

## Call for papers

### Workshop „Mapping agency. Comparing regionalisms in Sub-Saharan Africa“

7 – 8 July 2011,  
Kolleg Forschergruppe “The Transformative Power of Europe?”  
in co-operation with the Centre for Area Studies  
Free University Berlin

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Although regionalism has developed into a global phenomenon, it is often enough treated as a distinct ‘European idea’. Despite long-standing theoretical disputes between disciplines, academic work still tends to present the EU as ‘promoter’ of the ‘idea of regionalism’, regional initiatives are examined in terms of being shaped by EU policies and regional institutions are measured against the model of the EU. Such a Eurocentric approach tends to view other actors than the EU as rather passive ‘receiving ends’ while it neglects the active participation of a multiplicity of actors and their agency in respective processes.

Particularly in the case of Sub-Saharan Africa, little is actually known about domestic, regional and external actors and factors shaping formal as well as informal processes of regionalism. While theoretical work has increasingly paid attention to this topic over the last years, research is often weak on empirical insights. Against this backdrop, the workshop emphasizes an African perspective on regionalism in Sub-Saharan Africa, and particularly focuses on three dimensions:

We would firstly like to highlight the historical dimension of such processes: We believe that current problems, successes, conflicts and failures of regionalisms in Sub-Saharan Africa can only be fully understood if their emergence and development over time is taken into account.

We are, secondly, interested in grasping and assessing domestic, regional and external actors engaging in regionalisms in Sub-Saharan Africa and their role in processes of regionalism. Which state and non-state actors foster or hamper regionalisms? To which extent are non-African actors trying to influence processes of regionalism in Sub-Saharan Africa? We are particularly interested in the build-up and the implementation of formal and informal processes.

Thirdly, we would like to stimulate a comparative perspective on different Africa regionalism approaches and schemes in order to develop a clearer picture on divergences, diversities, but also commonalities of processes of regionalisms in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The workshop aims at bringing together scholars working from an African perspective beyond disciplinary divides in order to map agency of and in regionalisms in Sub-Saharan Africa more comprehensively. We welcome paper abstracts for empirically rich papers from both junior and senior researchers of area studies, history, political science and neighboring disciplines that focus on at least one of the three dimensions. Abstracts of no more than 350 words should be sent until 15 March 2011 to [mappingagency@gmail.com](mailto:mappingagency@gmail.com). Travel and accommodation funding can be provided.