



## Program Point Sud 2015

# Place and Mobility: People and Cultural Practices in Cosmopolitan Networks in Africa, the Atlantic & Indian Ocean

## Date and Place Report



## **1 Organisers**

Dr Patrick Desplat, anthropology, University of Cologne

Professor Shaun Viljoen, English, Stellenbosch University

Dr Fernando Rosa Ribeiro, anthropology and history, Stellenbosch University

## **2 Themes and Objectives**

This project development workshop aimed at developing an encompassing transdisciplinary project and network of scholars covering the domains of African, Atlantic & Indian Ocean studies, including Sahel & Saharan studies, under a common research agenda centred on the theme of place and mobility and the making of cosmopolitan networks. In spite of bringing in Atlantic & Indian Ocean studies, this proposal aims to use African studies - and Africa - as a point of articulation between both linked oceanic realms and their respective domains of studies. Though the focus here is therefore on connectivity and movement, Africa - and African studies - keeps a central place. In this sense, our workshop is inspired by previous initiatives in South Africa, where Indian Ocean studies has been welded to African studies, as well as by a previous initiative carried out by Point Sud in Bamako 2011. Moreover, Sahel & Saharan studies are also a source of inspiration here. Our own perspective included a focus on various practices and imaginaries that arise in and through movement, therefore giving more weight to processes as such rather than objects or social actors. This processual nature comes out strongly through the notion of connected histories. Having this important insight in mind, namely, the importance of process and movement, we have foregrounded the making of cosmopolitanism (or cosmopolitanization) as it is linked to people, cultural practices and products within oceanic connected histories (Subrahmanyam 1997; Pearson 2007), what Françoise Vergès (2010) has called in fact Indian Oceanic processes of creolization. The exploration of how processes of cosmopolitanism and creolization link together was therefore also part of our event.

## **3 Methodology and Results**

We used a project development workshop format, with a half-day of discussions related to the work of postgraduate students who presented at the event. The programme included a tour to the District Six Museum in Cape Town as well as to Bo-Kaap, a Muslim neighbourhood in the city of Indian Ocean origin. The most interesting outcome was familiarizing scholars who study Africa with work done in a different part of the continent, in particular the Sahel & Sahara (a part of the continent not much studied in South Africa), but also, for instance, the Cape Verde Islands and Senegal. The meeting between scholars from Brazil (four Brazil-based scholars were present) and from Asia-Pacific (two were present) as well as Africa was also quite innovative in terms of exchange of views. In particular, anthropology, history, literary studies, Indian Ocean studies, and geography generated a wide-ranging interdisciplinary discussion. The different cultural and geographical background of the various participants also made for a lively and intriguing environment. Several of the non-South African scholars were also in the country for the very first time (and two were in Africa for the first time ever).

One important outcome was taking notice of the links between creolisation and cosmopolitanism in Atlantic and Indian Ocean locations, in the one hand, and immigration and movements of people within the Sahara & Sahel region, North Africa included, on the

other. These regions – and processes – are not usually linked in scholarly works. The keynotes were particularly helpful in this regard, as when Paulo F. de Moraes Farias disclosed the long term connected histories linking all the regions bordering the North African Mediterranean and those as far as today's Benin and Nigeria. Mamadou Diawara, another keynote, indicated also how Sahelian networks in fact extend themselves nowadays all the way to Central & East Africa, and as far as China and Thailand. Even more amazing was Haripriya Rangan's presentation, in which she showed that plants – the various species of the baobab, for instance – have been crossing the Atlantic and the India Ocean all the way between West Africa, East Africa & Madagascar, South & Southeast Asia, and Australia, well before any historical records are available (she used plant genetics to trace the movements). She has also powerfully suggested that we are all Creole if for no other reason because of the food we eat and the plants we use. Isabel Hofmeyr complemented all the above with a fine-tuned analysis of Indian Ocean studies and the many related connected histories and strands. The presentations related to the Atlantic islands and Cape Town – for instance, those of Marina Berthet and Dan Yon – have also unveiled how Creole societies of colonial origin in fact have points in common with societies where migration is historically present to a great degree, such as those of the Sahel and Sahara. Just as Haripriya Rangan, Andrea Acri has also shown how ancient processes of cosmopolitanism and creolisation took place in the post-Gupta Indian Ocean, this time involving tantric networks. The overall impression given by the talks is that processes of migration, various forms of human (and related plant and animal) mobility, creolisation, and cosmopolitanism are intimately related to a hitherto unsuspected degree.

Below is the full programme:

Time	Tue (4.8)	Wed (5.8)	Thu (6.8)	Fr (7.8)	Sa (8.8)
<b>8 am</b>	Registration				
<b>8.30 am</b>	Welcoming address by Point Sud and Organizers	Keynote address: <i>People, ideas, and wealth, across the Sahara and the centuries</i> (Paulo Fernando de Moares Farias, University of Birmingham) (Chair: Fernando Ribeiro)	Keynote address: <i>The movement of plants and creolisation of culture</i> Haripriya Rangan, Monash University Chair: Patrick Desplat	Field visit to Bo-Kaap and visit to District Six Museum, Cape Town.	

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9 am	Keynote address: <i>Oceans of the South: The Indian Ocean meets the South Atlantic</i> Isabel Hofmeyr, University of the Witwatersrand (Chair: Shaun Viljoen)				
9.30 am		<b>3. Creolization and cosmopolitanism in Africa, the Atlantic, and the Indian Ocean</b>  <i>Revisioning Africa from the Indian Ocean littoral: locations and transportations</i> Meg Samuelson, University of Cape Town (Susanne Gehrmann)	<i>Amitav Ghosh and the integral hegemony of English</i> Vedita Cowaloosur, Stellenbosch University (Meg Samuelson)	Departure for Cape Town	<i>Cosmopolitan crisscrossing of the shores of the Sahara and Southeast Asia: Tribes and frontiers of knowledge</i> Fernando Rosa, Stellenbosch University and Nottingham Malaysia (Paulo Farias)
10 am	<b>1. Migrating arts and transnational connections</b>  <i>From Indian Ocean to African Indian: Through the refracted lens of Capital Art Studio, Stone Town, Zanzibar</i> Pamila Gupta, WISER/University of the Witwatersrand (Patricia Hayes)	<i>Creole beasts: Equine breeding and mobility in Africa, the Atlantic &amp; Indian Ocean</i> Sandra Swart, Stellenbosch University (Haripriya Rangan)	<i>Mapping Setswana genealogies in Keorapetse</i> <i>Kgositsile's poetry</i> Uhuru Phalafala, University of Cape Town (Tina Steiner)		<i>Tantric Buddhist networks in maritime Asia, 7th–14th centuries AD</i> Andrea Acri, Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre (Fernando Ribeiro)
10.30 am	Break	Break	Break	District Six Museum	<i>Partir, partir au loin pour survivre...Departing for far away places in order to survive</i> Aboubacar Souley, Independent Scholar, Niamey (Marko Scholze)

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<b>11 am</b>	<i>Tamasheq student itineraries: from the Sahara to Cairo crossing spaces-time and beyond</i> Denise Dias Barros, Universidade de Sao Paulo and Casa das Africas (Fernando Ribeiro)	<i>The Island, the ocean and the desert: memory and the St Helena presence in the Northern Cape.</i> Daniel Yon, University of Cape Town/York University (Antonio Tomas)	<b>5. Colonialism, Cosmopolitanism, and the State</b> <i>The Atlantic Ocean thesis versus the Indian Ocean thesis of Indirect Rule? Migrants, genealogical roots and transnational movement in southern Africa</i> Patricia Hayes, University of the Western Cape (Paulo Farias)		<b>11:15</b> Keynote address: <i>Asia as horizon for West Africans from the 1980s</i> Mamadou Diawara, Goethe University Frankfurt (Chair: Fernando Rosa Ribeiro)
<b>11.30 am</b>	<i>Whose heritage? The struggle for meaning and power connected to a UNESCO-World-Heritage Site in Niger</i> Marko Scholze, Goethe Frankfurt University (Karin Barber)	<i>Mobility as a key concept in Afropolitan lives &amp; literatures</i> Susanne Gehrmann, Humboldt University Berlin (Mamadou Diawara)	<i>'Creoles', print culture and the idea of India in early colonial British West Africa</i> Karin Barber, University of Birmingham (Isabel Hofmeyr)		
<b>12 pm</b>	<i>Cape Verdean narratives, poems, and songs about forced labor in São Tomé</i> Marina Berthet, Universidade Federal Fluminense (Jung Ran Annachiara Forte)	<i>Cosmopolitan collaboration or what is a telescope?</i> Tina Steiner, Stellenbosch University (Isabel Hofmeyr)	<i>A poetics of junk</i> Megan Jones, English, Stellenbosch University (Joaze Bernadino Costa)		<b>12:15 – 12.45</b> Plenary/ Closing
<b>12.30 pm</b>	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break		
<b>1 pm</b>					
<b>1.30 pm</b>					
<b>2 pm</b>	<i>Spirits, beasts, rivalry: Dancing the Other in Mapiko Masquerades</i> Paolo Israel, University of the Western Cape (Alain Kaly)	<i>Creolized writings: Augusto Bastos and the Angolan Creole Society</i> Antonio Tomas, Stellenbosch University (Michaeline Crichlow)	<i>Conceiving a new Islam for the Western world</i> Ewa Dynarowicz, University of Wroclaw (Paulo Farias)		

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<b>2.30 pm</b>	<b>2. Writings in Africa and across oceanic spaces: migrations and voyages</b>  <i>Sindbad the Sailor: Home and away</i> Andrew James Hofmeyr, University of Cape Town (Shaun Viljoen)	<i>Caliban cosmopolitanism: connecting Brazilian, Caribbean and North American black thinkers</i> Joaze-Bernardino Costa, Universidade de Brasilia and University of California Berkeley (Pamila Gupta)	<i>Aline Sitoe Diatta's struggle against Franco-Marabout agricultural hegemony in Senegambia</i> Alain Pascal Kaly, Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro (Mamadou Diawara)	Bokaap and Bokaap Museum	
<b>3 pm</b>	<i>Cosmopolitanism and the concept of home in Tahar Ben Jelloun's Novels</i> Kayode Atilade, Obafemi Awolowo University (Tina Steiner)	<b>4. Routes, languages, and writings</b>  <i>Imperialist history and orientalist philology in François Valentyn's Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën (1724-1726)</i> Siegfried Huigen, University of Wroclaw (Andrea Acri)	<i>Mobility, parental abandonment and family life in the liminal space</i> Yunusy Castory Ng'umbi, Stellenbosch University (Susanne Gehrman)		
<b>3.30 pm</b>	Break	Break	Break		
<b>4 pm</b>	<i>At sea. A journey across the South Atlantic</i> Shaun Viljoen, Stellenbosch University (Felix Ayoh'Omidire)	<i>Urban mobility: how social identities are constructed through language in a multicultural area</i> Albinou Ndecky, Universite Gaston-Berger (Fernando Rosa Ribeiro)	<b>6. Cosmopolitan networks across the Atlantic, the Sahel, and the Indian Ocean</b>  <i>Vodun Remix</i> Jung Ran Annachiara Forte, University of the Western Cape (Marina Berthet)		

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<b>4.30 pm</b>	<i>Creolization, Americanity and the Caribbean in a critical world system</i> Michaeline Crichlow, Duke University, with Patricia Northover, University of the West Indies (Fernando Ribeiro)	<i>Saro-Wiwa's Sozaboy and its Circuit of Value: Towards a Creolization of "Rotten English"</i> Philip Aghoghovwia, University of Cape Town (Karin Barber)	<i>Flux et reflux revisited: Aguda cosmopolitanism and the creolization of trade, culture, festivals, religiosity, and architecture between the Bight of Benin and Bahia de Todos os Santos</i> Felix Ayoh'Omidire, Obafemi Awolowo University (Tina Steiner)		
<b>5 pm</b>	<i>"The Spice of Life": Trade, storytelling, and movement in Paradise and By the Sea by Abdulrazak Gurnah</i> Sophie Kohler, University of Cape Town (Patrick Desplat)	<i>Postgraduate student meeting</i> (Shaun Viljoen)	<i>Towards a better life. Gendered sociabilities and spatial aspirations in Mahajanga, Madagascar</i> Patrick Desplat, University of Cologne (Alain Kaly)		
<b>5.30 pm</b>					
<b>6 pm</b>				Dinner Aubergine	
<b>6.30 pm</b>					
<b>7 pm</b>	Dinner Decameron		Dinner Koopmanshuijs		
<b>7.30 pm</b>				JAZZ 8:30	

#### 4 Sustainability of the Event

We plan to put forth at least one special journal issue with some of the conference papers, as well as an edited volume (containing further papers). Discussions are still being held in this regard. The special issue would have only just over half a dozen papers, and *African & Asian Studies* is a possible publication venue for it. As for the joint volume, the Palgrave Indian Ocean World Studies Series is a possibility.

We have built a strong Brazil-South Africa-Europe-Asia Pacific network through this workshop. We are planning a follow-up workshop with at least some of the same participants, on a similar theme, this time concentrating on fewer disciplines. There are on-going discussions in this regard.

Three departments (arts, English, and anthropology) at Stellenbosch University and the equivalent departments at Universidade de São Paulo are currently discussing a joint research

project and also an event in São Paulo bringing together scholars from both sides of the South Atlantic. The joint project will be on arts, transnationalism, and creolisation.

It is also hoped that this will not be the only project to come out of this workshop.

## **5 Participants**

- 1) Prof Alain Pascal Kaly, African history and sociology, Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (papa1kaly@yahoo.fr)
- 2) Dr Andrea Acri, Sanskrit and Buddhist studies, Nalanda Sriwijaya Centre, Singapore (a.acri81@gmail.com)
- 3) Andrew Hofmeyr, masters student, English, University of Cape Town (mutoyou@gmail.com)\*\*
- 4) Dr Annachiara Forte, anthropologist, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town (annachiara.forte@gmail.com)\*\*
- 5) Dr António Tomás, anthropologist, Stellenbosch University (antonioctomas@gmail.com)\*\*
- 6) Prof. Haripriya Rangan, Monash University, geography, Melbourne (haripriya.rangan@monash.edu)
- 7) Prof. Dan Yon, anthropologist and film maker, University of Cape Town/ University of York, Toronto (dyon@edu.yorku.ca)
- 8) Prof. Denise Dias Barros anthropologist, University of São Paulo (yadene@gmail.com)
- 9) Prof. Félix Ayoh'Omidire, Portuguese, Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria (fomidire@yahoo.fr)
- 10) Dr Fernando Rosa Ribeiro (co-convener), anthropology and history, Nottingham Malaysia & Stellenbosch University (ferori.rosa@gmail.com)
- 11) Prof Isabel Hofmeyr, Indian Ocean studies, University of the Witwatersrand (isabel.hofmeyr@wits.ac.za)
- 12) Dr Kayode Oyabame Atilada, French (postdoctoral fellow, Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria, (ayodestiny@yahoo.com)
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- 32) Prof. Grace Musila, English, Stellenbosch University (listener only)