

## **Call for Contributions: International Spring School**

### **“Decolonizing Gender Studies”**

***Annual conference of the Gender Studies Association in Germany 2022***

03.02.-07.02.2022, University of Kassel, Germany

The inter- and transdisciplinary field of Gender Studies is characterized by various theoretical approaches, methodologies and genealogies that strive to address gendered orders, relations and constructions in order to identify its gaps and challenge its normalized truths and self-understandings. Transnational Feminisms, Black Feminisms, Feminist border-thinking, Diasporic Feminisms, Indigenous Feminisms and Queer Diaspora Critique, among others, have been crucial in advancing critical perspectives. Epistemological and methodological tools like intersectionality and the emphasis on situated knowledge have been important anchors for critically evaluating practices of knowledge production. The 2022 annual conference of the Gender Studies Society is dedicated to the decolonization of gender studies. Building on the question of whose voices have been and continue to be silenced and which racialized and gendered ways of life have been othered and excluded, hegemonic knowledge production has been analyzed in its systematic relation to processes of exclusion, devaluation and Othering. In addition to this, the critical analysis of gender and sexuality as colonial categories of knowledge as well as the critical reflection of the reproduction of colonial logics such as the centering of white and Eurocentric perspectives have been central in the field of Gender Studies.

While intersectional and critical perspectives have become established within and beyond the field of Gender Studies, there is a growing call for decolonizing research, knowledge production and teaching especially within academic institutions. Practices of decolonization, including the dismantling of epistemic violence and structural inequalities, need to go far beyond neoliberal approaches of reform in order to radically challenge the legacies of colonial power structures and enable modes of epistemic transformation. The consistent consideration of post- and decolonial knowledges and of how Europe and its 'knowledge traditions' have been produced through entangled global histories is still far from commonplace in the scholarship of the Global North, i.e., also in Germany. Therefore, Gender Studies needs to ask how post- and decolonial perspectives can be more strongly taken into account.

The spring school “Decolonizing Gender Studies” aims to establish a space for exchange between post- and decolonial, feminist, queer and antiracist perspectives, practices and visions. We seek to engage with the complexities, challenges and paradoxes of decolonization in the field of Gender Studies in Germany and contribute to the de-privileging, un-learning and dismantling of colonial, Eurocentric, racist, and heteronormative hierarchies and exclusions. We invite scholars, researchers, artists and activists to join into dialogue across artistic, activist and research areas. The Spring School aims to discuss current debates, questions and challenges on decolonization from a Gender Studies perspective and develop (new) imaginaries and collective decolonizing strategies and interventions.

We particularly invite contributions that engage theoretically, epistemologically, methodologically as well as from an empirical or/and an activist perspective with different approaches on decolonizing Gender Studies. We welcome contributions from (while not limited to) the fields of Postcolonial Feminist, Critical Race and Critical Whiteness Studies, as well as Cultural, Migration, Black, Indigenous, Queer, Trans\*, Disability/Crip, and Feminist Science and Technology Studies related to the following questions:

- What can transnational feminist solidarity look like?
- What could and should solidarity mean for feminist knowledge production, research, and activism? How activist can and should research be and how research-oriented can and should activism be?
- If gender is critically analyzed as a colonial category of knowledge and as a part of the colonial matrix of power and knowledge, what does this mean for re-thinking the category 'Gender' in Gender Studies?
- How is the (German) university complicit in the reproduction of colonial relationships and patterns? What does 'decolonizing the university' and 'decolonizing knowledge production' entail? Which concepts and practices are helpful for this process? How might a decolonial university look like?
- Which historical, theoretical, artistic, literary or activist concepts and analyses challenge Gender Studies? How has their dissemination been controlled and made difficult? How could they be made to matter in and for Gender Studies?
- How can and must teaching be (re)designed against the background of decolonial interventions? How can in particular the curriculum be decolonized?

In addition to broader discussion and dialogic formats, workshops on "Migration and Asylum", "Extractivism", "Land and Territory", "Digitalization and the Decolonization of AI" or "Decolonizing the University" (with inputs on visual and artistic gender research, activist and participatory gender research, research and publication practices, pedagogical strategies and working conditions, among others) are planned. Another focus is on queering decolonial, postcolonial and intersectional research.

We invite proposals such as (but not limited to) single contributions, workshops, poster presentations, and performances in German, English and Spanish. Please indicate the language, which your contribution will be in and if applicable, which workshop you would like to take part in. Contributions with workshop topics and formats that are not addressed in the call, but related to the topic, are also welcome.

**Please submit an abstract (max. 500 words) as well as a short bio-note (max. 100 words) and your contact details by 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021, in one PDF-file, to: [decolonizing-genderstudies@uni-kassel.de](mailto:decolonizing-genderstudies@uni-kassel.de).**

Childcare will be available during the course of the Spring school - please indicate if you will make use of this offer when submitting your abstract so that we can plan accordingly. We aim to make the Spring School as accessible as possible. Please inform us of any other technical, time and other requirements for your participation.

We imagine that the Spring school will take place in person however, given the conjuncture of the pandemic, there is a possibility that the format of the Spring school will change. In the event of this, we will inform you of any changes as soon as possible.

*The Spring School is organized by a heterogeneous group of people situated in the academic environment of the Department of Social Sciences at the University of Kassel in cooperation with board members of the Gender Studies Association.*