

SUMMER INSTITUTE 'BORDERS, BORDERTHINKING, BORDERLANDS'

UNIVERSITÄT BREMEN, MAY 15-26, 2015

Call for Applications

FACULTY: PROF. WALTER MIGNOLO (DUKE UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR GLOBAL STUDIES AND HUMANITIES); PROF. JULIANE HAMMER (UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL); PROF. SABINE BROECK, PROF. GISELA FEBEL, PROF. ELISABETH AREND, DR. CARSTEN JUNKER, SEBASTIAN WEIER (UNIVERSITY OF BREMEN)

The moral foundations and the political crisis of the contemporary world order have of late become an important topic in various disciplines of the humanities and social sciences. While the current problems of the international system led many scholars to examine the normative values of the inter-state system and global governance, the problems created by rigid borders, their formation and their challengers have been overlooked. Often, civilizational borders, racial borders or borders of other kinds are taken as facts. The Summer Institute 'Borders, Borderthinking, Borderlands' will contest this approach and propose a critical epistemology of borders, focusing on border making, border contestation and new border imaginations. It will propose a re-evaluation of the state of humanities in light of the challenge anti-colonial struggles and decolonization processes have and still are posing to 'borders'. Most prominent explanations of the contemporary crisis miss the complexity and ambivalence of a global experience that cannot be divided into civilizational, national and religious containers.

The Summer Institute will analyze many of the ongoing problems of global community, from economic disparity to political disempowerment and legitimacy crisis, with a focused attention to issues of border construction and deconstruction over the centuries since the European "discovery" of the so-called "New World" and the conquista, since 1492, of what became "Latin" America in the second half of the nineteenth century. The terms 'Borders, Borderthinking, Borderlands' will be understood as the recognition of conflict lines for a radical revision of colonial modernity emanating from decentered locations. The Summer Institute will approach these terms in their immediate political and physical sense, but also as tropes of thinking. Aiming to further the understanding of the mechanisms of inner and outer decolonization, as well as western modernity's resistance to this decolonization, it will examine post-, anti- and decolonial constellations, e.g. Black Diaspora or transculturalism and trajectories influenced by Negritude, Black Consciousness, to name a few.

The goal of the Summer Institute is to enable its participants to generate a better understanding of contemporary global conflicts and developments, and to offer them starting points for further progress in their own research. It will consist of a mixture of interactive work in small groups focusing on

projects proposed by the participants and a series of keynote lectures. The Summer Institute will engage its participants in a critical self-reflection on their own position, participation and agency within the matrix of power and knowledge-production of (neo-; sub-)coloniality, post-, anti-, and decolonisation, as well as the influence, role and potential of this position for and within their own work. In order to achieve this, the Summer Institute will demand participants to pro-actively integrate their own research into the Institute's work-processes. Through this, a space for crosscutting, intersectional and trans-disciplinary work and exchange between the participants, their work and the Institute personnel will be created. Decoloniality will be offered as an option, as one among different possible methodologies to think through borders, borderlands and borderthinking, to delink knowledge from western hegemony and to rethink the conjunction of ethics and epistemics always present in academic work.

The Summer Institute 'Borders, Borderthinking, Borderlands' will be held at the University of Bremen (Germany) from May 15-26, 2015. Organized in cooperation between the Bremen Black Knowledges Research Group, the Bremen Institute for Postcolonial and Transcultural Studies, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University (Center for Global Studies and the Humanities), this will be the first session in a series of yearly Summer Institutes. The Summer Institute will not hand out credit points or offer other forms of academic certification. Applicants must be grad-students and submit a short CV as well as an exposé of the project they wish to work upon during the Summer Institute (max. 1.500 signs including space characters). Tuition fees for the Summer Institute will be 335 Euro per participant. The Summer Institute has applied for academic exchange funding and may have funds available to offer travel, accommodation and tuition stipends to successful applications from outside Germany. Applications must be send by email to sebastian.weier@uni-bremen.de by December 20th, 2014. For an 'interventionist' reading list and further information, or in case of other questions, please write to: sebastian.weier@uni-bremen.de