

Call for Papers

The Making of Mankind: Tracing *Race* & *Racism*

4-6 July 2019

The Annual Seminar is a renowned three-day conference format of Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology (BGHS) approaching 11 years in 2019. In cooperation with the collaborative research center (SFB 1288) on “Practices of Comparing,” we invite young researchers to present their work on the construction of *race* and *racism* in an interdisciplinary framework of history, sociology, law, literature and others. More precisely, this year’s Annual Seminar focuses on the role of comparing in the processes of making mankind and the way it influences assumptions of equality and inequality.

Whether in natural sciences, social and human sciences or humanities, *race* as a concept or central category has been widely contested and criticized. But the construction of *race* is a crucial part in the processes of making mankind and as an analytical category it is intertwined with the emergence of disciplines in their respective epistemological contexts (e.g. “scientific *racism*”) and related discourses. It is an integral part of the formation of a knowledge matrix biased by a European perspective that urges for further scrutiny across scientific fields. The conference wants to explore origins and preceding concepts as well as the construction of *race* as a category and methodological model that has been used in different scientific contexts over time, as well as its consequences for the production of knowledge and reality.

Moreover, the conference will address the entangled relations of *race* to the social phenomenon of *racism* in everyday life and other discourses across the globe. It remains open to question how the development of the category of *race* influenced practices of *racism* and vice versa as well as how it connects to a broader political context. Furthermore, *racism* often finds its expression in a more complex set of practices by actors, institutions and structures that transverses and involves other categories and relations of (in-)equality such as gender and class. For this reason, we want to ask for the status of *racism* in the reproduction of power relations, processes of social differentiation and material inscriptions.

In all of this, we see practices of comparing as an innovative focal point: By making comparisons the subject and not the method of our conference we want to ask who is comparing, what is compared, when and in which regard? By detecting and describing concrete practices of comparing (see Radhakrishnan 2009, Xie 2013, Zhang 2016) important insights can be gained into the ways *race* and *racism* are being made.

In this context, we are interested in examples across different times or epochs, regions and groups:

- the emergence of scientific fields
- discussions of colonialism, nationalism, post-colonial discourses
- cultural narratives and boundary processes
- anthropological and ethnographic discourses
- legal practices and discourses

This conference is intended for young researchers from all disciplines and invites abstracts (max. 300 words) for project presentations of about 20 minutes. Abstracts, along with a short biographical note, should be submitted to the conference organizers at annualseminar@uni-bielefeld.de. The deadline for abstracts is **1 March 2019**.

The BGHS offers financial support to graduate students whose contributions are selected for the Annual Seminar. This support includes accommodation, and in justified individual cases, a portion of the travel expenses can be reimbursed. Due to limited resources, please indicate in your application whether you would like to be considered for a travel grant, and send us an estimate of your expected travel expenses. Please also check with your home institution for other funding opportunities. Speakers will be responsible for their own daily expenses. Applicants will be notified by **1 April 2019**, as to whether their abstract has been accepted. Furthermore, please note that the conference will be held in English. A publication is planned.

This call for papers and further information regarding the BGHS Annual Seminar and the SFB 1288 are available:

www.uni-bielefeld.de/bghs/Programm/Ansem/
[www.uni-bielefeld.de/\(en\)/sfb1288/](http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/(en)/sfb1288/)

Organizing Team:

Lisa Baßenhoff, Andreas Becker, Julian Gärtner,
Lena Gumpert, Ina Kiel, Malika Mansouri, Malin Wilckens