

CALL FOR PAPERS



ECPR Joint Sessions, 19-22 April 2022 ([more info](#))

“Sovereignty, Governance, and Indigenous Peoples: Engaging with Indigenous Political Thought” Workshop (online)

Organized and chaired by Valentin Clavé-Mercier (University of Aberdeen) and Karolina Werner (Western University & Carleton University)

Deadline for paper proposals: 2 February 2022

Indigenous worldviews, experiences, and political thought are still largely marginalised in mainstream political studies. Outside of critical political science research which has increasingly focused on decolonization and recognition of the coloniality of knowledge (Grosfoguel, 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013), Indigenous issues continue to be engaged with in ways that objectify Indigenous peoples, rather than recognize their ongoing contributions to political praxis and theory. However, the entanglement of their historical and socio-political experiences with Euromodernity due to colonization processes has meant that Indigenous peoples have been at the forefront of some of the key challenges posed by/to political modernity. Often through the reintroduction and reimagining of their traditional ontologies, epistemologies, and philosophies, Indigenous peoples have articulated alternatives to some of the basic precepts and conundrums of political modernity, including sovereignty, multiculturalism, recognition, universalism/relativism, self-determination, or democracy. Their role and influence in international and national political developments are increasingly significant, as exemplified by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), the Bolivian Constitution (2009), or the increasing engagement of Indigenous representatives at the United Nations and in national governments. These developments signify a wave of change for political science and highlight the importance of engaging with Indigenous political thought. Particularly, European scholarship has long been at the centre of colonial thought and

coloniality, shaping the narrative. We argue that practical, theoretical and methodological richness lies in engaging with Indigenous worldviews, knowledges, and practices. As a result, this joint session resolutely claims a space for Indigenous politics within (European) political science with an eye on encouraging more researchers and academic institutions to engage with, and include, Indigenous issues and research in their work. More specifically, this workshop aims to foster a dialogue between Western and Indigenous political thought on questions of sovereignty and governance.

Through diverse political claims and mobilisations, Indigenous peoples are pushing political imaginations on how to organise and construct political communities. For instance, Indigenous scholars are theorising models of self-determination that disrupt the paradigmatic model of modern state sovereignty (Alfred, 1999; Coulthard, 2014; Simpson, 2014). In other cases, Indigenous peoples and organisations are articulating their own claims of sovereignty, although as a differentiated conception disconnected from statehood and linked to alternative political models and philosophies (MacDonald & Lightfoot 2017; Matike Mai Aotearoa, 2016; Moreton-Robinson, 2007). Alternatively, Indigenous peoples pursue their claims of self-determination and sovereignty by integrating existing local, national, and international governance systems and statutes, often transforming these in the process (Gagné & Salaun, 2010; Postero & Tockman, 2020). Therefore, Indigenous peoples force us to re-think many of the ‘modern’ political ideas, assumptions and dominant models of political authority, sovereignty, and governance. Either explicitly or implicitly, their political praxis and thinking thus constitutes a key site for the growing agenda of decolonizing political science, political thinking, and politics itself (Emejulu, 2018; Shilliam, 2021; Tuck & Yang, 2012).

The workshop welcomes proposals from a variety of analytical perspectives and methodological approaches covering the proposed topics. We expect to receive papers based on empirical and non-empirical research, potentially covering different temporal and spatial coordinates. Comparative studies and case-focused works are both welcome and to be expected. Fields and areas such as political theory, political philosophy, international relations, Indigenous studies, postcolonial/decolonial studies, conceptual analysis, political geography, ethnopolitics, or governance studies are likely to be brought into conversation.

Considering all this, and among other questions, this workshop invites both comparative and case-focused papers that deal with the following:

- How is coloniality still defining significant political concepts and practices such as sovereignty, self-determination, authority, governance, or autonomy? How are these definitions and associated practices detrimental to Indigenous peoples? What alternatives are Indigenous peoples advancing?
- How are Indigenous peoples currently pursuing their political aspirations, from accommodation/participation to the construction of alternatives? How do they articulate their claims and challenges to authority and governance? What kind of political configurations and systems are they advancing? How are states responding to these claims?
- What voices, practices, political thought are erased and which ones made predominant in the discipline of political science? What can we learn from Indigenous peoples to re-think political praxis and theory beyond their specific contexts? How can we decolonise political science in a way that enables it to productively engage with Indigenous politics and to support non-exploitative research on/for/with Indigenous peoples?

Contributions are welcome from PhD students, early career researchers and established scholars. Indigenous and non-indigenous researchers are welcome, hopefully representing and working on as many diverse geographical and political contexts as possible. This joint session is intended to be for anyone engaged in, as well as those interested in, conducting research that includes and builds on Indigenous political thought, worldviews, and knowledges.

Information for prospective participants

For more information on the Joint Sessions' format and on how to submit a paper proposal, please see the [ECPR website](#). Abstracts should be of no more than 500 words. Co-authored papers are welcome. Prospective participants will be notified of their submission's outcome by 23 February 2022. Full papers should be submitted by 4 April 2022.

For any questions on the Joint Sessions, contact jointsessions@ecpr.eu. Questions on this particular workshop can be directed to valentin.clave-mercier@abdn.ac.uk and k.werner@makowski.ca.