

Vortrag: The Mirage of Biosocial Complexity

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, Bild: Bild von Maike und Björn Bröskamp auf Pixabay.

Eine Präsentation von Luca Chiapperino, organisiert von [CeSCoS](#) (Centre for the Study of Contemporary Solidarity) in Zusammenarbeit mit der [Österreichischen Plattform für Personalisierte Medizin](#) (ÖPPM), Open Science – Lebenswissenschaften im Dialog und der [Karl Landsteiner Universität für Gesundheitswissenschaften](#).

Wann:

4. Juli 2023, 17 Uhr

Wo:

Vienna BioCenter

IMBA lecture hall

Dr.-Bohr-Gasse 3, 1030

Wien

Online-Teilnahme via [Zoom](#) möglich.

Vortrag in englischer Sprache.

Abstract:

This talk challenges a key tacit assumption about the policy potential of epigenetics, namely, that it has great value for action on the health consequences of environmental exposures and the embodiment of inequalities. Epigenetic modifications such as DNA methylation get increasing attention as biological correlates of social conditions, lifestyles and/or environmental exposures. Yet, the actionability of this information is not clear. Some have criticised that epigenetics would bolster the idea that individuals are responsible for their exposure to hazardous environments. Others have questioned the added value of this information to existing policy claims addressing health and environmental inequalities. Interindividual epigenetic variation, these scholars argued, can hardly be connected to the social or environmental processes that produced it.

Building upon six years of fieldwork, my talk explores the technical and experimental work invested into connecting structural policy-level interventions with epigenetic knowledge of exposure-related disorders. The connections between social justice and epigenetics rest upon a distinct kind of actors' work "complexifying" the experimental designs and knowledge claims of this research. Some of the field's epistemic norms and values are used for this purpose, including those relating to: a) the multiple social-biological transitions shaping the epigenome; b)

the epigenetics of culture and ethnicity; c) the effectiveness and viability of social and environmental interventions into the epigenome. Is an epigenetics of health and environmental injustices just a mirage, or a concrete opportunity for future public health policymaking?

Über Luca Chiapperino:

Luca Chiapperino is Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) "Ambizione" Lecturer at the STS Lab of the Institute of Social Sciences (ISS), Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (SSP) at UNIL. In 2015 he received his PhD in "Foundations and Ethics of the Life Sciences" at the European School of Molecular Medicine (SEMM) and the University of Milan, Italy. His research interests sit at the crossroads of Science and Technology Studies, moral and applied philosophy; a position from which he studies the normative dimensions of biomedicine, and the multiple ways value-laden and factual elements get articulated in practices of knowledge-production. His work has appeared in numerous specialised journals and collective works, as well as in interdisciplinary publications.

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