

# Provincializing the Social Sciences

International Workshop 4–6 June, 2015

The three-day workshop departs from the insight that the much lamented ‘crisis’ of area studies has to be understood and coupled with as a larger ‘crisis’ of the social sciences. Important area studies initiatives have embarked on formulating transregional perspectives in response to internationalization efforts and postcolonial critique, yet many social science faculties have remained remarkably untouched by these developments. In addition, funding for area expertise in social science faculties has been drastically reduced, further widening both the institutional and epistemological gap between the often evoked disciplinary binary of ‘major’ social sciences and ‘minor’ area studies.

We want to use this moment of ‘crisis’ as a productive opening to foster a critical conversation on the interface of area studies and social sciences. Following Chakrabarty’s call to ‘provincialize Europe’, we deploy the notion of ‘provincializing the social sciences’ as a point

of departure for such an exchange. The workshop thereby aims not only to foster reflection about false claims to universality and tendencies to marginalize ‘other’ knowledges in the social sciences, but also to work towards a more political and theoretically reflective formulation of area studies.

The workshop is designed as the inauguration of a longer conversation leading to a broader research project located at Freie Universität Berlin.

## International Workshop 4–6 June, 2015

Freie Universität Berlin  
Henry Ford Building  
Senate Assembly Hall  
Garystraße 35  
14195 Berlin-Dahlem

### Convenors

Schirin Amir-Moazami, Ruth Streicher

The workshop is open to the public but requires advance registration ([mkurz@zedat.fu-berlin.de](mailto:mkurz@zedat.fu-berlin.de)). For more information, see: <http://www.bgsmcs.fu-berlin.de>.

## THURSDAY, 4 JUNE, 2015

- 14.00 Welcome Remarks by the Convenors  
*Schirin Amir Moazami, Ruth Streicher, Freie Universität Berlin*

### PANEL 1: RETHINKING THE SOCIAL SCIENCES FROM THE AREAS

- 14.30 Fiqh al-Waqi' and Its Discontents: Contemporary Islamic Legal Debates on the Status of the Social Sciences  
*Alexandre Caeiro, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar*
- 15.15 Rethinking Society from Elsewhere: Studying Thought and Intellectual Practice on the Swahili Coast  
*Kai Kresse, Columbia University, New York*
- 16.00 Coffee Break
- 16.30 Rethinking Humanism and Politics in a Global Age: A View from Southeast Asia  
*Goh Beng Lan, National University of Singapore*
- 17.15 Provincializing Secularism? Buddhism, Statehood and the Management of the 'Muslim Minority' in Thailand  
*Ruth Streicher, University of California, Berkeley/ Freie Universität Berlin*
- 18.00 Discussion
- 18.45 Transfer to Restaurant and Welcome Dinner

## FRIDAY, 5 JUNE, 2015

### PANEL 2: CONTESTING SOCIAL SCIENCE EPISTEMOLOGIES

- 09.30 Decolonizing State Theory: The Absent Presence of 'Latin America'  
*Markus-Michael Müller, Freie Universität Berlin*
- 10.15 Negotiating 'Area' and 'Discipline' after the Arab Uprisings – Political Sciences in Turbulent Times  
*Cilja Harders, Freie Universität Berlin*
- 11.00 Coffee Break
- 11.30 Critical Theory after the Rise of the Global South  
*Boike Rehbein, Humboldt Universität Berlin*
- 12.15 Discussion
- 13:00 Lunch Break

### PANEL 3: DECENTERING THEORETICAL CATEGORIES OF GENDER AND RELIGION

#### Part I: Categories of Gender

- 14.30 Gender Studies and Its Travels - Discipline and Disciplining  
*Allaine Cerwonka, University of East London*
- 15.15 Coffee Break
- 16.00 Beyond Gender and Body: A Queer Case of Fakirs?  
*Omar Kasmani, Freie Universität Berlin*
- 16.45 Discussion
- 17.30 End of the Second Day

## SATURDAY, 6 JUNE, 2015

### CONT. PANEL 3

#### Part II: Categories of Religion

- 09.30 The Movement of Critique  
*Ruth Mas, University of Colorado, Boulder*
- 10.15 Transcultural Perspective on the Sociology of Religion  
*Armando Salvatore, McGill University, Montréal*
- 11.00 Coffee Break
- 11.30 A Post-Colonial Critique of Weber's Theory of Race, Religion and Ethnicity  
*Manuela Boatca, Freie Universität Berlin*
- 12.15 Knowledge Production as a Secular Practice: The Social Scientific Measurement of Muslims in Europe  
*Schirin Amir-Moazami, Freie Universität Berlin*
- 13:00 Discussion
- 13:30 Lunch Break

### PANEL 4: GENEALOGIES OF (GERMAN) AREA STUDIES

- 14.30 History, Primitive Peoples and the Abyss of Race. Territorial and Temporal Orders in German Anthropology and Folklore Studies, 1850s-1930s  
*Christof Dejung, University of Cambridge*
- 15.15 Coffee Break
- 15.45 Universalizing the Province: Projections, Stereotypes and Premises in Research on African Law in the German Colonies  
*Ulrike Schaper, Freie Universität Berlin*
- 16.30 Discussion
- 17.15 End of the Workshop

