

## Research Seminar

### Doing research in interdisciplinary and global environments: Methodologies, sources, research organization

Prof. Dr. Matthias Middell/ Dr. Steffi Marung (both SFB 1199) ([middell@uni-leipzig.de](mailto:middell@uni-leipzig.de)/  
[marung@uni-leipzig.de](mailto:marung@uni-leipzig.de))

Venue: SFB 1199, Strohsackpassage (Nikolaistraße 5-10), 5<sup>th</sup> floor, Seminarroom

This research seminar is organized as a series of workshops, which provide insight into and practical discussion of different methodological challenges and approaches in particular but not exclusively for the investigation of processes of spatialization under the global condition, thereby offering training and advice for – among others – geographers, historians, anthropologists, social scientists, global and cultural studies scholars who position themselves in interdisciplinary and global environments.

The workshops cover a wide range of disciplinary approaches including field work, working with historical sources, addressing spatial imaginations as well as dealing with „big data“, i.e. textual sources that are available electronically and can be made productive with the tools of the digital humanities. Each individual workshop will be guided by an experienced scholar, introducing into the respective methodological topic. Participants are furthermore asked to bring their own material, experiences and questions, to be discussed and worked with in groups and plenary sessions.

The workshop series is designed specifically for all members of the SFB 1199 – not only for its doctoral students – and is simultaneously as a whole package as a research seminar offered to all PhD students of the GSGAS.

## **PROGRAMME**

### **Introductory Session (Matthias Middell/ Steffi Marung)**

10 April 2017, 11:00am - 1:00pm

### **Lecture “How to write a funding application” (Ursula Rao)**

13 April 2017, 3:00pm - 5:00pm (Seminargebäude, room S420)

### **Workshop No. 1 (Ursula Rao)**

Wednesday 26 April 2017, 1:00pm – 4:00pm

*Doing Research Ethically: Challenges of safety, fairness and privacy*

Field research and dissertation writing pose a number of ethical challenges. Conducting interviews, doing participatory observation, or network analysis brings students in touch with people of different contexts and cultures. Access might be difficult and communication can be fraught with tensions. Often researchers find themselves in the middle of difficult power negotiations. How best to navigate this territory? How to conduct ethical research and how to guard against potential dangers? The process of writing up throws up new problems, of accuracy, validity and rendering data anonymous. How to be fair and clear while also protecting the privacy of research participants? This seminar addressed equally young researchers planning to start research soon and academics in the process of analyzing and writing up their data. We will identify challenges and seek solutions for typical research predicaments.

### **Workshop No. 2 (David Maxwell/ Geert Castryck/ Bas de Roo/ Adam Jones)**

Tuesday 9 May 2017, 10:00am - 1:00pm & Thursday 11 May 2017, 10:00am - 11:30am

*Working with textual and visual sources: examples from missionary, colonial and African history*

In a hands-on session offered by Prof. David Maxwell (University of Cambridge) on Tuesday 9 May, we will work with scans of original sources and with text fragments in order to illustrate, practise and reflect upon the hermeneutic work of a historian. The examples will be drawn from his own research about Central Africa, but will be of general interest and accessible without previous knowledge about the history of the region. A mini reading list and a worksheet with sources will be distributed beforehand.

Two days later, on Thursday 11 May, we will take the issue of working with historical sources up again, and link it up with our own ongoing research. We will address the challenge of reconciling a research definition (based on a problem and research questions) with an at times recalcitrant source-base. We explicitly invite you to bring sources, with which you have been struggling yourself, so that we can apply our reflections on historical hermeneutics to your own ongoing research. The researchers of SFB 1199 – TP B02 will lead this session and will bring examples of successful and unsuccessful attempts at "cracking" historical sources from their own research as well.

**Workshop No. 3 (Maren Möhring/ Antje Dietze/ Ute Wardenga)**

Wednesday, 24 May 2017, 2:00pm - 4:30pm

*Spatial imaginations across disciplines*

This workshop is part of the thematic group “Spatial imaginations” of the Collaborative Research Centre “Processes of Spatialization under the Global Condition”.

Participants will read and discuss relevant texts that deal with the role of imaginations in spatialization practices and spatial orders.

It will bring together perspectives from different disciplines and research fields, thus also providing the opportunity of addressing the challenges of interdisciplinary research.

**Workshop No. 4 (Julia Oheim/ Ninja Steinbach-Hüther/ Steffi Marung)**

Date to be confirmed

*Working with “Big data”, textual and digital sources: Insights from the digital humanities*

In many research projects the challenge is to process, interpret, and arrange larger amounts of textual data, including catalogues and other databases, legal documents, novels, letters, serial sources such as journals or interviews. As more and more sources and archives – both historical and contemporary – are digitized and often available online, this does not only offer many new productive roads of inquiry but also poses a challenge for many scholars across the humanities and social sciences. As an answer to this challenge new approaches and tools are being developed which are summarized as „digital humanities“, a productive field in which computer sciences and humanities closely cooperate. Particularly when it comes to the investigation of processes of spatialization, this might offer helpful tools.

The workshop will provide input from experienced scholars in the digital humanities and based on the individual projects of the participants introduce some of the available tools.

**Concluding Session (Steffi Marung)**

28 June 2017, 1:00pm – 3:00pm