Six years after its creation, the Crossroads Asia competence network is coming to an end in December 2016. During the project, Crossroads Asia members have engaged in local and global conversations on the future of Area Studies in an increasingly interdependent world. The network has produced a wealth of studies that have challenged ‘fixed’ ways of conceiving of space, areas, and regions, questioned hegemonies and used novel methods to interpret the social world. The final conference, “Area Studies’ Futures” in September 2016, provided an excellent venue for an international group of scholars to present project results, exchange ideas and discuss how to conduct Area Studies in the 21st century.

The Crossroads Asia members would like to thank its donor, the BMBF, for its continuous support and in particular the highly professional DLR team. We also wish to thank the extended network for their interest and collaboration, the Center for Development Research (ZEF) in Bonn for hosting the Coordination Office, as well as current and former staff members for their dedication. We wish everyone all the best for the future!

This newsletter constitutes the final Crossroads Asia Newsletter but if you are interested in receiving information on Area Studies scholarship, we have compiled a list of recommended newsletters and blogs that you can subscribe to by following the links on the right.

Thank you and goodbye!

Crossroads Asia will continue to exist online by means of Facebook, Academia.edu, Ell-pses.net and the following email address: crossroads.coordination@gmail.com.
On 22-23 September 2016, Crossroads Asia organized its 5th and final international conference: Area Studies’ Futures. With more than 30 scholars from India, Russia, Serbia, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, the UK and beyond, from various academic disciplines, the conference offered a forum for fruitful discussions and addressed challenging questions in Area Studies.

**Keynote. Decommodifying Knowledge: Recuperating the Interdisciplinarity of Area Studies**

One of the highlights of the Area Studies’ Futures Conference was the keynote lecture by Shelley Feldman (Cornell University). Feldman started with an overview of how Area Studies, in particular in the United States, is confronted with and limited by the institutionalization of normative knowledge. Gatekeepers in academia, she argued (e.g., journal editors and those who make hiring decisions) largely shape what is considered to be appropriate knowledge and thereby inhibit intellectual creativity. (...) While discussing the more general and widespread commodification of knowledge, Feldman cautioned that knowledge production for understanding and knowing the world better may be marginalized as funding sources and institutions of education prioritize the practical application of research. (...) Feldman furthermore encouraged scholars to focus on Area Studies as an arena of enquiry for thinking interdisciplinarily and thus from the points of view of the retrenchment of many of the disciplines, which in turn enables thinking outside the box and taking intellectual risks. (...)

**Book Presentation. Area Studies at the Crossroads: Knowledge Production after the Mobility Turn**

The book Area Studies at the Crossroads. Knowledge Production after the Mobility Turn (Palgrave, 2017) was presented by the editors Katja Mielke (Crossroads Asia and BICC) and Anna-Katharina Hornidge (Crossroads Asia, ZMT and University of Bremen).

Mielke began the book presentation by illustrating its effort to take the interaction of people as the basic unit of investigation, while using mobility as a lens and departing from a figurative understanding of the social construction of space. She also stressed the book’s aim to consider epistemological, theoretical and pedagogical implications of the rethinking of area studies, by focusing on inequalities in knowledge and theory-production. (...)

Hornidge built on Mielke’s introduction by stressing that the book also aims to provide a foundation for a more theoretical/analytical and interdisciplinary approach to area studies, especially via efforts to develop mid-range concepts. She further stressed the need for mobile and transregional area studies methods. (...)

**Presentation. Comparative Area Studies: What It Is, What It Can Do**

In his presentation in the Panel “Shedding Light on Agency and the Social Construction of Space”, Patrick Köllner, Director of the GIGA Institute of Asian Studies in Hamburg, talked about the rationale for and contributions of Comparative Area Studies (CAS). (...) Not only can comparative methods generate theoretical contributions to so-called systematic disciplines, according to Köllner, but CAS can also enhance an understanding of the interrelated global system of regional interactions and hierarchies. (...) However, Köllner stressed that CAS was not the only suitable approach to advance Area Studies, but only one of a number of promising approaches existing in the field. Following Köllner’s presentation, there was a lively discussion on what ontological frameworks need to be in place before meaningful comparison can take place. (...)

**Read the full conference report here.**

**Video Interviews with Conference Participants**

» **Anna-Katharina Hornidge** on epistemic hegemonies and the interrelation of area studies and the disciplines.

» **Vincent Houben** on redefining “area” as a relational, multi-scalar concept for understanding processes of globalization.

» **Patrick Köllner** on comparative area studies and their role in the future of area studies.

» **Martin Sökefeld** on the relevance of the state and its deconstruction for area studies.
Activities in the Network

Crossroads Asia Lectures - Past


Read a full summary in the conference report here.

A.-K. Hornidge New Chair of the EU Cost Action ‘Ocean Governance for Sustainability’

On 28 September 2016, Prof. Anna-Katharina Hornidge was elected Chair of the EU Cost Action “Ocean Governance for Sustainability”. Find more information here.

Lectures, Workshops & Presentations - Upcoming


Dr. Henryk Alff to join the Leibniz Center for Tropical Marine Ecology in Bremen

Starting from 1 January 2017, Dr. Henryk Alff will join Prof. Anna-Katharina Hornidge’s team at the Leibniz Center for Tropical Marine Ecology for a two-year postdoc assignment.

Organization of Workshops & Conferences - Past


Lectures, Workshops & Presentations - Past


AMOO-ADARE, E.: “Post-disciplinary Science Futures: (Un)Thinking Research, Praxes for a Pluriversal World”, presentation at XVI World Congress of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES), Beijing, 25.08.2016.


HORNIDGE, A.-K.: „Wissenschaftsforschung“, talk at the “Dämmerschoppen” organised by Prof. Dr. Gotthilf Hempel at the Leibniz-Center for Tropical Marine Ecology, 3.11.2016.


CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP AT THE COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH CENTRE 923 «THREATENED ORDERS» AT THE EBERHARD KARLS UNIVERSITY TÜBINGEN

The Collaborative Research Centre 923 “Threatened Orders” at the Eberhard Karls University Tübingen is offering a full position at the postdoctoral level at the earliest opportunity. The contract is limited to 30th June 2019 within the research project “Salinization and Soil Degradation as Threats to Agrarian Orders in Russia, Kazakhstan/Tajikistan and Australia since 1945”.

More information here.

CONTACT: jeanne.feous@uni-tuebingen.de

DEADLINE: 12 DECEMBER 2016


CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS
AT THE BUFFETT INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL STUDIES, NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

The Buffett Institute invites applications for two-year postdoctoral fellowships in the study of global, comparative, or international affairs. Up to three fellows will be selected. Applications are welcome from scholars from any range of social science or interdisciplinary perspectives whose research addresses global, international, or transnational social processes, problems, governance, or conflicts.

Fellowships will run from September 1, 2017, to August 31, 2019. Applicants must have received their PhD between January 2, 2015, and August 31, 2017.

More information here.

CONTACT: buffettpostdoc@northwestern.edu
DEADLINE: 3 JANUARY 2017


SCHETTER, C.: “Selected Fields of Development Policy - Peacekeeping”, panel at Summer School on Development Policy, organized by the University of Bonn and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Bonn, 11.08.2016.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Borderless Communities and Nations with Borders: Challenges of Globalisation
3rd International IIFAS Conference


CONTACT: iifas2017@gmail.com
DATES: 8-9 February 2017
VENUE: Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
DEADLINE: 15 December 2016


Recent Publications


CALL FOR PAPERS

GLOBALISATION AT THE CROSSROADS.
RETHINKING INEQUALITIES AND BOUNDARIES
EADI NORDIC CONFERENCE 2017

The conference is a joint partnership between EADI (European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes), NFU (Norwegian Association of Development Research), the University of Bergen (UiB) and the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI). With more than 400 participants, the EADI NORDIC 2017 offers unparalleled opportunities to network with the main actors in development research across Europe. More information here.

CONTACT: team@eadi-nordic2017.org
DATES: 21-23 August 2017
VENUE: Bergen, Norway
DEADLINE: 31 January 2017


**INTERVIEWS**

**MIELKE, K.** “Neue Milliarden für ein Land in der Krise”, Interview with FAZ.net, 4.10.2016.


**REETZ, D.** The Economist: Background info talk with Bruce Clark, Online Editor for Public Policy, Religion & Ethics, on Islamic education in Western Europe (Germany, Britain, France) for article on Islam in Europe, 02.08.2016 at ZMO, published “The Faith of our Fathers”, 20.08.2016.

**NEW PROJECTS**

**HORNIDGE, A.-K., WIEDENSOHLER, A., HUTTER, G., KRUTMANN, J.** “Exploring the Air Pollution Crisis in Megacities: The Case of the Metro Manila, Philippines”, Seed Funds applied for from Leibniz Association SAW fund, €22.000,00 (approved).


**FIELD WORK**

**HORNIDGE, A.-K.:** research vessel expedition on the Atlantic, between Azores, Mauretania, Senegal & Cape Verde on board of the Meteor, July-August 2016.

**MIELKE, K:** conducted field research in Kabul, Afghanistan, between 16-31.10.2016.

**SMOLARZ, E.:** conducted field research in Moscow, Russian Federation, 10-21.10.2016: worked with valuable old editions of imperial ethnographic descriptions of the Kazakh Steppe as well as with documents on nomadic migration processes during the archival stay in the Russian State Archive of Ancient Documents.

**CALLS FOR PAPERS**

**St. Petersburg International Conference of Afghan Studies**

A comprehensive academic conference on Afghanistan and the Afghan trans-boundary cultural and linguistic Oecumene is long overdue and still remains of paramount importance for international Afghan studies. The conference organised by St Petersburg State University Faculty of Asian and African Studies will serve this purpose.

Find more information and a list of proposed topics [here](#).

**CONTACT:** afghanstudies1@gmail.com  
**DATES:** 27-29 June 2017  
**VENUE:** St. Petersburg, Russian Federation  
**DEADLINE:** 15 March 2017

**Defining Agency, Performing Power**  
**14th Annual GOSECA Graduate Conference**

The Graduate Organization for the Study of Europe and Central Asia (GOSECA) at the University of Pittsburgh welcomes paper submissions for the conference “Defining Agency, Performing Power”. This year’s conference centers on topics of agency and power in the expression of physical and symbolic borders. More information [here](#).

**CONTACT:** info.goseca@gmail.com  
**DATES:** 25-26 March 2017  
**VENUE:** University of Pittsburgh, USA  
**DEADLINE:** 6 January 2017
Crossroads Asia derives its name from the geographical area(s) extending from eastern Iran to western China and from the Aral Sea to northern India. The scholars collaborating in the network pursue a novel approach to Area Studies, which aspires to identify concepts of area that take into account key dynamics like the constant mobility of human beings, ideas and commodities across and beyond cultural, social and political borders. Mobility forms an analytical lens for investigating figurations, a concept implying that changes, minor or major, within one element of a constellation (e.g., a familial, religious, or economic network) always affect the whole; figurations can emerge in a given location but stretch to far-flung corners of the world, perhaps then returning to where they began. The research network uses methods from the disciplines geography, political science, sociology, linguistics and social anthropology, among others, to investigate phenomena related to multiple spatial realities, (im-)mobilities and (im-)mobilisation, borders and boundary-making/-weakening, and positionality.

Funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and comprised of half a dozen research institutions, the Crossroads Asia competence network was established in spring of 2011. Integral to its academic undertakings, the network aims to meet the high demand on the part of political decision-makers and the public for information on countries within the scope of its research. Further information on Crossroads Asia is available at www.crossroads-asia.de.