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VII. UPCOMING EVENTS

CALPIU'12: *Higher education across borders: Transcultural interaction and linguistic diversity*, 1–4 April 2012, Roskilde University, Roskilde, Denmark

The theme of the CALPIU'12 conference is the consequences of transnational student and staff mobility. Student and staff mobility are vital for both cultural and linguistic accommodation and learning processes. We are witnessing a huge increase in learning of languages to be used as *lingua francas* by academic teachers and students, not only English as “the language of globalization”. However, forces of “localization” are manifested at every university trying to adopt internationalization strategies, the tension between the global and the local – uniformity and diversification – creating a multidimensional space for new kinds of cultural and linguistic hybridity to flourish in. There is a new open-mindedness regarding the roles and identities of self and others, leading to new patterns of linguistic/interactive, educational and social practices. The conference aims to further the theoretical understanding of these processes, those of active and receptive multilingualism as well as language alternation in interaction.

For more information see: <http://calpiu12.ruc.dk/calpiu12/about/contact>

African Borderlands Research Network Annual Conference within the Centre of African Studies of the University of Edinburgh *African Borderlands – Regional Integration from Above and Below*, 6–9 June 2012, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Ideas to foster cross-continental cooperation as a counter-measure to redress the balkanization of Africa during the colonial period have been around for decades and were one of the key motivations behind the creation of the Organization of African Unity. Pan-Africanism and other grand ideas of continental unity have arguably made little difference to the lives of ordinary Africans over the years, while their leadership settled into and often became entrenched in the relative comfort zones provided by recognized territorial sovereignty. Instead, more modest and often hands-on projects by Regional Economic Communities (RECs) like SADC, ECOWAS and EAC have in recent years forged ahead with their own protocols. With the official and highly marketable purpose to foster more liberal movement of people, goods and finances, they have brokered significant investments in infrastructure and policy reforms. Also the African Union treats regional integration initiatives as an important step on the route towards continental unity. It sees itself as playing a bridging role between the RECs, whose memberships overlap in many cases. Despite these ground-breaking developments, two critiques of the integration agenda have come to the fore. The first argues that it is embedded in a neo-liberal project with overwhelming emphasis on the promotion of capital investment and global

commercial flows. This bias is reflected in the sub-contracting of substantial border functions to private companies and the creation of “frictionless” cross-border “transport corridors” managed by public–private joint ventures. Borderlands are often constructed as peripheral spaces through which these flows take place, while their inhabitants and institutions are not consulted or play an inactive role in their own right.

The second and closely related critique argues that the integration agenda is typically conceived of and acted upon, in a top-down manner by national governments, RECs and the AU itself and with extensive intellectual and financial input from agencies and consultants in aid donor countries. Local initiatives and existing, sometimes centuryold regional socio-political networks which transcend national boundaries are seldomly taken into account and may even be frowned upon where they are perceived to infringe upon national sovereignty and big business interests.

The overall question this conference will address is therefore: What evidence emerges from research and policy-making experience in African borderlands, past and present, of regional integration in Africa as something other than a top-down and externally driven process?

For more information see: <http://www.aborne.org/aborne-science-meetings.html>

Interdisciplinary workshop *Social Media and Cross-border Cultural Transmissions: Technologies, Policies, Industries*, 21–22 June 2012, National University of Singapore, Singapore

This interdisciplinary workshop takes a transcultural approach to exploring newly emerging online practices of cultural transmission. Culture industries across Asia have been dynamically transformed during the past decades and are significantly affected by multilayered economic, socio-political and technological turbulence occurring on both global and domestic levels. This workshop explores how social media, online consumer practices and transcultural pop flows have facilitated the emergence and development of new global cultural distribution avenues and transformed the cultural industry landscape and how Asia is at the centre of this newly emerging global cultural economy.

The primary intention of the workshop is to examine both positive and negative connotations of the impact of Web 2.0 technologies on cross-border cultural transmission and the transformation of cultural industries in Asia. This workshop aims to explore the following questions:

How have contemporary cultural flows formed by particular combinations of globalisation dynamics and technological innovations and how and why has Asia become the emerging hub of such a phenomenon? Who is at the centre of these changed cultural distribution dynamics and how do they combine and appropriate old and new modes of cultural distribution? To what extent is such a newly emerging mode of cultural distribution still a tool employed by powerful groups (e.g. corporate media and state governments) attempting to support their control and domination of pop consumer groups? In what ways has web user participation, particularly online youth activities on social networking sites, shifted the mode of “transcultural

flows” in the global cultural market environment? How have such shifts demonstrated the expansion of the dynamics of global cultural flows, considering they were once predominantly centred on the Euro-American axis? How have changes in these paradigms affected the cultural industries in Asia and elsewhere in the context of transformations in industry structure, technology, market development and policy-making?

For more information see: http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/events_category-details.asp?categoryid=6&eventid=1252

3rd Conference of the Asian Borderlands Research Network *Connections, corridors and communities*, 12–15 October 2012, Centre for Southwest Borderland Ethnic Minority Studies, Yunnan University, Kunming, China

Extensive land and maritime networks have crisscrossed Asia for centuries, providing the basis for encounters between diverse ethnic, linguistic, economic, religious and political groups. Today, developments such as new infrastructural projects, an increase in media access and renewed interest in shaping cross-border cultural identities serve to both underscore these long-standing linkages and create new forms of connections across Asia. During the 3rd Asian Borderlands Research Conference in Kunming, we invite submissions that address continuities and ruptures along the routes and borders in Asia, broadly related to the theme “Connections, Corridors and Communities”.

Connections: How are Asian borderlands made more (or less) visible through the study of cross-border connections? In what ways does the idea of the “borderland” remain resilient throughout political and historical ruptures? What are the characteristics of various kinds of connections that are being created (as well as cut off) in Asian borderlands?

Corridors: Are networks and paths throughout Asian borderlands being forged, reopened, diverted, or closed and what are the effects of such processes? Can one conceive of “corridors” in relation to maritime or island borderlands, information technology networks, or bodily borders in Asia?

Communities: What constitutes a “community” or “communities” in and across Asian borderlands and how might these be contingent upon other factors, such as politics, environmental issues and history? What are some of the barriers and restrictions to the creation of communities in the context of Asian borderlands? In what ways is a community defined by the state, by organizations and/or by local individuals?

Since one of the main goals of this conference is to spur collaboration and conversation across diverse fields in the hope of building up a more nuanced picture of the intersections and relationships across Asian borderlands, submissions are invited from scholars, writers, policy studies researchers, artists, filmmakers, activists, the media and others from a wide variety of disciplinary backgrounds.

For more information see: <http://asianborderlands.net/call-papers-0>

International conference *Transculturation and Aesthetics*, 31 August – 2 September 2012, University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway

To mark the close of the three-year project on Literary Transculturation an international conference open to all interested will be held at the University of Bergen. This conference aims to bring together the concerns previously explored in The Nordic Network for Literary Transculturation Studies research seminars/symposia, opening them up to a wider conceptualization of transculturalism. The meaning of the transcultural and the aesthetic expression of this is the site of much contemporary thinking in the wake of postcolonialism. Issues of borders and border-crossings are of central interest, be geographical, epistemological, cultural, personal, temporal or symbolic. The notion of writing history “to reconstruct on entirely new terms” (Attwell) is fraught with theoretical perplexities. This is very much what underlies theories of globalization processes and of course it is not coincidental that precisely postcolonial theories of culture and identity politics have so strongly influenced how we understand our own current and interconnected realities. This interconnectedness of routes/roots and cultures is not a phenomenon “elsewhere”; it increasingly circumscribes and describes the realities and lives lived in our own contemporary societies, evident in the process of migration, border crossings and responses to an integrated Europe.

The literary expression of this is a key element in understanding this world, not least since literary transculturation is linked to other cultural phenomena from folklore to film, further emphasizing the need for creating and developing interdisciplinary approaches. The emphasis on the simultaneity of multiple sites, heterogeneity and heterochronos is important in helping to create an understanding of the contemporary cultural and social aspects of everyday life.

For more information see: <http://www.uib.no/rg/nnlts/projects/conference-transculturation-and-aesthetics>

Ancient Borderlands International Graduate Student Conference *Conflict, Consensus and the Crossing of Boundaries in the Premodern World*, 13–15 April 2012, Santa Barbara, California, United States

The Ancient Borderlands Research Focus Group at the University of California, Santa Barbara invites graduate scholars of any discipline to submit abstracts for papers addressing the question of ancient borderlands. Borderlands, broadly defined, are spaces where disparate ethnicities, religions, political systems, linguistic traditions or other ways of life come into close contact and are forced, through constant interaction, to define, maintain or change their own identities. Such instances of culture contact can be violent or peaceful and can revolve around either physical borders or mental categories of difference. The Ancient Borderlands Graduate Conference seeks to apply borderlands theories to such zones of interaction in the ancient world. As the study of borderlands by its very nature fosters an interdisciplinary approach, the conference also aims to include a wide variety of perspectives and specialties. With this in mind we encourage, but do not require, papers that engage with the ideas and themes raised by current borderland scholars such as Frederick Barth, Daniel Boyarin, Bradley Parker, Gloria Anzaldúa, Thomas Sizgorich and James Brooks.

For more information see: <http://www.thewha.org>