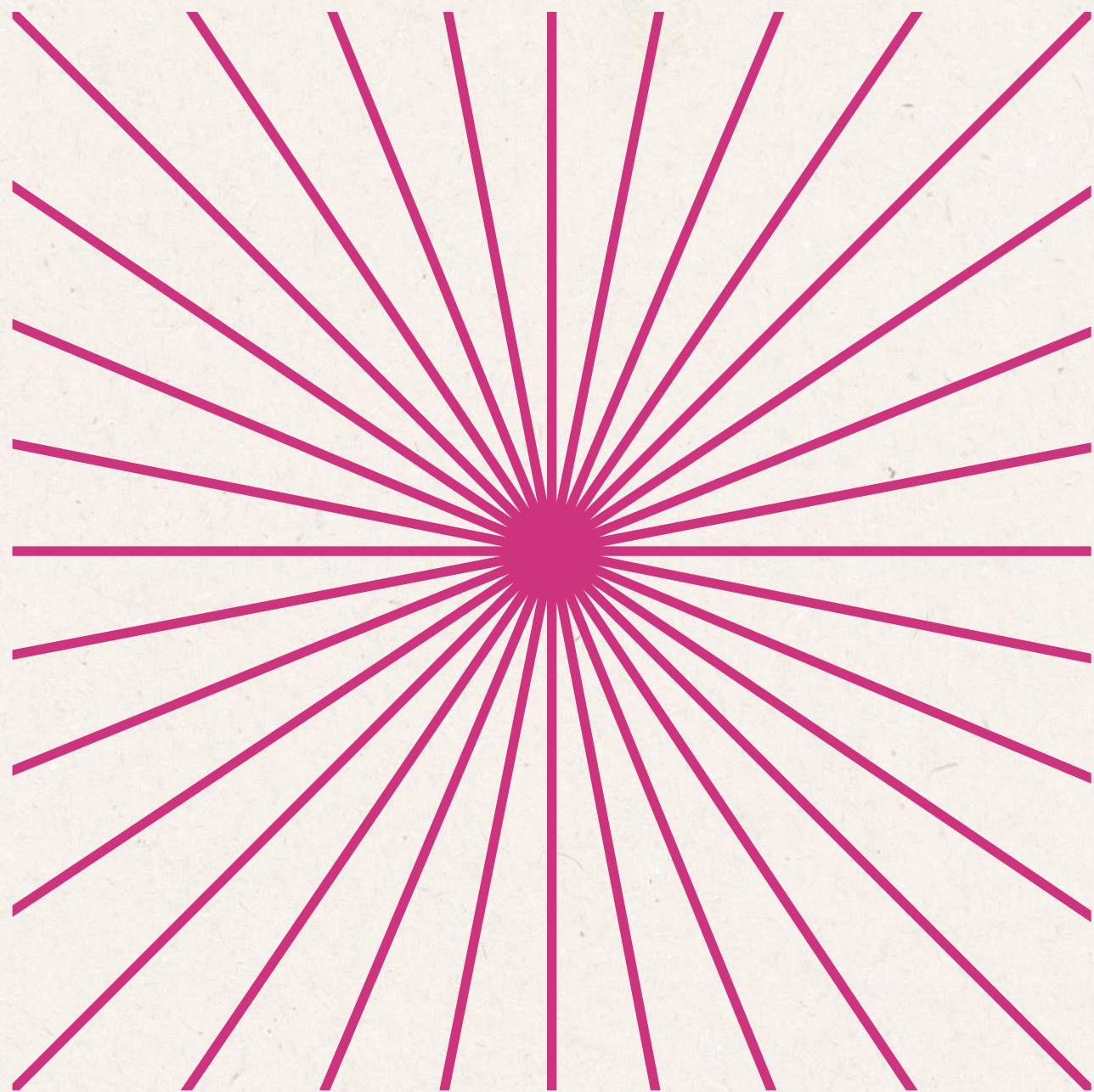
How do we counter the dominant narrative that only infamous colonial powers require decolonial reflexivity?



What arguments and practices help increase acceptance of decolonial approaches in adverse contexts?



**What practices do other Universities implement regarding decolonialization and anti-racism?
And how is this monitored or coordinated?**



Collective Harvest

What are our key takeaways?

Thank you !



CONTACT US

Charlotte.voigt@boku.ac.at

e.beringer@boku.ac.at

Guide



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