

## **History of Knowledge and Transnational History: theoretical approaches and empirical perspectives**

International Conference, 10th and 11th of September 2009  
Historical Institute, University of Basel, Switzerland

Organised by Patrick Harries / Martin Lengwiler (Historical Institute, University of Basel, Switzerland) together with the Swiss Association for the Studies of Science, Technology and Society (STS-CH)

This international conference discusses the intersection between the history of knowledge and transnational history, focusing on the theoretical and empirical potential of such a venture. Both approaches have turned out to be highly innovative over the past years. The history of knowledge is seen as an extension of the history of science in the direction of social and cultural history, whereas transnational history represents a melting pot for a variety of research perspectives, from comparative and postcolonial history to international or global history.

The combination of the history of knowledge with transnational history also makes sense for historical reasons. Modern knowledge practices are deeply marked by transnational learning processes. At the same time, international power relations – from the colonial era to the current period of globalisation – were themselves represented and legitimated by epistemic practices. This interplay between knowledge practices and processes of transnationalisation is the central theme of the conference. It will be illustrated by specific case studies on scientific technologies of order and classification or on their social and cultural contexts of application.

The conference brings together some of the leading scholars in the field and a group of junior researchers. As an audience, the venue addresses students in history, social anthropology, science and technology studies, and African studies from the university of Basel and other academic institutions. It is open to a wider public interested in the field.

### *Registration*

Attending the conference is free of charge. The facilities at the University of Basel only offer room for a limited number of participants. Those interested in participating at the conference should therefore register with Felix Held ([felix.held@stud.unibas.ch](mailto:felix.held@stud.unibas.ch)) by the end of August.

### Thursday, 10th of September 2009

11.00 hrs: Registration, Coffee & Sandwiches

12.00 hrs: **Martin Lengwiler**, University of Basel, Switzerland: Intersections between the history of knowledge and transnational history (introduction)

12.30 hrs: **Saul Dubow**, University of Sussex, UK: 250 years of colonial science in South Africa: An overview and a periodisation (introductory paper; chair and comment: **Patrick Harries**, University of Basel)

13.45 hrs: Session I: Mapping and exploring (part 1)

**Bruno Schelhaas**, Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, Leipzig, Germany: Africa made in Gotha: Cartography and Knowledge Transfer in the 19th Century  
**Guy Thomas**, University of Basel / Mission 21: Faith in Maps: Exploring Horizons of Missionary Cartography in West Africa

Comment: **Lorena Rizzo**, University of Zurich, Switzerland

15.00 hrs: Coffee break

15.30 hrs: **Jakob Vogel**, University of Cologne, Germany: Localizing and delocalizing European colonial knowledge (introductory paper; chair and comment: **Harald Fischer-Tiné**, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology/ETH Zurich, Switzerland)

16.45 hrs: Session II: Mapping and exploring (part 2)

**Franziska Suter**, University of Basel: John Forbes, a Naturalist in the Service of the Royal Navy

**Sandra Näf-Gloor**, University of Basel: Hinrich Lichtenstein (1780-1857): a naturalist's career

Comment: Patrick Harries, University of Basel

18.00 hrs: Reception and dinner (offered by the Swiss Association for the Studies of Science, Technology and Society (STS-CH))

### Friday, 11th of September 2009

9.00 hrs: **David N. Livingstone**, Queen's University, Belfast, UK : Mapping Darwinism: Towards a Geography of Darwinian Encounters (introductory paper, chair and comment: **Martin Lengwiler**)

10.15 hrs: Coffee break

10.45 hrs: Session III: Knowledge practices between colonial and local actors (part 1)

**Felicity Jensz**, University of Munster, Germany: Turning missionaries into scientists: Moravian missionaries' collecting practices and identity construction in the nineteenth century

**Giorgio Miescher**, Basler Afrika Bibliographien, University of Basel, **Anna Vögeli**, University of Basel: Rehabilitating the 'Ovambo cattle': Veterinary science and cattle breeding in early colonial Namibia

Comment: **Heinrich Hartmann**, Free University Berlin, Germany

12.30 hrs: Lunch break

14.00 hrs : **Nancy Jacobs**, Brown University, USA: Cosmopolitan Science, Respectability, and Defiance In a Segregated Life: Saul Sithole of the Transvaal Museum (introductory paper; chair and comment: **Ulrike Lindner**, Universität der Bundeswehr, Munich)

15.15 hrs: Session IV: Knowledge practices between colonial and local actors (part 2)

**Christiane Sibille**, University of Heidelberg, Germany/University of Basel: Folkmusic research in a transnational perspective. Music as part of the League of Nations' International Intellectual Co-operation

**Lukas Meier**, University of Basel, Switzerland: Between the study of nature and high modernism: Switzerland in Côte d'Ivoire 1920-1955

**Daniel Speich**, ETH Zurich (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology), Switzerland: Colonial Social Accounting and the possibility of economic comparison between the North and the South

Comments: **Barbara Lüthi**, University of Basel

17.00 hrs: Coffee break

17.00 hrs: Session V: Effect of decolonisation on knowledge institutions

**Marcel Dreier**, University of Basel, Switzerland: The scientification of rural public health interventions in eastern Africa: local practice and global debates 1920-1990

**Hines Mabika**, University of Basel, Switzerland: At the Heart of Transnational History and Medical Knowledge: Elim Hospital in South Africa

**Pascal Schmid**, University of Basel, Switzerland: A rural Hospital as a transnational hub for medical knowledge: The Agogo Hospital in Ghana

Comment: **Franziska Rüedi**, University of Oxford, UK

18.45 hrs: Concluding remarks (Patrick Harries, Martin Lengwiler)

19.00 Reception

## Speakers

### *Keynotes*

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**Jakob Vogel**, University of Cologne, Germany: Localizing and delocalizing European colonial knowledge

### *Sessions*

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### *Comments*

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Switzerland

**Heinrich Hartmann**, Free University, Berlin, Germany

**Ulrike Lindner**, Universität der Bundeswehr, Munich, Germany

**Barbara Lüthi**, University of Basel, Switzerland

**Lorena Rizzo**, University of Zurich, Switzerland

**Franziska Rüedi**, University of Oxford, UK

### **Organisers and sponsors**

The conference is organised by the Swiss Association for the Studies of Science, Technology and Society (STS-CH) and the Historical Institute of the University of Basel (Patrick Harries, professor for African history, and Martin Lengwiler, professor for European history). It is funded by the Swiss Academy of the Humanities and Social Sciences (SAGW), the Swiss Association for the Studies of Science, Technology and Society (STS-CH) and the Historical Institute of the University of Basel.



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