



Call for Papers

“Intersectional and Postcolonial Feminist Perspectives as Instruments of Critique in Political Science”

Annual Conference of the Working Group “Politics and Gender” of the German Association of Political Science (DVPW)

10 November 2017, University Duisburg-Essen, Campus Essen

Intersectional and postcolonial feminist approaches both analyze the interlinked structures of inequality, power, and authority. Inter alia, they focus on hierarchized and hierarchizing processes of social structuration, and, in particular, on the co-constitutiveness of racism and sexism.

The concept of intersectionality was first developed by the US scholar and representative of critical legal and critical race theory, Kimberlé Crenshaw. Crenshaw demonstrated how – in both legal and activist contexts – the position of Black women is marginalized and made invisible by the simultaneous reference to their ‘equality’ and their ‘difference’ to both the positions of white women and black men. Postcolonial feminist approaches analyze the effects of colonial power relations from the past to the present. Challenging universalizing perspectives, they examine the mechanisms of exclusion in knowledge production and political interventions, but also develop proposals for border-crossing solidarities.

Both perspectives, which are tightly intertwined, provide ample points of connection the German-speaking political and social sciences. But their reception has been shaped by the different disciplinary approaches, theoretical orientations and research interests. Some hold that in these processes of translation, their internal heterogeneity and their political impetus have been lost. In response to this criticism, a continued dialogue with local knowledge production and political activism is needed to evade their ‘exclusive inclusion’.

Their reception has, unquestionably, propelled the critical self-reflection of academic practice: From criticizing the canon of social sciences, academic recruitment and teaching practices, to questioning the exclusive and hierarchizing mechanisms of research praxis and knowledge production, they have been used to intervene in hegemonic power relations. Intersectionality has, paradoxically, served both as example for the cooptation of critical knowledge in the service of a neoliberalized academia and as an instrument able to challenge this very process. Postcolonial and decolonial approaches are, in a similar manner, confronted with accusations of depolitization and have, in some cases, been selectively reproduced to legitimize hegemonic research.

The conference aims to critically reflect on the potential of intersectional and postcolonial feminist analyses for political and social science. We welcome contributions that analyze the relation between both perspectives, but also their link to the canon of political science research and teaching both conceptionally and empirically: We look forward to papers demonstrating how one or both perspectives have been applied in empirical research and addressing the challenges and potentials



CfP: „Intersektionale und postkolonial-feministische Perspektiven als Instrumente einer politikwissenschaftlichen Macht- und Herrschaftskritik“

identified in these research endeavors. As knowledge production happens not only at universities; we consider the knowledge that activists create in concrete struggles and through critical reflection of their praxis highly relevant for the creation of emancipatory knowledge. We consequently specifically invite activists to hand in abstracts and actively participate in our discussions.

Intensive exchange and dialogue is at the heart of the conference. The presentations, therefore, should be prepared in advance and will be made available to all participants before the conference. Nikita Dhawan (University of Innsbruck) and Birgit Sauer (University of Vienna) have confirmed their attendance.

Please send us your abstract of max. 250 words and a short bio-note until 31 March 2017 to [akpg\[at\]web.de](mailto:akpg[at]web.de). We will inform you about our decision before 30 May 2017 and expect your complete paper until 1 October 2017. We intend to organize child care. In order to calculate the demand in advance, we ask you to state whether you will need childcare when you submit your abstract.