



## Preliminary Programme of the International Conference

### **African Studies – Multiple and Relational**

University of Bayreuth (Germany), December 7-10, 2017

#### **Outline**

Over the past two decades, Area Studies have undergone critical revision. African Studies are no exception here. However, debates conducted about the past, present and future of Area Studies are often limited to academics based in the Global North, i.e. Europe and North America.

Yet, academics in the field of African Studies in countries such as, for instance, Brazil or Cuba, with their own history of links with Africa, maintain different networks that intersect only partially with those in the Global North. Even more sparse are the connections that link African Studies centers in Europe and North America with those in Asia, although some of them were founded three or four decades ago.

Parallel to the rise of critical Area Studies approaches in the Global North, African Studies centers in Africa have engaged in their own debates about academic knowledge production in the field, oftentimes with little involvement of their colleagues from other regions. Long-established centers, such as the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana (founded in 1961), at the University of Cape Town, at Addis Ababa University (founded in 1950), or the Center for African Studies at Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo (founded in 1976), established connections with other, younger centers in Africa, thus reinforcing the continent-based African Studies network.

Our conference aims to transcend the regional logic that underlies the organization of African Studies, as e.g. in the European AEGIS network, the North American ASA, the African ASAA, or the Australia-Asia-Pacific Institute (AAPI). By bringing African, Asian, Latin American, Australian, American, and European perspectives together and strengthening the exchange between African Studies centers, the conference will foster forms of exchange that have so far only happened on a limited scale.

In addition to **casting a wider net by convening representatives of African Studies institutions**, we also pursue **thematic objectives**, as expressed in the conference title. How does the wide range of approaches to the study of Africa on a global level reflect the diversity of regional and multidisciplinary viewpoints? To what extent do methods and theories depend on regional or disciplinary contexts and on their particular relation to each other and to the African context?

Taking into consideration the wide range of approaches to a complex field, we invite the participants **to reflect on notions of multiplicity and relationality**. By multiplicity we intend to emphasize the simultaneity of heterogeneous and mutually influencing ways of life and world-making as well as Africa's connectedness in today's world. In addition, multiplicity refers to wide array of theoretical and methodological approaches that characterizes our field. Developing a relational perspective means to shift the focus from entities or objects to the relations between them. At the same time, relationality implies taking a stance that considers the relations between the researcher and the topic studied, as well as between different methodological and theoretical perspectives. Here, relationality connects to the necessity of self-reflection in any type of social or cultural study, and even more so in the study of Africa, framed as it is by past and present power relations. We therefore encourage

the participants—researchers in African Studies from different disciplinary backgrounds and different continents—to engage with these concepts and/or to put forward other concepts that can guide the search for new approaches in our field.

The conference is thus designed to meet two purposes: firstly, it will provide **space for exchange between representatives from African Studies Centers and regional networks** from five continents; secondly, it will **foster interdisciplinary and intercontinental debates about new directions in African studies**. In particular, it pursues the following objectives:

- (1) to discuss approaches and theoretical concepts pertaining to the study of Africa developed in the various areas, including reflection on the impact of these approaches and concepts on the ways in which we understand and conceive of African Studies;
- (2) to explore the potential of multiplicity and relationality as methodological and theoretical devices for the study of Africa—taking into account the immense diversity of the continent—and for the future collaboration between African Studies centers.

Therefore, in addition to the presentation and discussion of academic papers addressing the above objectives, the conference will feature roundtable discussions where participants give short informative overviews concerning the state of research at their home institutions.

## Workshop Schedule

### Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup> 2017, Iwalewahaus

13:30-14:00 Registration & Coffee on Arrival of the participants at Iwalewahaus, Bayreuth

14:00-15:00 Opening Session:

Words of Welcome by the Director of IAS, Rüdiger Seesemann

Words of Welcome by the University Board, Vice President Martin Huber

Introduction by the Convenors Ute Fendler & Doris Löhr

Presentation of the IAS, Bayreuth, Franz Kogelmann, Coordinator of IAS

### 15:00-17:00 AFRICAN STUDIES CENTERS IN AFRICA

**Dzodzi Akuyo Tsikata** (Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana)

*“Overview of Institute of African Studies and a discussion of the range of issues being researched by colleagues and how they view the issue of theoretical frameworks”*

**Carlos Fernandes** (Centro de Estudos Africanos, Maputo, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Maputo, Mozambique)

*“Socialism, post-socialism and intellectual legacies in contemporary Mozambique: evidences from CEA (1979-1986) and IESE (2007-2014)”*

**Yahia Abou El Farah** (L’Institut des Etudes Africaines, Université de Rabat, Morocco)

*“Institute of African Studies: an institution during the African politics of Morocco”*

16:45-17:15 Coffee break

### 17:15-19:15 AFRICAN STUDIES CENTERS IN AFRICA

**Round table Area Studies** *“Where is the ‘African’ in African Studies”*

**Lungisile Ntsebeza** (Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, South Africa)

*Overview Centre for African Studies (tbc)*

**Godwin Murunga** (Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, Dakar, Senegal)

*“African Studies seen by CODESRIA” (tbc)*

19:30 Dinner in town, at “Wiegner 1872”

**Friday, December 8th 2017, Iwalewahaus**

**09:15-10:30 AFRICAN STUDIES CENTERS IN ASIA**

**Hui Jiang** (School of Asian & African Studies at Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing, China)

*“An overall view on African Literary Studies in China” practiced in different institutes all over China & the institute's development of African Literary and language studies against the general situation in China”*

**Aparajita Biswas** (Centre for African Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Mumbai, India)

*“African Studies in India: Evolution, Challenges and Prospects”*

10:30-11:00 Coffee break

**11:00-12:15 AFRICAN STUDIES CENTERS IN ASIA & AUSTRALIA**

**Yongkyu Chang** (Institute of African Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul, Gyeonggi-do, South Korea)

*“Convergence or divergence? Issues and trends in Korean African studies”*

**David Doepel** (Africa Research Group, Murdoch University, Perth, Australia)

*“How closing a mine can be good news for a local economy”*

12:15-13:30 Lunch break (catering)

**13:30-15:30 AFRICAN STUDIES CENTERS IN EUROPE**

**Céline Thiriot** (Les Afriques dans le Monde, Université de Bordeaux, France)

*“Is there a French way for African studies ?”*

**Petr Skalník** (Philosophical Faculty, University Hradec Králové, Czechia)

*“African studies at Hradec Králové, the Czech Republic and East-Central Europe: advantages and limitations of studying Africa from non-colonial perspective”*

**Giorgio Banti** (University of Naples "L'Orientale", Naples, Italy)

*“African Studies at Naples “L'Orientale” and in the wider Italian context”*

15:30-16:00 Coffee break

**16:00-17:00 PUBLIC LECTURE**

**Livio Sansone** (Centro de Estudos Afro-Orientais, Salvador de Bahia, Brazil)

*“Africa has no special smell: Towards academic equality in African Studies”*

17:00-18:00 Round table/ Discussants **Maria Grosz-Ngaté & Yongkyu Chang**

19:00 Reception with music at Iwalewahaus

**Saturday, December 9th 2017, Campus**

**9:30-10:30 AFRICAN STUDIES CENTERS IN THE AMERICAS**

**John Henry Hanson** (The African Studies Program, Bloomington, Indiana, USA)

*"Multiplicity and Relationality in the research of African Studies scholars at Indiana University."*

**Livio Sansone** (Centro de Estudos Afro-Orientais, Salvador de Bahia, Brazil)

*"Challenges and new possibilities: African studies in Brazil"*

10:30-11:00 Coffee break

**11:00-12:30 AFRICAN STUDIES CENTERS IN THE AMERICAS**

**Akíntúndé Akínyemí** (Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, University of Florida, Gainesville, FA, USA)

*Overview of Center & "Expanding the Frontiers of African Studies through Language Teaching"*

**Marta Cordiés Jackson** (Centro Cultural Africano "Fernando Ortiz", Universidad del Oriente, Santiago de Cuba, Cuba)

*"African Presence in the Caribbean, Certain Considerations"*

12:45-14:00 Lunch break

**14:00-15:30 AFRICAN STUDIES CENTERS IN THE AMERICAS**

**Rina Cáceres Gómez** (Chair for African History, Universidad de Costa Rica, San José, Costa Rica)

*"African and Caribbean Studies in Costa Rica a case of Public History" and "Atlantic Africans and The Narratives of Political Exclusion and Territorial Dispossession in the prelude to Central America Independence"*

**AFRICAN STUDIES CENTERS IN EUROPE**

**José da Silva Horta & Carlos Almeida** (African Studies, Centre for History, University of Lisbon, Portugal)

*"Historicity: the primacy of contexts, connections and networks. The case of the international project "African Ivories in the Atlantic World"*

15:30-16:00 Coffee break

**16:00-17:30 AFRICAN STUDIES CENTERS IN EUROPE**

**Jan-Bart Gewald** (African Studies Centre, Universiteit Leiden, Netherlands)

*"African Studies in the Netherlands, Challenges and Constraints"*

**Angelika Basciera** (School of Oriental and African Studies, London, Great Britain)

*The work of SOAS and the research priorities*

20:00 Dinner in town

**Sunday, December 10th 2017, Campus**

10:00-11:00 Round table: African Studies in the World – multiple and relational?  
(discussants tbc)

11:00-12:00 Outlook and Future Activities / End of Conference