

Call for PAPERS

Crossing boundaries.

An interdisciplinary conference on the challenges and chances of research on the "Indian Ocean"- "Africa"-connection

9 - 11 August 2015 at Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study
Stellenbosch, South Africa

Conveners:

Dr. Franz Kogelmann (Islamic Studies, University of Bayreuth, Germany)

Prof. Dr. Louis Paul Randriamarolaza (Anthropology, University of Antananarivo, Madagascar)

Prof. Dr. Eva Spies (Study of Religion, University of Bayreuth, Germany)

In cooperation with:

Point Sud, Centre for Research on Local Knowledge, Bamako, Mali

The recent increase in Area Studies resulted in a new debate on the suitability of a research approach driven by geographically defined regions. Some critics voiced the concern that research concentrating on areas tends to reify imagined regions and their borders. Others see boundaries of academic disciplines severely challenged whenever regions are at the centre of research designs rather than theoretical questions or critical disciplinary discourses and methods.

Based on these observations, the conference aims to promote a new south-south perspective on the connections between the "Indian Ocean" and "Africa". To achieve this objective the conference provides a forum to re-think conceptual and disciplinary boundary-making and -crossing while discussing empirical case studies with foci on religious and/or economic interactions between "Africa" and the "Indian Ocean".

We invite the submission of papers that present innovative research on religious and/or economic interactions between "Africa" and the "Indian Ocean" and critically discuss the concepts of area, border or connection used in research.

By discussing empirical data as well as the translation and application of an area-approach, we invite scholars to re-think not only the empirical data but also the epistemological basis of research on areas, borders and connections. Thus, the conference aims to foster the re-location and re-evaluation of knowledge and academic knowledge-production and the discussion of southern perspectives on the "areas" in question.

We encourage papers from different disciplinary backgrounds to discuss empirical case studies, to question concepts such as "area", "region" and "border" and to present models of interconnectedness and processes of exchange.

Invited applicants are kindly requested to send in draft versions of their paper four weeks prior to the workshop, to ensure a thorough preparation of the workshop discussions. The presentation (20-25 min) of the papers is in English.

Please send an abstract of max. 500 words and a short biographical sketch (disciplinary background, institutional affiliation) to Franz Kogelmann, Louis Paul Randriamarolaza and Eva Spies by **April 24, 2015**

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For invited participants costs of transport and accommodation during the duration of the workshop will be covered.