

## The Biannual CRG African History Conference 2014

**Durham University, 5-7 July**

Version française ci-dessous

We are pleased to invite you to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Biannual AEGIS CRG African History Conference  
The conference will be hosted by the Durham University Department of History  
The conference organizers gratefully acknowledge the support of Durham University and the  
British Institute in Eastern Africa

**Conference Dates:** Saturday 5 to Monday 7 July 2014

### **Final programme** Detailed descriptions below

#### **Saturday 5 July:**

**Conference Venue:**

Holgate Suite, Grey College  
South Road  
Durham DH13LG

**15:00 Opening of the conference**

Words of Welcome

**Roundtable I (BIEA sponsored panel): Who's afraid of impact? Power, knowledge and the study of Africa**

**BIEA sponsored panel**

Convenor: Cherry Leonardi

Participants: Joost Fontein, Justin Willis

**16:45 Exciting lecture in African History: "States of Anxiety: Reflections on History and Nation in Modern Africa"**

Speaker: Richard Reid

**19:00 Drinks & Dinner**

#### **Sunday 6 July**

**Conference Venue:**

Holgate Suite, Grey College  
South Road  
Durham DH13LG

**09:00 Roundtable II: "The History of Marriage in Africa"**

Convenor: Shane Doyle

Participants: Felicitas Becker, Henri Médard, Clémence Pinaud, Marie Rodet

**10:30 Coffee break**

**11:00 Roundtable III: "New Sources / Sources Nouvelles?"**

Convenor: Adam Jones

Participants: Elara Bertho, Shane Doyle, Jan Jansen

**12:30 Lunch**

**14:00 Roundtable IV: "La nation est morte, vive la nation?"**

Convenors: Benoit Beucher, Etienne Smith

Participants: Armando Cutolo, Anna Pondopoulo

**15:30 Coffe break**

**16:00 Roundtable V: Borderlands and state formation in African history**

Convenor: Chris Vaughan

Participants: Vincent Hirribaren, Paul Nugent, Hannah Whittaker

**17:30 Drinks and Conference Dinner**

## **Monday 7 July**

### **Conference Venue:**

Penthouse Suite, Collingwood College

South Road

Durham DH13LG

**10:00 Roundtable VI: "Doing history in the aftermath of large-scale violence in Africa"**

Convenor: Lidwien Kapteijns

Participants: Baz Lecocq, Øystein Rolandsen

**11:30 Business meeting**

**12:30: closing remarks**

**13:00 End of conference**

The conference can host an additional 30 attendants apart from the speakers. Participants and attendants will be required to arrange and pay for their own travels. Accommodation has been reserved in Grey College. Two nights and meals (breakfast on 6th and 7th, lunch on the 6th, evening meals on 5th and 6th) will cost £110, if booked for and paid by 15 June 2014; later bookings will cost £125. An additional night (4<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup>) can be booked for an additional £40. Bookings and payment can be reserved on-line at <https://www.dur.ac.uk/conference.booking/details/?id=321>

**Please register before 15 June** at [durham2014crg@gmail.com](mailto:durham2014crg@gmail.com). Please state your full name and your affiliation, as well as the days of the conference you plan to attend if you do not intend to attend the whole event.



## **Conférence Bi-annuelle du CRG Histoire africaine 2014**

### **Université de Durham, 5-7 July**

Nous avons le plaisir de vous inviter à la 2<sup>nd</sup> Conférence bi-annuelle de l'AEGIS CRG Histoire africaine

La conférence se tiendra au département d'Histoire de l'Université de Durham  
Les organisateurs de la conférence tiennent à remercier l'Université de Durham et l'Institut Britannique de l'Afrique de l'Est de leur soutien (BIEA)

**Dates :** du Samedi 5 au Lundi 7 juillet 2014

### **Programme finale**

Résumé des communications ci-dessous

#### **Samedi 5 Juillet :**

**Lieu de Conférence:**

Holgate Suite, Grey College  
South Road  
Durham DH13LG

**15:00 Ouverture de la conférence**

Mots de bienvenue

**Table Ronde n°1 (avec le soutien du BIEA) : « Qui a peur des conséquences ? Pouvoir, savoir et étude de l'Afrique »**

**Panel soutenu par le BIEA** Organisateur

: Cherry Leonardi Intervenants : Joost

Fontein, Justin Willis

**16:45 Passionnante conférence d'Histoire africaine : « les Etats anxieux : réflexions sur l'Histoire et la Nation dans l'Afrique contemporaine »**

Intervenant : Richard Reid

**19:00 Collations et diner**

#### **Dimanche 6 Juillet**

**Lieu de Conférence:**

Holgate Suite, Grey College  
South Road  
Durham DH13LG

**09:00 Table ronde n°2 : « L'histoire du mariage en Afrique »**

Organisateur: Shane Doyle

Intervenants : Felicitas Becker, Henri Médart, Clémence Pinaud, Marie Rodet

**10:30 Pause café**

**11:00 Table ronde n°3 : « Sources Nouvelles / New Sources ? »**

Organisateur: Adam Jones

Intervenants : Elara Bertho, Shane Doyle, Jan Jansen

**12h30 Déjeuner**

**14:00 Table ronde n°4 : « La nation est morte, vive la nation ? »**

Organisateurs: Benoit Beucher, Etienne Smith

Intervenants : Armando Cutolo, Daouda Gary-Toukara, Anna Pondopoulo

**15:30 Pause café**

**16:00 Table ronde n°5 : « Régions frontalières et construction de l'Etat en Histoire de l'Afrique »**

Organisateur: Chris Vaughan

Intervenants : Vincent Hirribaren, Paul Nugent, Hannah Whittaker

**17h30 Collation et diner**

## **Lundi 7 Juillet**

**Lieu de Conférence:**

Penthouse Suite, Collingwood College

South Road

Durham DH13LG

**10:00 Table ronde n°6 : « Faire de l'histoire après une situation de violence en Afrique »**

Président : Lidwien Kapteijns

Intervenants : Baz Lecocq, Øystein Rolandsen

**11:30 Réunion de travail**

**12:30 conclusions**

**13:00 Fin de la conférence**

La conférence peut accueillir 30 participants supplémentaires en plus des intervenants. Les intervenants et participants devront prendre en charge leur transport. Nous avons réservé des hébergements au Grey College. Le prix pour deux nuits d'hébergement, repas compris (petit-déjeuner du 6 et 7 juillet, déjeuner du 6 juillet, diner du 5 et du 6 juillet) est de 110£ jusqu'au 15 juin 2014 et 125£ par la suite. Une nuit supplémentaire (le 4 ou 7 juillet) est possible en payant un supplément de 40£.

Les réservations et le paiement peuvent être effectués en ligne à l'adresse suivante :

<https://www.dur.ac.uk/conference.booking/details/?id=321>

**Veillez vous inscrire avant le 15 juin** à [durham2014crg@gmail.com](mailto:durham2014crg@gmail.com). Remplissez vos nom et prénom(s) complet ainsi que votre affiliation, suivie des dates auxquelles vous souhaitez participer si vous ne participez pas à la conférence entière.

## **Roundtable I: Who's afraid of impact? Power, knowledge and the study of Africa (BIEA sponsored panel)**

For academics based in the UK, the term 'impact' has acquired a very precise significance in the last few years. Impact is how our research 'affects policy, behaviour, or attitudes outside the academy'; and it means money. The Research Excellence Framework – which will decide the research funding, and status, of university departments across the UK – will include an assessment of impact in its decisions. UK-based historians have been working hard to provide evidence of their impact; colleagues elsewhere in Europe face the same challenge.

This apparatus of measurement is novel, as is the sometimes risible discursive culture which has developed around it. Yet the intellectual and ethical questions which it raises are neither new nor ephemeral. For whom are we researching, and writing? How far are we compelled and constrained by the architecture and language of funding? This panel, involving three participants will take the opportunity offered by 'impact' to initiate discussion about the purpose of the study of the African past, and present, the audiences for whom we write, and the constituencies which we serve; and it will particularly encourage discussion of the politics and challenges of writing about Africa, in Europe.

Convenor: Cherry Leonardi

Participants: Joost Fontein, Justin Willis

## **Roundtable II: "The History of Marriage in Africa"**

Current discourse around homosexuality in Africa often stresses the threat posed by same-sex relationships to the purity and traditional values of African marriage. Yet studies of marriage in Africa demonstrate contemporary diversity and varying strands of historical evolution. This roundtable will attempt to illustrate the complexity of the story of marriage from the nineteenth century to the present day. It will consider the changing context within which marital forms have developed: for example, the impact of rising and then decreasing marital fertility; the increasing social acceptability of reproduction outside marriage; and evolving patterns of family formation and structure, including the adaptation of matrilineal kinship systems, narrower family relationships in urban and peri-urban settings, the growing prominence of female-headed households, and the partial displacement of polygamous with newer forms of concurrency. It will also examine how marriage has served as an arena within which people have argued about gender relations, clanship, and the relationship between ethnicity, nationalism and the state.

The five papers which will constitute this roundtable will address various aspects of these broad themes. Henri Médard will consider royal marriage and the politics of incest in pre-colonial Buganda. Felicitas Becker will examine the history of marriage between individuals belonging to different faiths, and how this affected both the marital institution and religion over the course of the twentieth century in eastern Tanzania. Marie Rodet will discuss the crucial role played by female family members, especially mothers and aunts, in marriage negotiations, and daughters' support in marital strategies in early twentieth-century French Sudan, and how this female agency was eroded by the colonial codification of customary law. Shane Doyle will analyse debates around extramarital reproduction in Tanzania and Uganda. Finally, Clémence Pinaud will examine the matrimonial strategies of post-independence Sudanese warlords.

Convenor: Shane Doyle

Participants: Felicitas Becker, Henri Médard, Clémence Pinaud, Marie Rodet

## **Roundtable III : "New Sources / Sources Nouvelles?"**

Are there any sources for the precolonial and colonial past still left for Africanist historians to discover? For over 60 years we have scraped the colonial and other records in the relevant National Archives, be they in former colonies or in the relevant metropolis. More adventurous scholars have dug into mission archives, business archives, personnel files, medical records and so on. Guides to early published material, such as that of John Fage and Stanley Alpern for Western Africa, have drawn attention to "neglected" publications. With the help of the computer and the internet the finding aids to archival sources have improved enormously. The "Endangered Archives" project has in the past decade made available to scholars considerable bodies of source material located in

Africa outside the central archives. In Europe much material that was originally in private hands has now been deposited within the public domain. Meanwhile the questions asked by historians have shifted, giving new prominence to sources whose relevance was previously considered marginal. The journal "History in Africa" has played an important role in discussing both published and archival sources, together with the problems they raise.

Nevertheless, looking at recent publications, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that increasingly we are regurgitating the same material as our predecessors. The excitement that was felt in the 1960s about "virgin territories" just waiting to be invaded has died down. The majority of doctoral theses produced nowadays rely mainly on the same kinds of source material – and sometimes precisely the same sources - as those written thirty years ago.

The roundtable will take stock of how far we have come, consider to what extent we can still hope to uncover significantly new sources (or new material in previously known sources) and ask how these may help to offset some of the biases inherent in better-known sources.

Convenor: Adam Jones

Participants: Adam Jones, Elara Bertho, Jan Jansen, Shane Doyle

#### **Roundtable IV: "La nation est morte, vive la nation?"**

Au tout début des années 1980, l'éminent africaniste Yves Person annonçait la mort de l'État-nation. Selon lui, celui-ci se heurtait « presque partout à travers le monde, à la revendication des minorités qui n'acceptaient plus de voir sacrifier leurs convivialités et leurs tissus humains à une structure abstraite qui ne leur offrait rien en retour ». Plus près de nous, Arjun Appadurai, dans un essai d'anthropologie de la mondialisation culturelle, n'avait plus aucun doute sur l'obsolescence des nations à l'échelle mondiale. Dès lors, celles-ci ne constituaient plus un objet d'étude prometteur, à la différence des « transnations » déterritorialisées.

L'actualité du continent semble démentir ces propos. Force est de constater que les processus de mondialisation culturelle, religieuse, économique ou politique sont loin d'avoir pris la forme de fossoyeurs des territoires comme le prophétisait Bertrand Badie, ainsi que des identités locales et nationales. Par conséquent, notre table-ronde s'intéressera aux phénomènes de re-territorialisation et de recomposition des référents identitaires régionaux et nationaux dont on se demandera s'ils sont les effets paradoxaux de la mondialisation, ou, au contraire, la preuve de la résilience des mémoires, histoires et identités constituées et entretenues dans la durée.

De fait, nous proposons quatre pistes de réflexion qui ne sont pas exhaustives :

- est-il possible de repenser la nation en Afrique sur la longue durée?
- peut-on établir un continuum entre l'ethnie et la nation comme le suggère Anthony D. Smith?
- dans quelle mesure les mémoires, mythes et histoires sont-ils réactivés, réinventés ou instrumentalisés pour donner corps à l'imagination des communautés nationales ou pour les contester?
- quelles sont les formes de mobilisation politique qui en découlent?
- quelles en sont les conséquences sur la gouvernance contemporaine des États?

Convenors: Benoit Beucher, Etienne Smith

Participants: Armando Cutolo, Anna Pondopoulo

#### **Roundtable V: "Borderlands and state formation in African history"**

The study of borderlands has become a particularly prominent and productive area of research within African studies in recent years. Much of this work has focused on the complexity of regulatory authority in spaces that are remote from the centres of state authority. Rather than reproducing state-centric perspectives on borderlands as 'ungoverned peripheries', it is frequently argued that borderlands themselves are in fact central to understanding processes of state formation. Borderlands often function as zones of political and regulatory creativity: under-resourced state actors negotiate their authority with a range of local non-state actors, resulting in the creation of complex forms of borderland governance which often mix state and local regulatory orders. These practices and negotiated arrangements, it is claimed, have the potential to transform even the centre of the state itself. At the same time, however, the regulatory ambiguity of borderlands also makes the state's claim to sovereignty in such regions uncertain and contestable, and the state therefore also often uses considerable violence in its efforts to achieve control in these regions. Borderlands,

therefore, exhibit particularly clearly the interactive processes of violence and negotiation which are characteristic of state formation in Africa.

This work has been extremely productive, but much of it has been produced by political anthropologists, and has not necessarily engaged the deeper histories of border regions. There are, of course, exceptions to this, and the more historical work has done much to show that the regulatory complexity and the violence of state power in borderlands have deeper genealogies and roots than simply being the product of contemporary political crises. This work has also challenged another, older idea: that nation-state boundaries in Africa were simply artificial impositions of colonial powers with no precedent in pre-colonial Africa. Instead, scholarship has shown that in areas of the continent where pre-colonial states emerged, boundaries that divided the sovereignty of these states were not altogether unknown (even if they were imagined in rather different ways to the colonial boundaries that followed), and that pre-colonial frontier zones in such regions certainly bequeathed a legacy of violence and political creativity that persists to the present day.

This round table reflects on the role of historians in African borderland studies, in thinking about change and continuities across time. To what extent are the regulatory regimes of contemporary borderlands rooted in deeper colonial and pre-colonial histories? How significant was, and in what respects lie the significance of colonial partition in areas characterised by either relatively centralised or relatively decentralised forms of political authority in the pre-colonial period? How far did the meaning of borders change in the transition from colonial rule to independence and the apparent creation of the nation-state? What might historians distinctively contribute to debates about African borderlands? And how might the study of borderlands shape historical research agendas?

Convenor: Chris Vaughan

Participants: Vincent Hirribaren, Paul Nugent, Hannah Whittaker

## **Roundtable VI: "Doing history in the aftermath of large-scale violence in Africa"**

Many historians of Africa have documented, analyzed, contextualized, and represented recent episodes of large-scale violence in Africa. In this process they have confronted aspects of the epistemology of 'doing history' about the subject of violence (e.g., whether the study of violence requires a special epistemology; how historians conceptualize the past, the relationships between history, memory, and forgetting, and do forth) and have reflected on the impact historical inquiry may have on post-conflict social realities in the areas of study, including perhaps social reconstruction and moral repair.

However, historians are neither the only nor the most influential interpreters and disseminators of these histories of conflict. History is being produced and put to a wide range of political and judicial (ab)uses by truth and reconciliation commissions, criminal courts and, for that matter, by those who were actors in the large-scale conflicts at issue (for example, as perpetrators, beneficiaries, bystanders and victims). These differing interest groups find each other in a growing specialized field of professional 'peace and reconciliation' diplomacy, financed by various international interest groups, such as the EU and AU.

In a recent essay in the London Review of Books entitled "The Logic of Nuremberg" (<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v35/n21/mahmood-mamdani/the-logic-of-nuremberg>), Mahmood Mamdani reflects on the South African context and contrasts Nuremberg's 'victors' justice' with 'survivors' justice', which he takes "in the broadest sense to include (...): yesterday's victims, yesterday's perpetrators and yesterday's beneficiaries-cum-bystanders." The survivor narratives he advocates must be "less fixated on perpetrators and particular atrocities such as Boipatong or Srebrenica and more alert to the continuous cycles of violence from which communities can eventually emerge."

In itself the growing 'peace and reconciliation industry' has become a subject of political science. Both actors and analysts tend to see professional historians as only marginally relevant to the process. It seems, bluntly stated, that historians lose ground in a field they have much to contribute. Confronted with such a warning against writing particular histories of conflict as articulated by Mamdani or with an insistence on knowing as little as possible about the past to ensure 'objectivity' (as insisted on by the ICTR, according to Thierry Cruvellier), how do historians of Africa think about and do history.

Convenor: Lidwien Kapteijns

Participants: Baz Lecocq, Øystein Rolandsen