

## »African experience«

### On development, migration and gender equality from pan-African perspective and on reconciliation processes in Rwanda and South Africa

Wednesday, 27 February 2013, from 14.00 to 17.00, Faculty of Social Sciences, room 3

The Peace Institute and Faculty of Social Sciences are inviting you to

- lecture by **prof. Gertrude Fester** from South Africa: ***Options for positive development, immigration and gender equality in Africa: a utopian dream or a possible objective?***, from **14.00 to 15.20**;
- **projection of documentary film *Save yourself? The life of a development project in Rwanda*** and discussion on **the reconciliation process in Rwanda** (the case of gachacha courts) **and in South Africa** (the case of truth and reconciliation commission) **with Vlasta Jalušič**, the author of documentary film, **Vestine Mutangampundu**, member of Nyamirambo Women's Center from Rwanda and **Gertrude Fester**, from **15.30 to 17.00**.

The invitation includes the abstract of the Gertrude Fester's lecture and the content of the film. The lecture, the film and the discussion will be in English.

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Gertrude Fester at an early age engaged in the fight against the apartheid in South Africa. In 1980s she was involved in numerous women's movements and organizations and thought at high schools or colleges. After 1994 she was engaged in the political arena in South Africa, in 2001 she became Gender equality Commissioner (a constitutional body in SA). She currently lives and works in Rwanda where she is a deputy director of the Centre for Gender, Culture and Development at the Kigali Institute of Education, where she is also lecturing on transitional justice.

Vlasta Jalušič is one of the founders of the Peace Institute, the author of several articles and books on women's movement and feminism, notion of politics and Hannah Arendt, violence, war and disintegration of Yugoslavia. As an activist against intolerance and for gender equality she has been deeply involved in feminist networks and human rights activities. In 2007 due to a research on genocide she travelled to Rwanda where she met a group of women that a year later with her help established a local NGO called Nyamirambo Women's Center (NWC). Since then Vlasta was leading several development projects that the Peace Institute implemented in partnership with NWC.

Vestine Mutangampundu is an active member of NWC in Rwanda. She was involved in several activities of these development projects, especially in the field of education and raising awareness on the rights of women, gender equality and gender-based violence. She recently finished Travel and Tourism Management studies in Kigali and would like to continue with postgraduate studies in Europe. She survived the genocide in 1994, however she lost most of her family and relatives.

## ***Options for positive development, immigration and gender equality in Africa: a utopian dream or a possible objective?***

Discourses on development have pre-occupied conferences, policy workshops and government plans for more than half a century. In the past 4 decades issues around women's and gender development and more recently, the complexities and challenges of immigration, have pre-occupied the world's political stages. There seems to be lots of negativity around many of these issues. At the International Conference "Bridging the Gap" on Migration and Development in Vienna in January 2012, Schachner pointed out "the public debate treats migration as a phenomenon somewhere between threat and potential". At the same conference Madjiguene Cisse encapsulated young people in Senegal's perceptions. Even though educated, many do not have hope: "We do not develop by staying at home". And Marjan Huč, at the same event shared the negative experience of a development worker who was twice returned to her country of origin from Paris airport even though she had been invited to share her development experiences in Europe and had the documentation to prove it.

But can we say that all is such doom and gloom? Perhaps we should not be deterred by some cynical experiences. We may be blinded to the potential of constructive opportunities for development. We may not explore the prospective reality of immigration in a holistic manner. We may not fully investigate what are the pitfalls to engender development, enhancing the position of marginalised peoples. In this presentation, I will first briefly summarise my own experiences. Thereafter, I will highlight trends in the literature in general and the current political and economic global context within which challenges to development, immigrations and to gender equality exist. Through extracts from various case studies I will then explore the reality of African experiences. Some of my questions may revolve around: Is there the political will by African governments to make democracy, development and human rights within their diverse contexts a reality for all - especially oppressed groups like the disabled or women? Can gender equality within the current development paradigm be achieved given the complexities of geopolitics, histories, cultures, religious, traditional beliefs and customs within Africa? What are the contributions of development partners? On careful analysis in some cases, the majority of development aid is often returned to the host country. By using a general, albeit terse, Pan African perspective, I will explore what the obstacles are and whether there exist any opportunities that can make positive interventions. These and related questioned will be explored and analysed. What I may say, may not necessarily all be new, but they are worth emphasizing. The conclusions will outline possible recommendations.

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## ***The abstract of the film***

The documentary film “Save yourself? The life of a development project” represents a personal view of a researcher who got involved into a development project enterprise in Rwanda and was engaged in establishing a self-help group and a women’s center in the Nyamirambo quarter in Kigali. On the background of the story of Rwanda as a state situated between the violent past and the global future, built upon the vision of gender equality, the film narrates the establishment of the center, individual stories behind it, the split between activist ambitions and reality, the leadership crisis and its outcome into “the life of a development project”. The documentary consists of four chapters and the epilogue, the first chapter dealing with Rwanda and its history in general, the second with men and women and gender equality in Rwanda, the third with the Nyamirambo Women’s Center, and the fourth with the choices women can or must make in contemporary Rwanda (marriage, study). It was mainly shot in Rwanda but also in South-West Uganda (a wedding ceremony). The documentary is a “by-product” of three projects that were carried out in the framework of the Peace Institute, and its purpose is to provoke critical thinking about the motives and reality of development cooperation projects. It was produced with a modest help of the Government of Slovenia and European Union and with a large amount of voluntary work of the people who participated in the project.