

PRESS INFORMATION

International Cluster Conference: “Africa*n Relations: Modalities Reflected”

*The second conference of the Cluster of Excellence at the University of Bayreuth will be held online from 14 to 17 July 2021. Titled “Africa*n Relations: Modalities Reflected”, the conference will feature four keynotes by prominent speakers and a number of panels, roundtables and discussions with scholars, artists and practitioners focusing on the overarching topic of ‘modalities of relations’.*

Bayreuth, 06.07.2021. Africa*n Relations: Modalities Reflected – the title of the second international Cluster conference – captures the thematic agenda of the four-day event. Modalities or modes of relating serve as a guide to the study of multiplicity, relationality and reflexivity – the Cluster’s core concepts. The angle of modalities is designed to support the systematization of research findings, but also to connect to a variety of theoretical concepts derived from the modes of relations the Cluster members encounter in their research.

The online conference will take place from 14 to 17 July 2021 and provide a forum to advance theoretical debates, fine-tune the respective concepts, mobilize related methodologies, and promote intellectual exchange within the Cluster and across its five locations – the University of Bayreuth and the African Cluster Centres at Moi University (Kenya), Rhodes University (South Africa), Joseph Ki-Zerbo University (Burkina Faso), and the University of Lagos (Nigeria) – as well as with scholars connected to the Cluster’s network and beyond.

During nine panels and four roundtables spread out over three days, more than seventy panelists from a wide range of academic disciplines will explore the topic of ‘modalities’ from various angles, shedding light on multiple ways and processes of relating. In line with the Cluster’s dynamic perspective on multiplicity, the panels and roundtables will highlight how modes of relating are subject to transformations over time, and the ways in which they vary across different contexts. Moreover, and in keeping with the Cluster’s focus on reflexivity and the aim of reconfiguring African studies, some of the conference events will interrogate power relationships and open up intersectional perspectives on the simultaneity of differences and hierarchies.

Apart from the concurrent panels and roundtables, the conference features plenary events with lectures by prominent speakers on each of the conference days:

14 July 2021: Keynote by Prof. Dr. Fatou Sow:

*Penser les femmes dans les études africaines: un regard critique/
Relating Women in African Studies: A Critical View*

The conference will start in the evening of 14 July with a keynote by Senegalese sociologist Fatou Sow, a veritable pioneer of African feminist studies, who will offer a critical analysis on the representation of women in African Studies.

Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence

Spokespersons:

Prof. Dr. Rüdiger Seesemann
Lehrstuhl Islamwissenschaft,
Universität Bayreuth
Tel.: +49 (0)921 / 55-3553
E-Mail: ruediger.seesemann@uni-bayreuth.de

Prof. Dr. Ute Fendler
Lehrstuhl für Romanische
Literaturwissenschaft und Komparatistik,
Universität Bayreuth
Tel.: +49 (0)921 / 55-3567
E-Mail: ute.fendler@uni-bayreuth.de

Press Contact:

Sabine Greiner
Wissenschaftsjournalistin
Universität Bayreuth
Tel.: +49 (0)921 / 55-4795
E-Mail: sabine.greiner@uni-bayreuth.de

www.africamultiple.uni-bayreuth.de

15 July 2021: Okwui Enwezor Distinguished Lecture by Prof. Dr. Chika Okeke-Agulu

The Postcolonial Museum

On 15 July, the conference will be the venue for the inaugural annual Okwui Enwezor Distinguished Lecture, a new lecture format jointly introduced by the Africa Multiple Cluster and Iwalewahaus, where a prominent artist, curator, or scholar will engage with the rethinking of African arts in a global perspective. The inaugural Okwui Enwezor lecturer will be the renowned art historian Chika Okeke-Agulu from Princeton University.

16 July 2021: Keynote by Prof. Dr. Boaventura de Sousa Santos

Decolonizing the University: a Proposal from the Perspectives of the Epistemologies of the South

The second keynote will be held on July 16 by Boaventura de Sousa Santos from the University of Coimbra (Portugal), one of the leading decolonial thinkers, who will explore the decolonization of the university from the perspective of the epistemologies of the Global South.

17 July 2021 Artist Lecture: Yvonne A. Owuor (Writer, Kenya)

Beauty, Thresholds and Boredom: A Case for Alt. Decoloniality?

On 17 July 2021, the Cluster conference will present an artist lecture by the Kenyan writer Yvonne Adhiambo Owuor, who will reflect on discourse about decoloniality in a post-pandemic world.

Further highlights of the conference are the “Conversation with Artists” taking place on Friday evening (16 July) as well as the final roundtable discussion featuring members of the Cluster’s Advisory Board that will conclude the event on 17 July.

14–17 July 2021

*Cluster Conference Africa*n Relations: Modalities Reflected*

For more information and to register please visit

www.africamultiple.uni-bayreuth.de

For further questions or contact to the interview partners please contact

Sabine Greiner

Wissenschaftsjournalistin

Universität Bayreuth

Tel.: +49 (0)921 / 55-4795

E-Mail: sabine.greiner@uni-bayreuth.de

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