

Call for Contributions

Inviting contributions for Virtual workshop on 15. - 17.09.2020

„Postcolonial Perspectives on Protest and Reform in the Global Political Economy“

NFG⁰¹⁷
NACHWUCHS-
FORSCHERGRUPPE

Gefördert durch die

**Hans Böckler
Stiftung** 
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30 years of Alter-Globalization and Globalization Research...

In response to the worldwide protests in the 1990s against the fatal effects of neoliberal globalization, the policies of international organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Trade Organization (WTO) have been under closer scrutiny by activists and researchers alike. Social Science research – in part counterhegemonic – has endeavored to examine the global protests as well as the incipient reform processes in international organizations.

...and a Postcolonial gap

However, an explicit postcolonial perspective on the contested global political economy and its institutions is largely lacking in spite of the proliferation of postcolonial studies in recent decades. Postcolonial studies are united by their focus on colonial continuities and thus on the question of how North-South asymmetries continue on material, institutional, epistemic and discursive terms. While it is clear that international organizations play a central role in these asymmetries, postcolonial concepts such as "othering", subaltern representation and hybridity can open up a different, (self-)critical perspective on global protest, reform processes and the role of the World Bank, IMF, WTO, etc. At the same time, the lack of systematic consideration of both institutional and political-economy contexts has often been the Achilles' heel of postcolonial studies.

Postcolonial Political Science?

We take this "complementary deficit" (Ziai 2012) of political science and postcolonial studies on one hand as a starting point to substantiate the possibilities and limits of postcolonial protest and reform research and on the other hand, to discuss its political relevance. For it is precisely against the background of the current movement for global climate justice -as illustrated by the "Decolonize!" campaign for example- that postcolonial questions are being asked with renewed vehemence.

We are therefore looking forward to contributions in a variety of creative formats on (or around) the following topics:

a) The contested relation of protest and reform

- Which protest (form of protest, location, strategy, etc.) led to institutional reforms and which one(s) did not? Why?
- Whose demands were responded to by the reforms and whose were not? How? What role did North-South and gender issues play in these reforms?
- How did the reforms affect the global protest movement?
- Are substantial reforms of the institutions of the Global Political Economy even possible – and, if so, what would they look like (from a postcolonial perspective)?

b) (Subaltern) representation in global protests and reforms

- How "global" or how "white" was the protest movement of the 1990s?
- What role did colonial/racist stereotypes play in the protests and (how) were they reflected?
- What role did colonial/racist stereotypes play in the reform responses of the international organizations?
- What does this mean for current political struggles?

c) Silencing, Appropriation, Cooptation in the Reforms of Global Political Economy

- What is the role of the subaltern and subaltern Knowledge in the institutions of the global political economy - and what has changed in this respect as a result of the protests and reforms of the 1990s?
- Which concepts can be used to critically understand the hegemonic access to subalterns and their knowledge (e.g. silencing, appropriation/expropriation, co-optation, commodification, depoliticization or epistemic violence)?
- What role do (social) scientists play in institutional reform processes, e.g. in relation to subalterns/social movements and their knowledge?
- Can institutional reforms also be appropriated "from below"? If so, how and by whom?

d) Colonial continuities of the Global Political Economy and its institutions

- Which colonial/imperial heritage characterizes the structures and institutions of the Global Political Economy?
- What does this mean for institutional reforms?
- To what extent do colonial power relations refigure in current debt crises?

e) Possibilities and obstacles of postcolonial political science

- How can a postcolonial study of institutions in the global political economy draw from the experience of social movements without being extractive?
- Must postcolonial political science give up the "privilege of the last word" (Charter for Decolonial Research Ethics)?
- Postcolonial political science for whom and with whom? What is the political goal?
- Which theoretical and methodological possibilities and obstacles face postcolonial political science?
- How to make postcolonial political science (more) relevant?

Contribution Types:

Please send your contribution ideas on a **maximum of one page by June 15, 2020**. In addition to articles, short contributions, posters, comics, poems, essays, videos, performances, etc. can also be presented. Your contributions can be ideas, approaches, reports from current research or your practice as well as advanced and completed contributions or research projects.

Timeline:

Submission of abstracts/outlines until **June 15 2020**

Workshop: **September 15 - 17 2020**

Language: The working language of the workshop will depend on the registered participants. Abstracts can be submitted in German or English.

Contact us: The Junior Research Group "Protest and Reform in the Global Political Economy from the perspective of postcolonial political science" can be reached at protestreform@mailbox.org

<https://www.uni-kassel.de/fb05/en/fachgruppen/politikwissenschaft/department-for-development-and-postcolonial-studies/junior-research-group-protest-and-reform-in-the-gpe.html>