

50th KUASS (Kyoto University African Studies Seminar)

Date and Time: 18 March 2016 (Fri), 15:00—17:00

Venue: #318, Inamori Memorial Foundation Building (3rd floor), Kyoto University

Speaker: Dr. Clemens Greiner (University of Cologne)

Discussant: Dr. Jon Holtzman (Western Michigan University)

"Overcoming divides: African Studies and the Global South Studies Center at the University of Cologne"

Abstract: Disciplinary Africa-based research has been a focus of academic interest at the University of Cologne (UoC) since the 1960s. Although there is a strong tradition of interdisciplinary research in the field of human-environmental relations, research on Africa has often been hampered by an area specific and sometimes mono-disciplinary approach, which is not capable of tracing the connections, flows and entanglements characteristic of an increasingly globalizing world. This has been the fate of most other area studies working in the Global South, many of them being institutionally small and sometimes also isolated units within the larger University. The successful application of the UoC within the third funding line of the German Excellence Initiative (2012) enabled the University to explore new avenues and to fund a Center designed to provide a meeting platform and organisational hub for a hitherto loose and little structured alliance of individual researchers from various disciplines working in the Global South. The explicit aim of the resulting Global South Studies Center (GSSC) is to overcome the multiple divides within area-specific studies by focusing on processes of mobility and exchange and on the resulting translocal connectivities.

"Infrastructures, post-pastoralism and territorialization: Mapping anticipation and change in a Kenyan dryland"

Abstract: Land-use and livelihood patterns in Eastern African drylands have changed profoundly in recent decades. Ethnographic data from East Pokot in Kenya's Baringo area illustrate some of the major change dynamics and point to relevant drivers. While until the 1990s the pastoral Pokot have managed an open, non-fragmented rangeland, wildlife conservation, sedentarization and land-use intensification as well as increasing

contestation of borderlands have led to a profound fragmentation and contraction of the commons and a fundamental territorial restructuring. These dynamics are driven by economies of anticipation, fuelled by expectation of future developments particularly large-scale infrastructural developments and changing politico-institutional frameworks. In a nutshell, the dynamics in East Pokot reflect the current dynamics in rural Africa at large, where land-use intensification, conservation and new infrastructure d-projects lead to fundamental changes in people's livelihoods. While much attention has been paid to the role of external actors in recent land-based grievances in Africa, this paper directs attention to endogenous agency and compliancy in territorial restructuring.

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“Reconstructing the Paradigm of African Area Studies in a Globalized World”