Abstract

The Paradox of Flexibilization and Fixation of Gender Relations in Neoliberal Politics in European welfare states: The German Example

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I would like to work on a concept of hegemony of gender relations under neoliberal conditions in Western Europe with special focus on Germany. I will draw from Robert Connells concept of hegemony of masculinity but question this for its shortcomings. Taking the helpful threefold categories of analysis of gender from Judith Lorber (process, structure and layering) I hope to combine this analytical view with recent concepts of discursive construction of gendered subjects. The problem to be faced is at least to my opinion that neoliberal gender politics organize two different though intertwined processes of both flexibilization and fixation of gender relations. This paradoxical structure is to be analyzed at different levels:

1. of institutionalized gender politics within EU and the German state
2. of metaphors and discursive practices within social and labour market politics as a field of reregulation of gender relations
3. as basis of changing self-relations within gendered subjectivities.

I will try to combine insights from a feminist critical view of state theories in relation to neo-Gramscian view with respect to gender relations with a Foucauldian frame of subjectivity in respect to his concept of governmentality. This is not gendered so far, and I will try to outline a sketch of how to do so.

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