

Area Studies' Futures: The 5th International Crossroads Asia Conference

University of Bonn, Germany, September 22-23, 2016

Abstracts welcome until: March 31, 2016

Find us:



The field of area studies (AS) as traditionally conceptualised, organised and taught at universities has long been subject to worldwide debates, especially since the end of the Cold War. Conventional approaches to AS have been criticised for ethnocentrism and methodological obsolescence, creating fixed geographical 'areas', and solidifying regimes of (Western) power and hegemony. Consequently, AS have been described as unsuitable for the study of the modern world, processes related to globalisation, and the increasing (im-)mobility of people, goods and ideas.

In 2011, the interdisciplinary research network **Crossroads Asia** was launched to tackle the question of how to conduct and position AS in the 21st century. In an effort to rethink AS – overturn misconceptions of 'the Other' and challenge epistemic regimes – the network has scrutinised traditional concepts and methods of AS and has explored novel research approaches related to multiple spatial realities, (im-)mobilities and (im-)mobilisation, borders and boundary-making/-weakening, and positionality. With project culmination in 2016, the network intends to synthesise its research results into an interdisciplinary research approach for the production of knowledge on a more interrelated world, and to enhance debate among scholars rethinking AS.

The 5th International Crossroads Asia conference provides a platform for sharing and discussing conceptual and methodological innovations in AS research that transcend traditional disciplinary approaches. How has the rethinking process changed AS? How do globalisation and migration challenge concepts of 'areas'? How does digitalisation alter social space and identities? How can AS account for the Anthropocene? How can AS contribute to overcoming epistemic hegemonies? These are some of the questions that we want to address; thus, we encourage contributions related to the following non-exhaustive list of themes:

- conceptualisations for mapping the spatial complexity of social and non-human interactions in the Anthropocene, as highlighted by climate change or digitalisation,
 - » including the multidimensionality of space and flows (figurations, entanglements, frictions, assemblages, networks, scapes, etc.);
- methodological and theoretical intersections between AS, post-colonial studies, future studies, gender and women's studies, queer studies, and other critical approaches; and
- positionality, power constellations and hegemonies of knowledge in AS research.

We invite scholars from AS and all other disciplines within the social sciences, natural sciences, humanities, etc. to submit proposals for conference contributions. The conference will include panels, roundtables and smaller, more interactive discussion groups. Alternative forms of expression around the proposed topics are also welcome. **Please send an abstract (max. 300 words) and a one-page CV to crossroads@uni-bonn.de by March 31, 2016.** The conference is free for all participants; limited funds are available to sponsor the travel of selected presenters. If you wish to be considered for sponsorship, please let us know and briefly explain your case.

Coordination:

Research Network:

Funded by: