

Call for Abstracts:

Decolonizing Methodologies and Epistemologies: Discourse Analysis and Sociology of Knowledge

(Deadline: 31.05.2021)

Dear Colleagues,

We hereby invite you to submit an abstract for the session “Decolonizing Methodologies and Epistemologies: Discourse Analysis and Sociology of Knowledge”, organized by Reiner Keller, Sasa Bosancic, Florian Elliker and Annette Knaut (Germany and Switzerland) at the Online-Conference “1st International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Spatial Methods” (SMUS Conference) and “1st RC33 Regional Conference – Africa: Botswana” in cooperation with ESA RN21 “Quantitative Methods” 23 – 26.09.2021, organised and hosted online by the University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana. The deadline for submission is 31.05.2021. Please find details on the session, the conference and the submission process below.

Kind Regards,

Gabriel Faimau (University of Botswana, Botswana) and Nina Baur (TU Berlin, Germany)
(Conference Organizers)

Session “Decolonizing Methodologies and Epistemologies: Discourse Analysis and Sociology of Knowledge

Session Organizers: Reiner Keller, Sasa Bosancic, Florian Elliker and Annette Knaut (Germany and Switzerland)

In the mid-1990s, Stuart Hall proposed to analyze discourses as knowledge processes: “[D]iscourses are ways of referring to or constructing knowledge about a particular topic of practice: a cluster (or formation) of ideas, images and practices, which provide ways of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society” (Hall 1997a: 4). A few years later, in her influential work on “Decolonizing methods”, Linda Tuhiwai Smith pointed out that in the context of a necessary “decolonization of methods”, the question of knowledge becomes of central importance. She argued that we should focus on questions “about the roles that knowledge, knowledge production, knowledge hierarchies and knowledge institutions play in [...] social transformation” (Smith 2012: XII), and that we should look for methodologies suited to that purpose. Taking Hall’s and Smith’s arguments together, discourse research integrating “discourse”, “knowledge” and “power/knowledge” seems to provide research with a concept that allows for such inquiries. The planned session therefore asks about the suitability of discourse-related as well as sociology of knowledge-related perspectives for the tasks of a contemporary and future decolonized social research that focuses on knowledge in social relations and the politics of knowledge – in Foucault’s words: the power/knowledge regimes – in the North/South relationship. In particular, the potentials of the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD) and other (related) perspectives in discourse research will be explored. Submitted proposals should therefore discuss from a methodological perspective the possibilities, pitfalls, limits and extensions of such approaches with regard to core questions of decolonization of methods. This might include discussing the need

for and challenge of hermeneutic procedures, interpretation and translation of data. It might also include examinations of the (current state of the) conceptual apparatus that has been developed primarily based on ‘northern hemisphere’ views on the discursive construction of reality in and between rather diverse social arenas and more or less ‘public’ spheres. Proposals may also address questions of the challenges and limits of the concepts of knowledge or discourse that arise from the post- and decolonial condition. The session welcomes papers on conceptual and methodological questions as well as presentations from empirical work relating to its purpose.

Submission of Papers

All sessions have to comply with the conference organization rules (see below). If you want to present a paper, please submit your abstract via the official conference website: <https://gcsmus.org> until 31.05.2021. You will be informed by 31.07.2021, if your proposed paper has been accepted for presentation at the conference. For further information, please see the conference website or contact the session organizers, Reiner Keller, Sasa Bosancic, Florian Elliker and Annette Knaut (reiner.keller@phil.uni-augsburg.de; sasa.bosancic@phil.uni-augsburg.de; florian.elliker@unisg.ch; annette.knaut@phil.uni-augsburg.de).

About the Conference

The “Global Center of Spatial Methods for Urban Sustainability” (GCSMUS) together with the Research Committee on “Logic and Methodology in Sociology” (RC33) of the “International Sociology Association” (ISA) and the Research Network “Quantitative Methods” (RN21) of the European Sociology Association” (ESA) will organize a “1st International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Spatial Methods” (“SMUS Conference”) which will at the same time be the “1st RC33 Regional Conference – Africa: Botswana” from Thursday 23.09 – Sunday 26.09.2021, hosted by the University of Botswana in Gaborone, Botswana. Given the current challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference will convene entirely **online**. The conference aims at promoting a global dialogue on methods and should attract methodologists from all over the world and all social and spatial sciences (e.g. area studies, architecture, communication studies, educational sciences, geography, historical sciences, humanities, landscape planning, philosophy, psychology, sociology, urban design, urban planning, traffic planning and environmental planning). Thus, the conference will enable scholars to get in contact with methodologists from various disciplines all over the world and to deepen discussions with researchers from various methodological angles. Scholars of all social and spatial sciences and other scholars who are interested in methodological discussions are invited to submit a paper to any sessions of the conference. All papers have to address a methodological problem.

Please find more information on the above institutions on the following websites:

- “Global Center of Spatial Methods for Urban Sustainability” (GCSMUS):
<https://gcsmus.org> and www.mes.tu-berlin.de/spatialmethods
- ISA RC33: <http://rc33.org/>
- ESA RN21: www.europeansociology.org/research-networks/rn21-quantitative-methods
- University of Botswana in Gaborone: www.ub.bw

If you are interested in getting **further information on the conference** and other GCSMUS activities, please **subscribe to the GCSMUS newsletter** by registering via the following website:
<https://lists.tu-berlin.de/mailman/listinfo/mes-smusnews>

Rules for Session Organization (According to GCSMUS Objectives and RC 33 Statutes)

1. There will be **no conference fees**.

2. The conference language is [English](#). All papers therefore need to be presented in English.
3. All sessions have to be [international](#): Each session should have speakers from at least two countries (exceptions will need good reasons).
4. Each paper must contain a [methodological problem](#) (any area, qualitative or quantitative).
5. There will be several calls for abstracts via the GCSMUS, RC33 and RN21 Newsletters. To begin with, session organizers can prepare a call for abstracts on their own initiative, then at a different time, there will be a common call for abstracts, and session organizers can ask anybody to submit a paper.
6. GCSMUS, RC33 and RN21 members may distribute these calls via other channels. GCSMUS members and session organizers are expected to actively advertise their session in their respective scientific communities.
7. Speakers can only have [one talk per session](#). This also applies for joint papers. It will not be possible for A and B to present at the same time one paper as B and A during the same session. This would just extend the time allocated to these speakers.
8. Session organizers may present a paper in their own session.
9. Sessions will have a length of 90 minutes with a maximum of 4 papers or a length of 120 minutes with a maximum of 6 papers. Session organizers can invite as many speakers as they like. The number of sessions depends on the number of papers submitted to each session. E.g. if 12 good papers are submitted to a session, there will be two sessions with a length of 90 minutes each with 6 papers in each session.
10. Papers may only be rejected for the conference if they do not present a methodological problem (as stated above), are not in English or are somehow considered by session organizers as not being appropriate or relevant for the conference. Session organizers may ask authors to revise and resubmit their paper so that it fits these requirements. If session organizers do not wish to consider a paper submitted to their session, they should inform the author and forward the paper to the local organizing team who will find a session where the paper fits for presentation.
11. Papers directly addressed to the conference organising committee (and those forwarded from session organizers) will be offered to other session organizers (after proofing for quality). The session organizers will have to decide on whether or not the paper can be included in their session(s). If the session organizers think that the paper does not fit into their session(s), the papers should be sent back to the conference organizing committee as soon as possible so that the committee can offer the papers to another session organizer.