



Swiss Society for African Studies
Société suisse d'études africaines
Schweizerische Gesellschaft
für Afrikastudien

c/o Institut für
Sozialanthropologie
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Swiss Researching Africa Days (Bern, 4.–5.11.2016)

Call for papers / Appel à contributions

The Swiss Society for African Studies invites paper propositions for the upcoming 4th Swiss Researching Africa Days. The objective of this biannual convention is to promote the exchange among the community of researchers working on Africa in Switzerland. Panels typically integrate young and established scholars (Master, PhDs, postdocs, professors). Please submit your proposal before **30 May 2016** directly to the convenors of the respective panel.

*La Société suisse d'études africaines invite les acteurs de la scène africaniste en Suisse de proposer des contributions à la 4^{ème} édition des Journées suisses d'études africaines. Ces journées biennuelles visent à promouvoir l'échange entre chercheurs de tous niveaux (master, doctorats, post-docs, professeurs). Nous vous prions de soumettre vos propositions jusqu'au **30 mai 2016** directement aux personnes responsables pour le panel respectif.*

Call for posters / Appel à proposition de posters

One of our aims is to present on-going or recently finished PhD research on a topic related to Africa at Swiss universities. The organizers invite researchers to submit a scientific poster (size A0, vertical orientation) on their PhD research for the Swiss Researching Africa Days. There will be time slots for the presentation of the posters during the conference. The posters will also be compiled as an electronic reader to be published on the website of the Swiss Society for African Studies. Please submit proposals for posters (pdf) to Veit Arlt (veit.ahrt@unibas.ch). The deadline for submission is June 5, 2016. The organizing committee will decide on the acceptance of submitted poster proposals and confirm by June 30, 2016.

En outre, la SSEA souhaite dresser un inventaire des thèses de doctorat en cours dans le champ des études africaines en Suisse. Pour cela, nous invitons toutes les doctorantes et tous les doctorants ayant une thèse en cours dans une université suisse, ou ayant soutenu une thèse en 2015 ou 2016, à préparer un poster (A0, orientation portrait) et le présenter lors des journées. Un moment sera réservé pour que les participants puissent prendre connaissance des posters et discuter avec leurs auteurs. Tous les posters seront ensuite publiés (en ligne) dans une petite brochure. Les propositions de posters (PDF) sont à envoyer par e-mail jusqu'au 5 juin 2016 à Veit Arlt (veit.ahrt@unibas.ch). La sélection se fera d'ici le 30 juin 2016.

For the Board of the SSAS/SGAS/SSEA: Didier Péclard, Tobias Haller and Veit Arlt

Panel 1: Translating & interpreting in plurilingual settings: Communicative strategies to maneuver administration in West Africa

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Communication practices in West Africa include the use of several *linguae francae*, depending on and according to context. In administration and education, these *linguae francae* are not treated equally, however – on the contrary, their use is regulated in a highly hierarchical manner. This means that participants in a court hearing, for example, have to mandatorily use a standardized form of the legal administrative jargon, which is spoken only by a small legal and educational elite. And as a consequence locally spoken varieties of the former colonial languages as well as African languages demand translated and interpreted communication in administration. In this sense, societies are classified along a language divide, giving the small group of users of standard French, English and Portuguese definite advantages over the majority of society. This disproportion brings into focus the equality of citizens before the law, an equality, which demands intermediating efforts through interpretation and translation. But how can this requirement be fulfilled? And who are the interpreters and translators? How are they trained and which role do they play in administration? How do they themselves view their place within the system? Evidence from West Africa is rare in literature so far; this panel will highlight some aspects.

Plurilingual speakers in West Africa who come into contact with legal and administrative authorities find that it is up to them to provide the language expertise needed to interpret the legal jargon. Authorities provide interpreters and translators only in a few domains. Not much is known about this officially employed staff. So far, field surveys allow the hypothesis that they are not accredited interpreters, who have pursued a professional training in interpreting. But they are either academics or high school graduates of the official language. Training in court/community interpreting are non-existent at tertiary level institutions in West Africa. A few universities offer conference interpreter training at international level, but not for African legal contexts. Important to note: tertiary institution programs for translation and interpreting exclude African languages or African varieties of official languages. One important question in this context refers to the role of language ideologies and hierarchical systems in determining language use/policy in interpreter training.

According to international human rights conventions and constitutional frameworks, the right to an interpreter is mandatory in court. Although this right is fulfilled by authorities in West African justice systems, quality and professional guidelines are not taken into account. So what is its impact on communication at court? The linguistic and educational imbalance between authorities and the public maintains advantages for a small proportion of society and puts them in a position of power. Justice in court is thus a minority right. But speakers face yet another, related dilemma: legal jargon is often confusing, its meaning not graspable. A large proportion of the interpreter's work therefore consists in explaining the procedure to create understanding. This fact is challenging to interpreters, particularly since their role is not clearly defined.

We encourage discussions on approaches investigating translation and interpretation issues in administration – from the citizens' point of view, the administration's/administrators' or the translator-interpreters', focusing on but not limited to questions such as the following:

- What kind of training in interpreting and translation is available in West Africa? What are the goals of this training? How by whom is interpreting quality checked (institutions for quality control)? Which languages are included in interpreting and translation studies and why?
- Who are the professional interpreters? How do they define their role and their professional ethics? How do they position themselves toward language ideologies and asymmetric power relations in court?
- How do interpreters position themselves towards their clients and how does it influence their translation?
- Which role does the national language policy in education play for the language training of interpreters?
- How important are neo colonial ideologies towards language use in administration?

Panel 2: Productions culturelles et refus des assignations identitaires

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Les productions culturelles (littérature, théâtre, radio, musique, cinéma, photographie, expositions, etc.) ne sont pas le reflet de leur époque mais participent à une représentation du réel. Tout comme les fictions qui inventent du vrai, elles n'ont aucune obligation de référentialité et font de leurs supports expressifs leur premier territoire. De fait, les nouvelles générations de créateurs et d'intellectuels, entre autres les romanciers, rejettent souvent toute assignation identitaire en récusant une « nécessaire appartenance africaine ». Ce constat, qui motive notre démarche, est synthétisé par le propos de Christiane Albert (2007) affirmant que « de la capacité de l'institution littéraire occidentale à accepter une africanité débarrassée de tous ses présupposés et stéréotypes essentialistes [...] dépendra la possibilité pour les écrivains africains d'écrire des œuvres susceptibles de parler, non de l'Afrique attendue ou stéréotypée, mais de l'Afrique d'aujourd'hui telle qu'elle existe réellement ». A partir de ce postulat, nous envisageons de :

- questionner la représentation de cette « Afrique qui existe réellement », au travers des productions de divers artistes et intellectuels (écrivains, hommes de radio, plasticiens, etc..) : faut-il la penser comme une topographie ou une topologie ? Quels sont les enjeux de ce qui peut être une configuration nouvelle ou une dérivation multiple ?
- se demander si la remise en question des stéréotypes de représentation, impliquant une liberté de création pour l'artiste et l'intellectuel (qui ne doit plus répondre à un devoir militant), oblige à une relecture et une autre interprétation de l'Histoire africaine – politique et culturelle – du XXe siècle.
- postuler que, placés sous le signe de la migration (qu'elle soit de nature symbolique, culturelle, identitaire ou territoriale) les mondes représentés rendent compte d'un univers globalisé dont les voix cosmopolites articulent des réflexions sociales et politiques, élaborant de nouvelles formes d'engagement.

Au vu du propos initial touchant au monde contemporain, la réflexion se concentre sur les productions des vingt-cinq dernières années, phase significative de changements sur le continent africain, qu'il s'agisse du contexte politique ou de diffusion médiatique. Les problématiques soulevées sont pensées à partir du champ francophone subsaharien, mais le panel souhaite intégrer des réflexions touchant à d'autres langues et donc d'autres référents culturels.

Panel 3: Economic liberalism and citizenship: contesting illiberal outcomes in Africa's 'boom economies'

Jon Schubert, Centre for Area Studies, University of Leipzig
Elísio Macamo, Centre for African Studies, University of Basel
Tobias Haller, Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Bern
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There is arguably a *dérive autoritaire* in several resource-rich African states: nominally democratic regimes are restricting the expression of dissent, closing spaces for opposition, and clinging to power by constitutional amendments or popular referenda of questionable democratic credentials. At the same time, many of these governments very actively promote a 'business-friendly climate' (tax breaks and legal guarantees, e.g.) to attract foreign investors and develop infrastructures, extractive industry ventures, or agribusiness through large-scale land acquisitions (LSLA). Corporate investors engaged in these projects equally uphold the banner of economic liberalism, speaking the language of transparency, equitable economic growth, and corporate social responsibility. However, even a cursory glance at the controversies surrounding many of these planned and on-going projects suggests a tension between the liberal values which they claim to uphold and illiberal outcomes they potentially produce. These include the ways in which governments and corporate actors may engage with and respond to the political and economic inequalities or the forms of spatial exclusion such projects possibly foster — the latter caused by new regimes of access control at concessions and industrial sites, or by the privatization of land and related common pool resources such as water, forests, pastures, prohibiting access to vital livelihoods resources for local people.

This panel invites contributions that explore the tensions between professed liberal values and illiberal outcomes to investigate if and how this disconnect may open up new terrains for contestations. We seek to understand empirically how social actors engage and subvert, or endorse and align with, the dominant language of economic liberalism to press claims on the society they live in, or pursue avenues for individual betterment. How are programmatic buzzwords like growth, distribution, transparency and responsibility reinterpreted and invested with meaning by the purported beneficiaries of such investments, and deployed to assert the political, economic and social rights of full citizens? How do such contestations redefine notions of citizenship, and how are ideas and ideals of the state played out and renegotiated in these interactions of local politics and globalised capital?

Panel 4: Political articulations from the everyday

Andrea Kaufmann, UN Research Institute for Social Development, Gender and Development Research Programme, United Nations Office at Geneva
Carole Ammann, Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Basel
Maaret Jokela-Pansini, Institute of Geography, University of Bern
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Large-scale protests and popular uprisings all around the world have attracted wide scholarly interests over the last years. Social scientists seek to understand the collective political actions surrounding those events, thereby focusing on claims from civil society organisations. However, by analysing people's agency narrowly with an institutional lens on politics or forms of collective action, we easily overlook their daily political articulations. This panel aims to gain insight into

modes of political articulations that are hardly visible and therefore not easy to grasp, in particular (but not exclusively) those of women who are often formed in the homes, in loosely organized women's groups or faith-based organizations (Mahmood 2005).

Hence, this panel focuses on ordinary people's discourses and social practices so as to explore their individual aims and collective modes of political action. These forms of political actions emerge from the everyday and have been labelled as "street politics" (Bayat 1997) or "everyday politics" (Kerkvliet 2002, 2005; Kallio and Häkli 2013). Specific to such everyday political articulation is that they are not primarily considered as being political.

This panel is interested in contributions that look at the everyday lives of marginalised individuals or groups that do not have access to channels and means to voice their interests – such as women, youth, migrants, street vendors or other marginalized persons. How is "everyday politics" done – in what social and physical spaces, with what social relations and in what ways? How does political articulation relate to governmental discourses and practices, and how do social actors shape their claims on issues such as infrastructure, basic services delivery or citizenship? Contributions should present empirical studies, but we also highly welcome theoretical and methodological reflections on how to grasp and analyse people's daily political articulations.

Panel 5: Material representations and spatial patterning of practices in Africa

Monika Baumanova, Centre of African Studies, University of Basel

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Technical and spiritual knowledge, social or economic relationships, hierarchies, and contracts have been materially enacted in space, with people building houses in certain ways, surrounding themselves with specific things and attributes, or wearing a dress which has symbolic connotations in a particular context. As these spatial expressions of materiality have not been constant through time, we would like to include in this panel reflections on temporal change and shifts, reconstructed on the basis of recording the patterning of material evidence for different time periods. The interplay of the material and the social has long been of interest to a number of social sciences. The relationship of objects, as human-made artefacts, and the material environment as extensions of the human body and ultimate devices through which people engage with the world form the very backbone of archaeology. It is also problematized and studied among others by ethnographers, cultural anthropologists and sociologists working on present-day Africa.

It has long been recognized that the past forms the basis of cultural identity, sense of rootedness and indeed informs socio-economical behaviour today. On the other hand, understanding in current communities the relationships between different aspects of materiality and their meanings, be it technical, social or political, helps to give sense to archaeological discoveries through the process of analogy. Despite the common fields of interest of these disciplines, a gap still exists between archaeologist working on Africa and the many disciplines that contribute to the field of African studies, because of different methodological strategies and distinct objectives. Moreover, dealing with different scales of space and time is difficult and needs input or training from geography.

In this panel we would like to promote the communication between researchers from various disciplines on the aspects of situated material representations, past and present. We are inviting all

researchers dealing with practices in African societies that leave behind material evidence with specific spatial patterning to join this panel and be ready to interact with researchers presenting different perspectives. In particular we are interested in contributions from African archaeology, history, cultural anthropology, sociology and geography. Individual papers can focus on anything from body adornments and pottery, building, materiality of social events to changes in the perception and management of landscapes or urban settlements.

Panel 6: Land governance, Environment and Rural Development

Julia Tischler, Department of History, University of Basel

Gesine Krüger, Department of History, University of Zurich

Cassandra Mark-Thiesen, Department of History, University of Basel

Tobias Haller, Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Bern

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Starting in the 1980s, development industry thinking about Africa shifted away from an urban-centricity to pay greater attention to the rural sector, which had accommodated the majority of the continent's population all along. However, while scholars and policy makers have rightly criticized the "urban bias" in late-colonial and post-colonial development politics, rural and agrarian themes had in fact featured more prominently in the earlier decades of the 20th century. Faced with economies that were becoming increasingly urban and industrial, colonial powers, settler governments, and also international agencies discussed the effects of structural change on the African continent and its people, who were perceived as quintessentially rural.

Our panel seeks to explore both earlier and more recent debates and practices and institutions of rural development, which encompassed efforts to enhance agricultural productivity and modern agriculture fostered by large-scale land acquisitions but also much broader concerns about rural life – including nutrition, hygiene, demography, as well as social stability and sustainable development goals. We seek to discuss continuities and changes in the way colonial and post-colonial governments conceptualized the rural sector and its people, and the way these concepts and related practices interacted institutionally with broader economic interests, political concerns, and ideologies concerning race and gender. Large scale land acquisitions enabled by states are examples in which continuity and change regarding conflicts over land can be seen since colonial times up to today. Similar ideologies on development and bringing modernity to backward areas are emerging and reemerging discourses. Moreover, we are interested in conflicts and negotiations on the ground, as these issues intersected with concerns about religion, local identity, and the social organization of labour and livelihoods of African men, women, and children, and the notions about them being transformed by state actors since colonial and post-colonial times.

The panel invites contributions that engage with various facets of rural life in Africa. In particular, we welcome papers dealing with environmental, social and economic development and related discourses in contemporary and historical terms.

Panel 7: Conditional and unconditional social protection mechanisms in health and health care

Sonja Merten, Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, University of Basel

Mari Dumbaugh, Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, University of Basel

Tobias Haller, Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Bern

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Demand-side financing approaches, including conditional or unconditional cash transfer programs, have been promoted in the past years in many African settings. For example, cash transfers are offered to persons who tested negative for sexually transmitted infections, who take their infants for early infant diagnosis of HIV, or for a prolonged birth-spacing, as such monetizing the most intimate spheres of human relationships. Conditional cash transfers are equally known in high-income countries, for example to promote childhood vaccination, or as incentives for healthy behavior by private insurance companies. Over ten years ago, Rylko-Bauer and Farmer (2002) have called upon researchers to engage in the debate on the marketization of health and healthcare, a plea taken up again ten years later by Magrath and Nichter (2012), who critically discussed incentivization in health care.

This panel calls for papers that explore how both health professionals and patients/clients engage in and experience incentivized health care and prevention programs. The investigations may range from decision making of patients/clients, healing relationships as well as notions of well-being and embodiment of patients in the context of incentivized health programs.