

# Let's talk about migration with Oiza Q. Obasuyi

My name is Oiza Q. Obasuyi my pronouns are she her and I'm currently a PhD student in sociology at the University of Bologna. And I am originally from Ancona, in the Marche region, which in the centre part of Italy.

## Why is important to study migration from a gender perspective?

Well, first of all, I believe that the question of migration is often dealt with in terms where the main protagonist is always a man. Where when we talk about migration in our imagination, there's always this concept of the fact that there are more men that take this journey through the Mediterranean, for example. And even though that might be true, I mean, even though it is true that there are men that take this kind of journey, there are also women, right?

So I think that talking about how migration from a gender perspective is really important in order to understand all the conditions or the aspects regarding what it means to be a woman and to be a migrant also.

So to analyze the intersection between being a migrant and being a woman and all the implications regarding the fact that these women are going to again take this journey and be hosted in a country that has a specific approach to migration.

So for example, in this case, we are talking about a context which is the European context that is pretty much securitarian when talking about migration. So that has an implication concerning the treatments of migrants as a whole. But if you are a woman, then you have you also may face more more kinds of discrimination.

---

WE Frame: Collective Views for equality is a project by:



Dipartimento  
di Giurisprudenza



TRACES® DREAMS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

CERV-2024- CITIZENS-REM-EUINTEGRATION | CERV-AG-LS 101196808  
WE Frame | Project No. 101196808

So for example, also gender-based violence, or discrimination regarding your again your gender. Let's think about also the women, for example, that are detained within the Libyan detention centers. So we know that the European Union, for example, or Italy are involved in the agreement that Italy has with Libya. So what are the implication of the women that are detained within that context, right?

So I believe that talking about migration must include again talking about women as well and rationalize women because it is not not just only a matter of again taking this journey through the Mediterranean but also it is a matter of talking about the diaspora for example. What about the diaspora in Italy, the African diaspora in Italy, for example.

So I believe that the concept of intersectionality is one of the main approaches that can be used to analyze all these implications and what it means to be a woman and a migrant or a rationalized woman living in a predominantly white country, for example.

## **Why is the lens of intersectionality important when addressing these issues?**

So intersectionality is an approach that makes us understand what kind of discrimination a person can face. So if you are a black woman, of course, the the implications the possibilities that you may be discriminated because you're a woman or your black are pretty high in this context.

Or let's say that you are a black woman uh with a disability, for example, then that is another um it is another aspect that can be used to discriminate you as a person.

So I believe that the intersectional approach is a way with which we can understand how society, I mean, okay, intersectionality is an intersectionality is an approach with which we can analyze the ways that a person may face different type of discrimination, I believe. And also the ways in which society responds to that discrimination.

WE Frame: Collective Views for equality is a project by:



Dipartimento  
di Giurisprudenza



TRACES® DREAMS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

CERV-2024- CITIZENS-REM-EUINTEGRATION | CERV-AG-LS 101196808  
WE Frame | Project No. 101196808

So, it is an approach that makes understand whether that society, the levels of discrimination of that specific society that can be based on race, gender, class, disability, or whatever, or sexual orientation, for example. So, yeah.

I believe that the intersectional intersectional approach is really important, because if you analyze a certain topic from only one point of view, you won't be able to understand or to analyze all the kinds of discrimination.

So, for example, if the point of view of the prominent point of view is the point of view of a white, able, male who is also maybe rich, of course, that is a partial point of view. It's something that can may not be it is an experience that that may not be everybody's experience.

### **What happens to these women when arrives, when migrates here, for example, in Italy?**

So, in this country, we have very strict security laws when dealing with migration. So, this is something that happens to everybody really. You are treated as an illegal immigrant. So, you are basically undocumented.

If we're talking about, of course, migration that is so-called illegal immigration from somebody that comes and not not through legal means, right? So, So, in this case, you are criminalized automatically. You are seen as a social threat or the national threat and you are put into a condition of precariousness, of vulnerability.

And the problem is that if you are undocumented and specifically if you are an undocumented woman and let's say that may that maybe you have to go through any sort of violence, then if you are undocumented, you may be really, really be scared to report what happens to you because of course the authorities may actually look at your condition in this country.

---

WE Frame: Collective Views for equality is a project by:



Dipartimento  
di Giurisprudenza



TRACES® DREAMS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

CERV-2024- CITIZENS-REM-EUINTEGRATION | CERV-AG-LS 101196808  
WE Frame | Project No. 101196808

So they may analyze or they may highlight the fact that you are an documented woman instead of offering support for that specific violence that you have to go through. So this is a very an important condition. Again, I mean this is a very dangerous condition I would say for women because in this country.

There are laws that doesn't that do not promote, for example, regularization or if there are, there are sort of spots kind of provisions where the government at some point wakes up and say, "Okay, let's do a regularization." But they do it not so often.

So most people tend to remain in a condition of precarity as vulnerability, poverty and also, I would say, exploitation because there are many many women that are that are maybe that can be undocumented, yet there are exploited exploited within the work within the care, for example, and cleaning fields.

So in fact, many migrant migrant women are those that are involved in the care and cleaning sector specifically.

And in these sectors, we can also we can also highlight the fact that there were several cases of exploitation and the employers actually, I mean, may use the fact that these women are documented against them because if they want to report any sort of mistreatment or violence within that field work and they are undocumented, that person and the employer can say, "Okay, I can report it to the police and you will lose the right to work here and you may not have the possibility to regularize their condition anymore." So So, the situation is really really I believe really dangerous for women and also unjust because this condition I mean has not changed through the years and there is a lot of work to do.

## What is the biggest challenge facing feminist today?

I believe that challenges are many. The challenges that feminist need to face today are many.

---

WE Frame: Collective Views for equality is a project by:



Dipartimento  
di Giurisprudenza



TRACES® DREAMS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

CERV-2024- CITIZENS-REM-EUINTEGRATION | CERV-AG-LS 101196808  
WE Frame | Project No. 101196808

So, first of all, of course, we cannot ignore the fact that the far right extreme far right parties are, of course, emerging through the globe, I would say. But specifically, since we are in Europe Europe, I would say, within European Union, but also, of course, in the United States.

So, in the west, northwest, northwestern countries, there is this rising of far right parties, which is really dangerous because of course, they bring also a very backward way of perceiving of talking about women, of dealing with women, of dealing with women's rights basically.

So, let's think about abortion, let's think about any kind of freedom really, I would say, also what anything that concerns LGBTQ rights, etc. So, we are going backwards instead of going forward, first of all.

And of course, I believe that another challenge, again, is I believe that white liberal feminism that is only for the people who can make it that people who can get to be the president of a country or the CEO of a company.

Of course, that means that we are going forward, but at the same time, we need to think about all the women that because of their class or because of their race do not have the same opportunity. So, I believe that one of the biggest challenges even though through the years the feminist movement have evolved, so we have these kind of critical approach very I believe that this critical approach has been absorbed within the feminist collectives and stuff.

But at the same time, I believe that this topic needs to be repeated more and more because we live in a more I mean the societies are becoming really really diverse. So we have different conditions and also because when we deal with poverty, what we deal with inequalities, again the women that face the most the women that face inequality the most in this country for example are again migrant women and racialized women.

---

WE Frame: Collective Views for equality is a project by:



Dipartimento  
di Giurisprudenza



TRACES® DREAMS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

CERV-2024- CITIZENS-REM-EUINTEGRATION | CERV-AG-LS 101196808  
WE Frame | Project No. 101196808

So again and the topic of intersectionality, it's really important to understand all these kind of discrimination.

And another challenge that is really important, of course, to me also would be again a climate change because, of course, it's something that affects everybody, but specifically, once again, women that are from the so-called global south because in this part of the world, we live in a privileged part of the world, but at the same time, we are responsible for so many for we're responsible for the main causes of the climate change.

But again, those who face climate change are those that live in so-called global south countries. Those that face floods or any kind of so-called bad weather, which is not bad weather, of course, it's again climate change. And we're talking about countries that really have to face inequalities and high rates of poverty.

So, again, I believe that these are the main challenges and if we do not have an intersectional approach, a global approach, a decolonizing also approach because let's think about also the women in Palestine, the women in Sudan. So, also decolonization, which is something that maybe I mean, when we talk about decolonization, we think about something that happened in the past, but actually it is something that is still going on. So, and the women, again, are the most affected by wars, by occupation, by segregation. Uh so again, let's think about the women that are resisting in Palestine or in Sudan, what the atrocities they have to face. So, I believe that so to sum up, climate change, far right parties, decolonization, and again uh also anti-racism are among the main topics, the main intelligence of feminism today.

## What will be the next challenges for feminist in ten years?

I think that in 10 years nothing will pretty much change globally. I mean, I am really pessimist about the fact that in 10 years anything will change. So I believe that probably we will be here having to face the same or similar challenges.

WE Frame: Collective Views for equality is a project by:



Dipartimento  
di Giurisprudenza



TRACES® DREAMS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

CERV-2024- CITIZENS-REM-EUINTEGRATION | CERV-AG-LS 101196808  
WE Frame | Project No. 101196808

So again, the topic of climate change will stay there. The topic of decolonization will still will still be there, honestly. So I believe we will have to face quite the same challenges yet. I don't have any type of challenge to to add. No, really. I believe that there's the same same I think so too.

### Three names of women who in your opinion have made feminist history

According to me, of course, I mean Angela Davis and bell hooks. So, we have two. Um, these are among the feminists that have paved the way, through the importance of understanding feminism through a different point of view to the most marginalized women and communities.

But also, I wanted to mention an African feminist, which is Wangari Maathai, which is an environmentalist, an activist from Kenya, and she works so much for the advancement of women's rights in the African continent. So I believe these three names. So Angela Davis, bell hooks and Wangari Maathai.

WE Frame: Collective Views for equality is a project by:



Dipartimento  
di Giurisprudenza



TRACES® DREAMS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

CERV-2024- CITIZENS-REM-EUINTEGRATION | CERV-AG-LS 101196808  
WE Frame | Project No. 101196808

