



CROSSROADS ASIA

In many parts of the world, we witness an increasing mobility of people, goods, capital and ideas. This fluidity calls for a reconsideration of the division of the world in territorially fixed 'areas', defined by certain character traits. The challenge for Area Studies is to develop concepts of 'area' that take into account these dynamisms, new interdependencies and spatial formations. At the same time, the increasing complexity of our glocal environments demands innovative approaches to knowledge production on dynamic human interaction processes, only properly understood through multidisciplinary perspectives and reflections on the positionality of the researcher.

**HOW CAN
WE CONDUCT
& POSITION
AREA STUDIES
TODAY?**

With the **Crossroads Perspective**, we aim to develop an interdisciplinary research paradigm for knowledge generation in an increasingly interrelated world. The perspective is focused on three components:

- developing appropriate theoretical concepts for analyzing interconnectedness (e.g., the “**Figurational Construction of Spaces**” concept);
- determining key methodological approaches to best capture interdependencies in dynamic spatial formations (e.g., the “**Follow the Figuration**” method); and
- enabling **reflexivity** among researchers through critical consideration of positionality in knowledge production.

Project Office:



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Funded by:



Bundesministerium
für Bildung
und Forschung

The **Crossroads Perspective** is based on seventeen empirical studies undertaken by network members since 2011, with research initiated in, but not limited to, locations ranging from eastern Iran to western China and from the Aral Sea to northern India. Presently, in the project’s second phase, the network intends to consolidate a common research orientation that is comprised of a range of conceptual and methodological tools suitable for interpreting a highly interdependent world. These synthesis efforts draw on seven work packages that provide theoretical breadth and empirical depth to the **Crossroads Perspective**. More specifically, the work packages are as follows:

- The Crossroads Perspective: a fundament for Crossroads Studies? (E. Amoo Adare & C. Bech Hansen, Nelli Nokkala)
- ‘How to speak conflict’ - Conflictuality in linguistic communication (L. Rzehak)
- Mobility in mobilized space: Interaction between autochthonous population and colonial power in the Central Asian frontier Region (E. Smolarz)
- People in in-between space: how forced immobility is dealt with in Kabul (K. Mielke)
- Spatial production and identity negotiations along Xinjiang’s roads (A. Joniak-Lüthi)
- Social and spatial transformation of trade locations and target locations of educational migration: the regional constitution of the local (H. Alff & A. Benz)
- ‘Rebordering’ in Kashmir: negotiation of spaces and statehood in contested border regions (A. Mato Bouzas)

Research Network:

bicc Bonn
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for Conversion

Freie Universität  Berlin

ZMO
Zentrum Moderner Orient



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