



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

## **Swiss Researching Africa Days (Bern, 23-24.10.2020)**

### **Call for papers / Appel à contributions**

The Swiss Society for African Studies invites paper propositions for the upcoming 6<sup>th</sup> 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 **31 July 2020** 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 6<sup>ème</sup> 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 **31 juillet 2020** 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.arlt@unibas.ch). The deadline for submission is **31 July 2020**. The organizing committee will decide on the acceptance of submitted poster proposals and confirm by 31 August 2018.

*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 récemment, 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 sur notre site web dans une petite brochure. Les propositions de posters (PDF) sont à envoyer par e-mail jusqu'au **31 juillet 2020** à Veit Arlt (veit.arlt@unibas.ch). La sélection se fera d'ici le 31 août 2020.*

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

## Panel 1: Élités et figures de la réussite et du pouvoir (elites, BigMen, brokers)

### ORGANISATRICES :

MARION FERT, Université de Neuchâtel

NATALIE TARR, Université de Bâle

L'évolution rapide des réalités sociales, influencées par des mutations économiques et politiques, qu'ont connue les sociétés africaines ces trente dernières années a fortement bouleversé et impacté les modèles de réussite, les conceptions du pouvoir et les imaginaires populaires du succès (Banégas et Warnier 2001; Bredeloup 2008; Bayart et al. 2010; Manga 2012, Baldé 2014; Galland 2016). C'est le cas notamment des élites universitaires, qui ont vu leur image être dévaluée (Honwana 2012; Baldé 2014; Steuer, Engeler et Macamo 2017) au profit de nouvelles figures avec des « trajectoires d'ascension nouvelles » (Banégas et Warnier 2001). Sur quelle(s) base(s) ces nouveaux itinéraires d'accumulation se construisent-ils? Quelles formes les mobilisations et les actions de ces figures prennent-elles? Ou au contraire, dans un contexte où les diplômés universitaires n'offrent plus les conditions de la réussite, comment négocier son statut d'élite fragilisé et avec quelle(s) définition(s) de soi?

Alors que certain·e·s parlent d'une période de « crise morale » en termes de réussite sociale, ce panel veut contribuer à la compréhension de la construction, de la légitimation et de la culture de ces figures de la réussite qu'il s'agisse d' « anciennes » ou de « nouvelles » figures, de différents types d'élite (intellectuelle, bureaucratique, politique, économique, culturelle, militaire, religieuse, éducationnelle), de *brokers*, de *big men*, d'aventuriers, de faiseurs d'opinion (*influencers* ?) ou encore de leaders populaires, pour n'en citer que quelques-uns. Que vos contributions soient basées sur des approches historiques, ethnographiques ou autres, nous vous invitons à explorer une ou plusieurs des questions suivantes :

- Quels sont les registres de légitimation mobilisés ? Avec quelles mises en scène de soi ? Et avec quels cadres de référence et de repères identitaires ? Comment le statut d'élite est-il contesté et négocié ?
- Quels sont les modèles culturels à disposition des individus ainsi qu'à leur construction sociale ?

Les propositions de papiers (500 mots maximum) peuvent être envoyées en anglais ou en français **avant le 31 juillet 2020** à :

Paper proposals in English or French (500 words max) can be sent **no later than 31 July 2020** to : [marion.fert@unine.ch](mailto:marion.fert@unine.ch) et/and [natalie.tarr@unibas.ch](mailto:natalie.tarr@unibas.ch)

## **Panel 2: Under Construction: The Evolving African Peace & Security Architecture**

CONVENOR:

MICHAEL AEBY, University of Edinburgh, School of Social and Political Science

DISCUSSANT:

JAMIE PRING, University of Basel, Department of Political Studies

The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) has evolved since its blueprint was laid out in the 2002 Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU). While the AU has elaborated its APSA pillars, Regional Economic Communities (REC) have set up the regional components. The AU and RECs have assumed a pivotal role in early warning, preventive diplomacy, mediation, peace operations, and as guarantors of peace agreements. Yet, the harmonisation of APSA components and crisis responses between the AU and RECs is a formidable challenge as their institutions and political imperatives differ.

The institutional development of the five APSA pillars has been neither linear nor continuous. The PSC has asserted its authority, but member states have prevented it from addressing enduring crises. The AU and RECs have developed early warning systems, yet warnings do not prompt timely responses. Whilst the Panel of the Wise and committees of elders are yet to take the lead in preventive diplomacy, Femwise seeks to bring women to the forefront of mediations. Mediation Support Units promote professional mediation practices, but ad hoc appointments of presidents as mediators remain the norm. As African Standby Force is still being operationalised, costly peace operations are carried out under the mandate of the United Nations. To source the African Peace Fund and reduce donor-dependency, the AU needs alternative funding models.

The AU and RECs have elaborated policy frameworks on areas ranging from Women, Peace and Security to Transitional Justice. The Economic Community of West African States has an inclusive approach to peace and security, but most RECs are state-centric and leave little room for civil society participation.

The impending restructuring of the AU Commission implies further reforms. Whether the institutional and policy framework of the APSA, which technical experts have erected with the support of development partners, will prove effective rather than a paper tiger, hinges on the buy-in of states that are reluctant to cede authority to supranational structures.

### *Objectives*

The panel aims to critically review new developments and enduring challenges in the development of APSA institutions and management of peace processes by the AU and RECs. By scrutinising political and technical challenges that relate to different APSA pillars, regional organisations, peace processes and actors, the panel seeks to highlight cross-cutting issues, identify interdependencies, and reflect on the current state of the APSA's development.

We welcome proposals for papers on new developments and enduring challenges relating to:

- a) APSA institutions such as the Peace & Security Council, Continental Early Warning System, Panel of the Wise, Mediation Support Unit, African Standby Force, African Peace Fund, and related programmes and institutions of RECs.
- b) Conflict prevention, peace-making, peace-building, peace-keeping and reconstruction by the AU and RECs from a comparative or case-specific perspective.
- c) Policies, reform plans, financial aspects and the role of specific actors in the development

of the APSA.

Paper proposals (500 words max) should be sent **no later than 31 July 2020** to:  
[michael.aeby@ed.ac.uk](mailto:michael.aeby@ed.ac.uk)

### **Panel 3: Enjeux de la traduction en Afrique**

ORGANISATRICES :

ANAÏS STAMPFLI, Université de Lausanne

CHRISTINE LE QUELLEC COTTIER, Université de Lausanne

Plus de deux mille langues sont pratiquées sur le continent africain. Parmi ces langues, certaines sont considérées comme des dialectes très localisés et d'autres, plus véhiculaires, tendent à entretenir un rapport glottophagique avec les langues minoritaires. Nous proposons avec ce panel d'étudier les rapports entre les langues ainsi que les moyens mis en œuvre pour les faire coexister. En d'autres termes, il s'agira d'étudier le rôle, le statut et les enjeux de la traduction en Afrique. Nous voulons privilégier une approche transversale et invitons des chercheurs de tous bords à partager leur perspective (les communications en français, allemand et anglais seront bienvenues). En effet, la question de la traduction pourra entre autres être abordée sous un angle anthropologique, linguistique, littéraire, juridique, sociologique et historique. Rappelons avec Paul Bandia que « Tracer une histoire de la traduction en Afrique c'est présenter l'histoire riche et complexe de ce continent, de tous les échanges et contacts qui ont forgé son identité et défini son destin. »<sup>1</sup> C'est en ayant ces propos en tête que nous vous invitons à songer à la puissance, à la symbolique mais aussi aux limites de la démarche traductive en Afrique.

Plusieurs axes sont suggérés (liste non exhaustive) :

- En tant que pont entre les langues et les cultures, la traduction est fondamentale pour la science de la compréhension d'autrui qu'est l'anthropologie. Cependant cet outil doit sans cesse se réinventer et s'adapter aux différents contextes ainsi mis en relation. L'enjeu étant de dévoiler sans pour autant dénaturer. Les réflexions autour de la recherche de cet équilibre seront centrales à ce panel.
- Dans le cadre des sciences juridiques, l'intelligibilité et la transparence de la langue sont essentielles à la bonne application des lois. La diversité des paysages linguistiques africains confère un rôle capital à la traduction juridique qui se fait garante de l'application de la justice. Dans la quête de la plus grande exactitude possible, le traducteur juridique devra également avoir de solides connaissances des différents systèmes juridiques africains et de leur équivalences. Il s'agira ici de penser les attentes et les limites de la traduction juridique en contexte africain.
- Dans le domaine littéraire, le traducteur aura à composer avec la créativité de l'auteur. De nombreux écrivains africains s'inspirent de la richesse linguistique et culturelle locale pour mêler les langues et les modes de transmission et créer ainsi leurs propres langages artistiques. Se pose alors la question du rôle qu'aura à jouer le traducteur : peut-il à son tour se faire créateur et s'inspirer du contexte linguistique cible pour

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Bandia, « Esquisse d'une histoire de la traduction en Afrique », *Meta*, vol. 50, n°3, Août 2005, p. 957-971.

proposer sa propre traduction créative ou doit-il être le plus proche possible de la langue de l'auteur, la faire entendre telle quelle en l'accompagnant éventuellement d'un glossaire explicatif ?

- Dans un cadre plus politique, on peut questionner la motivation à rédiger dans une langue minoritaire qui n'a que peu de lecteurs. En littérature, il s'est agi, dans les années 1980, de motiver l'usage d'un patrimoine local ou national, avant que certains auteurs se traduisent eux-mêmes dans une langue de grande diffusion pour assurer la circulation de leurs œuvres. Qu'en est-il aujourd'hui, dans de multiples domaines sociétaux : les documents officiels sont-ils traduits en plusieurs langues ? comment s'opèrent les choix et pour quelle efficacité ?

Quel que soit le champ d'application, les particularités du contexte africain invitent à repenser le rôle du traducteur, son importance et ses limites.

Les propositions de contribution (500 mots maximum) sont à envoyer **avant le 31 juillet 2020** à : [anais.stampfli@unil.ch](mailto:anais.stampfli@unil.ch)

#### **Panel 4: Chronic Conditions in Times of Social Health Protection in Africa**

##### CONVENORS:

MELINA RUTISHAUSER, Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Basel

ANDREA KAISER-GROLIMUND, Institute of Social Anthropology & Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, University of Basel

##### DISCUSSANT:

PIET VAN EEUWIJK, Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute & Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Basel; Department of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies, University of Zurich

In diverse urban and rural African contexts, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are on the rise and contribute to what is termed a "double burden of disease" due to the comorbidity of infectious diseases and chronic conditions. Current research shows, however, that the boundaries between non-communicable and communicable diseases are increasingly blurring because of synergetic (inter-)relations, as in the case of HIV/AIDS and diabetes in Africa. Furthermore, a syndemic lens on NCDs and comorbidities provides information about the synergistic interactions between such coexisting diseases and the social, economic, political and ecological contexts in which people live their local biologies. Chronicity often implies expensive, complex and life-long therapies and a continuous intensive care scheme that the ill person can hardly manage alone. Control of NCDs and its biosociality in Africa lead primarily to the social entities of family and kin, but increasingly to non-kin institutions and to (formal and informal) schemes of social health protection. Therefore, we may ask: What are strategies of chronically ill persons to receive adequate long-term cure and care for their conditions?

Furthermore, in this panel, we would like to shed light on how the management of NCDs is linked to different forms of social health protection. Social health protection includes different types of formal health insurances, but also family support, networks and saving groups with a health component. Are there differences between social groups in the way how individuals and their extended networks handle chronic health conditions and provide thus protection? How do

available insurances impact the way chronic conditions are managed? How do global policies and international funding schemes as well as national policies and local interests influence the different ways to develop and strengthen social health protection? What are the influences of advocacy groups and research institutions in the design and implementation of specific health insurance schemes and how did they develop over time?

This panel addresses these emerging questions about ways of interlinkage and mutuality of chronic diseases and social health protection in Africa. Therefore, we encourage the submission of anthropological as well as historical, economical, epidemiological, public health and other contributions that include but are not limited to diverse ways of social health protection; chronicity and the management and control of NCDs; NCDs and their interplay with social health protection; the potential impact of international/national policies and funding schemes on such correlations.

Paper proposals (500 words max) should be sent **no later than 31 July 2020** to: [melina.rutishauser@unibas.ch](mailto:melina.rutishauser@unibas.ch), [andrea.kaisergrolimund@unibas.ch](mailto:andrea.kaisergrolimund@unibas.ch) and [peter.vaneeuwijk@unibas.ch](mailto:peter.vaneeuwijk@unibas.ch)

## **Panel 5: The practice and theory of transcontinental research on Africa**

### CONVENORS:

JOSCHKA PHILIPPS, swisspeace / University of Basel

NOEMI STEUER, Center for African Studies Basel

ELÍSIO MACAMO, Department of Sociology, University of Basel

This panel reflects on the potentials and challenges of research and teaching collaboration between the global North and South. From both a practical and theoretical vantage point, it focuses on how knowledge is co-produced in African studies. Presentations and discussions consider how different social and professional contexts shape Northern and Southern perspectives on what social science should focus on and what it can accomplish, how international donor incentives and development institutions affect the role of the social sciences in Africa, how language differences and technological innovations impact research collaboration, and how calls for the decolonization of the social sciences are to be approached in African studies from the global north and south.

The first part of this double panel presents findings from an ongoing collaborative project called [IDEAS](#) (International Digital Exchange between Africa and Switzerland). IDEAS brings together 17 MA students from Bamako, Basel, and Conakry, as well as professors and lecturers from each place, to discuss key methodological and theoretical concerns in social science research on Africa.

The second part of the panel, which will take the form of a **Round Table discussion**, is open to contributions from different disciplines and researchers involved in collaboration projects and/or dealing with the co-production of scientific knowledge between the global North and South.

Proposed contributions for the **Round Table Discussion** are welcome and should be sent **by 31 July** to: [joschka.philipps@unibas.ch](mailto:joschka.philipps@unibas.ch)

## Panel 6: African Contributions to Global Health Practices

### CONVENORS:

TANJA HAMMEL, ANDREA AZIZI KIFYASI & ANDREA GRAF, Department of History, Chair for African History, University of Basel

Medical histories in and on Africa have often focused on the activities and achievements of Euro-American missionaries, philanthropists, humanitarians, scientists, and organizations. For a long time, discourse on innovation was based on the (tacit) understanding that new developments occur in the North, while Southern countries adopt them only after some delay. This view created the impression that countries of the South had nothing or little to offer to global health practices. Challenging these unidirectional models, this panel focuses on African contributions to global health practices, examining critically its role in the production, use and circulation of medical knowledge within the continent and around the world. By referring to “health practices” we would like to transgress the biomedical sphere and include sociomedical aspect and broadly conceptualize health. The broad questions we would like to raise, are: What forms of knowledge, practices, or applications have been designed for improving health and well-being in Africa and have become relevant to global questions of health? What is the history and context behind these African contributions to global health practices?

In Western scholarship, cooperation and exchange between Southern actors is often neglected. Therefore, this panel explicitly welcomes studies on South-South cooperation, highlighting the forms and particularities of African medical knowledge exchange with the Southern world. What kind of collaborations have been established? What kind of knowledge has been circulated, how and to whose benefits?

While our panel is motivated by present-day concerns to respond to challenges in health systems, it is based on the premise that intercontinental exchanges in public health share a much longer trajectory, starting before the onset of colonialism and continuing after the Second World War with the emergence of international health politics. We therefore particularly invite historians to contribute but are interested in learning from scholars in other disciplines working in the field. Topics: May include but are not limited to the following;

- a) Medical knowledge production and circulation within South-South cooperations
- b) African inventions/concepts in medical research or health practices
- c) African interventions against diseases
- d) Public health practices forged in African contexts and established elsewhere
- e) Practices of Traditional African Medicine/Herbalism
- f) Knowledge created on medicine (e.g. in clinical trials) conducted in African research centers and development of pharmaceutical industries in Africa
- g) Health policies in post-colonial Africa

Paper proposals (500 words max) should be sent **no later than 31 July 2020** to:

[Andrea.Graf@unibas.ch](mailto:Andrea.Graf@unibas.ch)

## **Panel 7: Food changes in Africa**

### CONVENORS:

ANNE MAYOR, Laboratoire Archéologie et peuplement de l'Afrique & Global Studies Institute, University of Geneva ;

TOBIAS HALLER, Institut für Sozialanthropologie, University of Berne

ROBERTO ZAUGG, Historisches Seminar, University of Zurich

Food as social, economic and cultural marker has emerged as a topic of great scholarly interest that needs to be addressed from an interdisciplinary perspective. Researchers can use various kinds of evidence to reconstruct the ways of food procurement, storage, preparation and consumption as well as their change through time: written, iconographic, oral and material sources (pottery, faunal and botanical remains...).

This session would like to bring together researchers from various fields in order to explore food and beverage practices throughout the African continent. Archaeological studies about different time periods and geographical contexts are important to draw a sketch of the emergence of plant and animal domestication and diffusion, as well as foodways variability. Historical, linguistic and anthropological studies will show the changes under the influence of the Atlantic trade since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and from colonial times to contemporary globalisation of local food systems, including impacts on local food security and nutrition.

This panel will give the opportunity to present the new Sinergia project "Foodways in West Africa: an integrated approach on pots, animals and plants", and bring various researchers in Switzerland into the conversation. For example, a dialogue between archaeobotanists, linguists and anthropologists about African rice domestication, cultivation, and current loss of diversity would be of great interest in this context. We also would like to see a conversation between historians and others on the value of written and oral sources to get insights about food changes during the Atlantic era, when new species were brought to African coasts and integrated in various recipes. Numerous other themes are also welcome.

Paper proposals (500 words max) should be sent **no later than 31 July 2020** to:

[Anne.Mayor@unige.ch](mailto:Anne.Mayor@unige.ch)

## **Panel 8: New Ethics towards African Heritage in Switzerland. The challenging discourse between academic and museum spaces**

### CONVENORS:

DAG HENRICHSEN, Basler Afrika Bibliographien, Head of Department Academic relationships and Special Projects.

FLORIANE MORIN, Musée d'ethnographie de Genève (MEG), Curator in charge of the Africa collections and Provenance research strategies.

Despite critical African voices since the Independence era on colonial violence, the issue of large-scale heritage looting seems to have reached the ears of former imperial institutions only recently. With French and German university and museum institutions in the lead, debates throughout Europe range from themes concerning "colonial provenance" to questions towards the restitution of translocated heritage and, more broadly speaking, questions relating to decolonizing



knowledge.

Since some time, academic research has been forcing Switzerland to face its own colonial past and as such its entanglement with imperialism, exploitive economies, religious proselytism and racism. The collections of Swiss heritage institutions and as such those with human remains, objects and specimens, archives and photographs reflect these now by and large discredited discourses.

The aim of this panel is to map out new theoretical approaches and practical experiences concerning African cultural property in Switzerland. How to share information, bring together and make accessible colonial collections and their documentation scattered throughout Switzerland? What about academic research of colonial provenance? Partnerships between Swiss and African institutions and cultural actors are likely to multiply, with which ambitions, processes and visions? Do decolonial exhibition curating practices reach their target audiences? These and other questions and issues will lead us to consider the challenges of a collective and national effort in the field of decolonial knowledge production, the relevance of provenance research and joint policy actions by Swiss universities and heritage institutions.

Paper proposals (500 words max) can be sent in French or English **no later than 31 July 2020** to: [Floriane.Morin@ville-ge.ch](mailto:Floriane.Morin@ville-ge.ch) and [dh@baslerafrika.ch](mailto:dh@baslerafrika.ch)

## **Round Table: Gaining and maintaining access in research**

### CONVENORS :

MARION FERT, Université de Neuchâtel

NATALIE TARR, Université de Bâle

Fieldwork negotiation, i.e. the series of steps (making contacts, oral or written exchanges) taken to obtain the right to carry out research, is an essential preliminary step of any data collection. Yet, due to the diversification of fieldwork in Africa, as elsewhere, agreement of authorities (state officer for research permit, head of institution, etc.) has become more and more necessary to undertake fieldwork. Often perceived just as “a condition for carrying out the investigation [our translation]” and not as “an object of research in its own right and [...] real material for analyzing the field itself [our translation]” (Darmon 2005, 99), we argue that these field negotiations are rich in information (Derbez 2010). Therefore, inspired by the round table presentations at the SRAD conference in 2016 on (dis)advantages of being a young researcher working in Africa, we would like to, this year, home in on the specific aspect of gaining and maintaining access to research in Africa: how do researchers negotiate their entry into the field and maintain it? How do these negotiations engage in the very nature of research, problematizing it and its methodology (Derbez 2010)?

What happens when anthropologists become potential spies? How to deal with a denial of access to the field (Darmon 2005) in a particular institution – be it governmental, humanitarian, or religious? For instance, can being refused access to a criminal court lead us to define this research topic as “delicate”? But why should this be more sensitive than, say, researching refugee university students’ choice to refuse to participate in the research? And how come local researchers often go through an elaborate administrative maze to obtain research permits while Western researchers do not (feel to) need to do so?

And, lastly, still in the same line of thought of accessing the field, we scientists often enthusiastically embark on our research in Africa without much thought to equity, i.e. collaboration with other researchers in the country we carry our research out in (“convivial scholarship”, Nyamnjoh 2012, 2019).

We would like to invite the SRAD community to share ideas, anecdotes, and experiences with us (max. half a page **by 31 July** to: [marion.fert@unine.ch](mailto:marion.fert@unine.ch), [natalie.tarr@unibas.ch](mailto:natalie.tarr@unibas.ch)), in order to discuss them informally at a plenary round table in October.