

Call for paper / Call for application

for an international and interdisciplinary Summer School “Point Sud Annual Institute” (PSAI) on

Entangled medical fields: transformation of meaning, knowledge and practice

to be held at the University Omar Bongo in Libreville, Gabon, from July 17 to 26, 2007

jointly organized as a German-French-African cooperation Point Sud (Bamako, Mali), University of Frankfurt (Germany); University of Nantes (France) and University of Omar Bongo (Libreville, Gabon)

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Society and health is undisputedly a top priority, not only in Africa but also in Europe. The PSAI in Libreville titled **Entangled medical fields: transformation of meaning, knowledge and practice** will be the first of three planned summer schools or PSAIs in Africa dedicated to the interdisciplinary key topic „**Society and Health**”. Although focusing on African contexts these thematical issues are of high global significance and prevailing in other parts of the world, too. Thus we would very much appreciate papers addressing an African point of view on European or other contexts or papers (eventually held by two co-presentators) effecting a profound comparing perspective between African and European or Asian, Latin American and Oceanian countries and contexts. Therefore, we particularly encourage scholars with a research focus on Latin American, Asian or Oceanian regions to apply for participation, too. School languages will be English and French.

In a unique way the PSAI merges the character of a conference and a school, to bring together junior and senior researchers and practitioners from all continents for a fruitful exchange of ideas relating to “Society and Health” at the interfaces between different disciplines and research traditions. Up to 14 experts and 25 PhD candidates or postdoctoral researchers will be funded to actively participate. Two plenary sessions consisting of experts` presentation will be held each morning, while in the afternoon four workshops will take place, where the doctoral candidates will present their papers (30 minutes presentation, 30 minutes discussion). Each expert will individually mentor two participating doctoral or post-doctoral scholars to enhance their careers and the formation of international networks. Two particularly promising candidates of each school will be invited to stay for three months at one of the participating research institution. Moreover, Nantes will award up to three Amadou Hampaté Bá scholarships (9.000 Euro each) per summer school to post-docs.

PSAI I: Entangled medical fields: transformation of meaning, knowledge and practice

In Africa, as elsewhere, medical propositions of practices and frames of references for explanation are characterized through a heterogeneous and competing diversity including “traditional”, “prophetic” and “complementary” medicine and biomedicine. These different realms of practice are continuously subjected to transformation and mutual permeation, influenced by religious groups, economics, national and transnational policies. Forms and contents, ways and varieties of these complex processes of entanglement as well as trends of delineation and exclusion will be taken center stage in this PSAI in Libreville, Gabon. To focus on specific issues from different actors` perspectives the summerschool is divided in interconnected workshops:

Workshop 1 Pragmatic handling of ill health in everyday life

Historical dimensions and recent transformations of medical knowledge and practice are taken center stage, in particular from patients` and public`s perspectives. In general we seek papers focusing on concerning biomedical and/or “local” and religious practices as well as resulting impacts on bodily, religious, social, moral and political dimensions of health and healing. Moreover we seek papers which address patients` and public`s perception of biomedical technologies and the role of elites referring to modernist objectives versus neo-traditional ones. In addition we papers exploring the perception and application of medical drugs (e.g. herbal, chemical) from users` perspectives as well as perceived benefits and risks are highly welcome.

Workshop 2 Health practices of “local” experts

The second workshop is devoted to `local` healing experts within `traditional` medicine, prophetic churches or religious associations. Here we seek papers focusing on different frames of reference merging in experts prac-

tices and its impacts on healing practices referring to immaterial and material realms of healing (e.g. drugs, empowered objects, social, ritual spiritual domains). In this context we also appreciate papers focusing on the negotiation of experts' legitimization and on the role of experts' associations. In addition, papers addressing historical changes in positioning of non-biomedical experts within different legal frameworks are of high interest as well as papers focusing on problems of intellectual property rights and biopiracy.

Workshop 3 Plurality within complementary domains of medicine in Africa

To grasp complementary practices and cooperations in health care we seek papers on impacts of historical or legal changes concerning the positioning of non-biomedical and biomedical experts within state health systems. In particular welcome are papers from various disciplines which emphasize the impacts of integration policies promoted by the WHO and impacts of neo-liberal healthcare reforms together with impacts of commodification and economization of health care on practitioners. Within this field we are interested in the role of various experts' associations (hunters, traditional practitioners) concerning marginalization or exclusion of specific health experts. Moreover, papers focusing on appropriation of homeopathy, Asian medical traditions and the import and export of experts are sought. As cooperations between biomedicine, complementary and local medicine are often required, we seek papers on how to study innovatively efficacy of treatments of non-biomedical domains while paying close attention on their specific modes of healing.

Workshop 4 Biomedical practice: disparities between realities and ideals

With an emphasis on consequences for health care system, education and provision in this workshop we seek papers on historical dimensions of biomedical interventions (e.g. colonial, postcolonial, recent healthcare reforms, public health campaigns) and its differences in various parts of Africa. Papers from different disciplines' perspectives on processes aimed on improving quality of healthcare, on benefits and problems of educational campaigns are welcome. Furtheron we seek papers either addressing the issue of authority and hierarchy within biomedical institutions or disparities of practice between different biomedical professionals. In particular, papers on hospital ethnography and the appropriation of biomedical knowledge and practice as well as papers focusing on impacts of biomedical experts' affiliation with various religious groups are invited to apply. *[please click here for more details on the workshops content]*

Sought applicants

We explicitly invite PhD students and postdoctoral researcher from different disciplines within the Humanities and Social Sciences (*anthropology, sociology, education, geography, history, law, literary studies, medicine, pharmacy, political studies, religious studies*) to apply for funded participation. An interdisciplinary and intercontinental Academic Advisory Board will be responsible for the selection of the participants, up to two thirds of who will be from Africa and one third from other continents. Preference will be given to female African candidates over male candidates if they are equally qualified. For the selected participants the Volkswagen Foundation of Germany will take over travel costs, accommodation and meals (board and lodging). Practitioners (like doctors, nurses, administrators, midwives, physiotherapists) and developmental experts from the field of healthcare are strongly invited to participate but cannot apply for funding.

Modes of application

Only digital application can be considered. For to be considered in the selection process we need

1. CV, including publications
2. letter of application with application for one specific workshop (max. 2 pages, 12 point wording)
4. short account of current research (no longer than 2 pages, 12 point wording)
5. reference letter by supervisor concerning progress of the applicant's research and applicant's personal and academic qualities (no longer than 2 pages, 12 point wording)
6. The last point (5.) does not apply to post-doctoral researchers
7. All applications can be submitted either in English or French.

Please send all the required documents till the 31 March 2007 by mail to PSAI-Libreville@ziaf.de

Your dossier will be reviewed by an international jury from Germany, France and Gabon till the **20 April 2007**.