



RECONSIDERING AFRICAN INTEGRATION IN A FRAGMENTED AGE

Johannesburg, South Africa | 2–6 December 2013

CALL FOR PAPERS

The workshop

The International Migration Institute (IMI-Oxford University), the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS-Wits University, Johannesburg), and the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity (MPIMMG, Göttingen) invite proposals for a workshop and publication project on the mechanisms, ethics and politics of migrant integration in sub-Saharan Africa.

This workshop arises from a recognition that newly arrived migrants and immigrants across the continent typically occupy worlds weakly structured by laws and official institutions. Rather than state policies and formal politics, the meaning and means of integration are often determined by highly localised social processes and power structures. Underlying migrants' incorporation or exclusion are varied ethics of hospitality and political calculation and community ideals.

Through an interactive three day workshop in Johannesburg, this initiative will develop comparative insights from across Africa and situate findings within global empirical and scholarly trends. Selected papers from the workshop will contribute to an edited volume examining the dynamics of integration across the case studies.



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Themes

The workshop themes emerge from on-going research suggesting how the mechanisms, language and the ethics of immigrant incorporation in Africa differ significantly from the European and North American experiences. In the latter, integration and diversity are closely intertwined with the presence of immigrants; in the former, questions of 'integration' arise from concerns about national 'indigenous diversity' overlaid with questions of immigration and mobility.

In many African urban neighbourhoods, for example, it makes little sense to speak of migrants and hosts. Instead, there are remarkable levels of diversity and fluidity and novel modes of both accommodation and exclusion are emerging. These result in new communities forms—cosmopolitan and conflictual—driven more by pragmatic responses to the quotidian challenges than a grand imagination of an integrated society or policy frameworks. The challenge of incorporating foreign migrants—the focus of integration as conceived in the West—may be a small part of the larger concern of mixing nationals with multiple languages and cultural norms.

In rural areas dominated by a single social group, the literature offers few insights, overlooking both historical and contemporary examples where people settle, mix and generate new identities, albeit with the potential for conflict. Such processes of incorporation of strangers in African rural society is a theme which is almost invisible in contemporary scholarship and completely absent in policy, with the stark exception of the case of rural refugees.

Submission of papers

Workshop papers should address one or more of the following themes:

- ▶ How are integration and cultural accommodation conceptualised and discussed in the 'global' literature and to what extent are these debates reflected in African literature?
- ▶ Do African realities give cause to question the philosophical and empirical foundations of the global debate?
- ▶ What accounts for the forms of accommodation or 'community' emerge in urban gateways, borderlands, and rural communities across Africa? Can we identify an emerging and practical ethics informing these engagements?

The workshop will include critical theoretical reflections from Africanist and non-Africanist perspectives and empirical case studies from African scholars. It will be held in South Africa and bring together 15-20 senior and early career scholars from across Africa and key speakers from other regions to provide a comparative perspective. Some attending will be expected to draft conceptual and synthetic papers while others will be present theoretically informed case material. All participants will be asked to reflect on the key thematic interventions in light of their own research.

Full drafts of the papers will be distributed to all participants in advance of the workshop. Early career participants will be partnered with more experienced mentors who will provide detailed feedback on their contributions. Following the initial workshop, participants are expected to submit revised chapters or articles to be included in the final publication.

ABSTRACTS AND ENQUIRIES

Funding is available for those selected to participate in the workshop. This initiative is being managed by **Oliver Bakewell (IMI)** and **Loren Landau (ACMS)** who will convene a panel to select papers and edit the subsequent publication.

Abstracts of between **400-500 words** should be submitted to integration@migration.org.za by **15 April 2013**. Full drafts of papers will be expected in **mid-September**.

Queries may be directed to the same address.