



Source: OpenArt (AI-generated image; prompt: online protest in an African setting through a mobile phone with drones in the background, black and white)

Connectivity and contestation - Africa in a networked world

Online

Saturday, 18 May 2024

10:00 am – 4 pm (UTC+2)

(GMT: 8 am – 4 pm; West Africa time: 9 am -5 pm; Eastern Africa Time 11 am – 7 pm)

Digital technologies have transformed and diversified the repertoires of contestation on the African continent. Today, the mobilization of people and resources, information and ideologies happens at the intersection of online and offline spaces. It cuts across continents, connects diasporas, and tends to amalgamate multiple concerns and interests. While earlier scholarship has tended to praise social media for their emancipatory and participatory potentials—especially in the face of autocratic regimes—today’s situation is exceedingly more complex. Social media and Internet-based technologies are used in such myriad ways—from warfare to information leaks and anti-government contestation to state propaganda—that a more nuanced and less normative approach is necessary to get a grasp of the intricate and ever-evolving relationships between power, technology and contestation on the African continent and beyond.

Agenda

10:00 – 10:30 am (UTC+2) (GMT: 8 am; WAT: 9 am; EAT: 11 am)

Welcome and introduction

Heike Wagner (Academy of the Diocese Rottenburg-Stuttgart)

Joschka Philipps (University of Bayreuth)

10:30 – 11:25 am (UTC+2) (GMT: 10:30 am; WAT: 11:30 am; EAT: 1:30 pm)

Exploring digital participatory warfare. The internationalisation of radical wars in the Sahel Region - Mirjam de Bruijn (Leiden University)

11:30 – 12:25 am (UTC+2) (GMT: 11:30 am; WAT: 12:30 am; EAT: 2:30 pm)

The afterlife of a digital utopia. Linking the African diaspora from mailing lists to social media - Mohomodou Houssouba (University of Basel)

12:30 am– 1:25 pm (UTC+2) (GMT: 12:30 am; WAT: 1:30 pm; EAT: 3:30 pm)

State secrets and social media leaks. On the politics of virtual unravelling

Joschka Philipps (University of Bayreuth)

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm **Break** (UTC+2) (GMT: 1:30 pm; WAT: 2:30 pm; EAT: 4:30 pm)

2:30 – 3:25 pm (UTC+2) (GMT: 2:30 pm; WAT: 3:30 pm; EAT: 5:30 pm)

Africa in the world: networked or taken hostage? Elísio Macamo (University of Basel)

3:30 – 4 pm (UTC+2) (GMT: 3:30 pm; WAT: 4:30 pm; EAT: 6:30 pm)

Round table

Mirjam de Bruijn * Mohomodou Houssouba * Joschka Philipps * Elísio Macamo

Further details and registration:

Participation in the conference is free of charge. To receive access to the conference (zoom-link) please register until 18 may 2024: https://www.akademie-rs.de/vakt_25803.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact Abir Rebmann: internationale-beziehungen@akademie-rs.de.