

GRACE ADENIYI-OGUNYANKIN**Biography**

Grace Adeniyi-Ogunyankin is the Canada Research Chair in Youth and African Urban Futures and an Associate Professor in both the Department of Gender Studies and the Department of Geography and Planning at Queen's University. Her current research examines the impact of contemporary urban transformations on youth identity, labour practices, psychosocial well-being, and future orientation in Lagos & Ibadan, Nigeria. She also has a research focus on popular culture that explores the issues of subjectivity and belonging and the use of Afrofuturism and Afropolitan Imagineering in geographic projects that address the politics of difference.

#TheAfricanPride: Global Capitalism and the Ecological Limits to Place-making Politics

Abstract

Through a comparative analysis of bank advertisements by Access Bank (#Taketomorrow), Guaranty Trust Bank (#TheAfricanPride) and Heritage Bank (#IamProudOfMyHeritage), I examine the extent to which financial institutions consider the environment in their seemingly Africapitalist visions for Africa's economy within the context of Africa Rising. I posit that the advertisements are place-making projects through their attempts to defamiliarize commonsense readings of Africa(ns) as ungeographic. Specifically, I highlight that the advertisements are examples of Afropolitan Imagineering because they narrate Africa as "a continent on the move" that is "providing the unexpected" and "achieving the impossible" – and hence making Africa suitable for neoliberal urbanization, consumption and investment. By bringing in the lenses of Black Geographies and Radical Black Ecology, I ask: what is left outside the frame of an Africapitalist approach (Ouma, 2019) to Afropolitan Imagineering? I argue that the advertisements take on an anthropocentric approach which privileges urban infrastructural development and are mostly silent on the "ecological limits to capitalist growth" (Ouma, p. 152). I also contemplate the possibilities of interrogating the temporal logic, and emancipatory rhetoric, of capitalist modernity when engaged in representational politics. To this end, I suggest moving towards demanding a "right to opacity" by not aligning with the quotidian violence of capitalist logic (Keeling, 2019). This non-alignment mobilizes a black sense of place that reimagines the meaning and process of wealth creation, beyond finance, through relationality, love and care.

Date: Friday, January 27th, 2023

Time: 2:30-3:30pm

Location: Room 1004 SSC

Open to all interested individuals



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