

**Workshop Call for Papers:  
“New Approaches to Mobility, Transport, and Infrastructure in Africa”**

Venue: University of Ghana, Legon

Dates: 26-29 September 2022

Organisers: Point Sud and INTRA-International Network on Transport Research in Africa

**Aims and Goals**

The intellectual goal of this international workshop is to further new approaches to mobility, transport, and infrastructure in Africa by bringing the “New Mobilities Paradigm”, the “Infrastructural Turn”, as well as the “Spatial Turn” in connection to African studies.

The organizational goal is to formalize INTRA: The International Network on Transport Research in Africa, a network of scholars engaging with mobility, transport and infrastructure in African studies. The workshop will serve as a kick-off event for this network.

**Key Concepts and questions**

While questions of global connectivity and mobility have become mainstream in the social sciences, the debate has become somewhat disconnected from their material realities. Recently, researchers have begun to re-center the role of material infrastructures in African societies, including transport infrastructures. This renewed academic interest in infrastructure and mobilities coincides with a financial and political engagement of governments in Africa as elsewhere in the construction and upkeep of infrastructure, as well as discussions about the geostrategic use and ecological impact of transport infrastructures. The workshop will focus on the conceptual and theoretical aspects of this renewed interest in infrastructure and mobility in Africa via empirically grounded research. We propose to do so by bringing the “New Mobilities Paradigm”, the “Infrastructural Turn”, as well as the “Spatial Turn” in connection to African studies. Whereas the Infrastructural Turn is mainly concerned with the distinctive logics of technologies and their social, cultural and political use, the New Mobilities Paradigm—while taking its cue from the Spatial Turn—centers mobility as the very basis of a fundamentally relational human existence. Within these paradigms socially constructed space still keeps its physicality and materiality. How can we bring the Spatial Turn, the New Mobilities Paradigm, and the Infrastructural Turn in conversation with each other, while situating African infrastructure and transport networks in a global context? What are the specific conceptual questions that arise out of the application of these larger theoretical frameworks to African societies? Which analytical tools should we employ, and what, in turn, can the analysis of African contexts contribute to the development of such tools? How can we conceptualise the interdependency of the social, the economic and the technical in infrastructure? How do the politics of development impact transport and its infrastructure? How can such overarching concepts as ecology, gender, race, class, work, the colonial and the neocolonial be fruitfully worked in? We welcome empirically-based but theoretically oriented contributions addressing these and related topics and questions from all social science and humanities perspectives.

**Modalities**

The workshop will combine invited participants with candidates selected via this call, based on the quality of the proposal and CV. Preference will be given to junior female scholars based in African institutions. All costs of participation will be covered, excluding possible Corona-related costs (vaccinations, tests, etc.) and costs incurred for visa applications.

Please send an abstract of your paper (max. 300 words), and a one-page CV (including a maximum of 5 relevant publications) indicating your institutional affiliation, rank, and email address to: [Baz.Lecocq@hu-berlin.de](mailto:Baz.Lecocq@hu-berlin.de) Please start your subject header with: ‘CFP Workshop Mobility’

**The closing date for this Call is: 13 March 2022. No proposals will be accepted after this date.**