



**Final Narrative Report on ABORNE Annual Meeting
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Submitted by:

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Summary

The African Borderlands Research Network - ABORNE(<http://www.aborne.org/>) - is an interdisciplinary network of over 70 academic researchers and institutions in Europe, Africa and North America.

From 10-12 September, the University of the Witwatersrand hosted the African Borderlands Research Network (ABORNE), Annual Meeting 2009: "How is Africa Transforming Border Studies?" This meeting was made possible through the generous combined support of the European Science Foundation, the African Union Borders Programme through the GTZ, and the University of the Witwatersrand.

The Annual meeting was attended by 65 academics from 24 countries. 52 original papers were presented (see programme below). This made the meeting by far the largest and most diverse in ABORNE's three-year history, heralding a significant expansion and maturation of the network. The meeting fulfilled ABORNE's aims of connecting and supporting young scholars from around the world through opportunities to interact with senior academics in the field of borderlands studies, as well as with each other. 26 of the presenters were young (under 40), although some of these scholars are already established in the field through substantial research, publication and teaching track records.

Particularly valuable to the sustainability of the network was the increased participation of African and Africa-based scholars, which was facilitated by the conference location on the continent and the support of the African Union Borders Programme through the GTZ. 31 of the presenters at the conference were of African origin and/or based in African institutions.

In terms of the network's interdisciplinarity and its goals of encouraging productive engagements between academic disciplines and between academics and practitioners, the meeting was also highly successful. In addition to the more traditional disciplines in the ABORNE network – anthropology, history, geography and political science – this meeting included

contributions from philosophy, education, literature studies, ethnomusicology, ecology, public administration, and security studies.

Description of Scientific Content

Regarding the scientific content of the meeting, the empirical and theoretical insights gained from studying African borderlands are already transforming the wider field of border studies. This is ABORNE's overall aim, and the annual meetings are key to achieving this through bringing together established experts in the field and younger scholars with empirical insights "fresh from the field". The stated aim of this third ABORNE meeting since the network's inception was to move beyond a collection of case studies to a greater engagement with theory and comparative perspectives. This was achieved to a significant extent. The focus on theoretical debate was furthermore enabled through the innovation of a 'Keynote Debate' rather than a single keynote speaker. The debate took place between Prof. David Newman, presenting the state of the art review of global border studies, and Prof. David Coplan speaking on the contribution of African borderland studies to past and future borderland theory. Both papers were distributed to all participants in advance and so created a common reference point for discussion and deliberation.

The themes discussed at the conference were broader than ever before in the history of ABORNE, illustrating the growing maturity and openness of the Network. These included:

- The history of border-making, continuing to relativise the common perception that all borders in Africa were arbitrary colonial impositions;
- Reflexive interactions between bounded polities (pre- and post-colonial, regional / national/ sub-national) and identities;
- The cognitive and cultural constructions of state borders according to borderland residents;
- The relationships between "nature" and "politics" in borderlands;
- Transfrontier economies through trade and natural resource use;
- The nature of borderland towns and local governments;
- Representations of and engagements with borders in literature and music;
- Peace and security through and around borders;
- The enforcement of bordered territories at and far from national borders;
- The nature of cross-border political mobilisation;
- The methodological specificities of borderland and border studies, including the challenges of multi-sited (field and archival) research.

A key element of the meeting was the partnerships and discussions between academics and practitioners. The partnership with the African Union Borders Programme was particularly significant in this regard. ABORNE has always considered the engagement with practitioners in border and borderland management to be central to its mandate, and so this relationship with the continent's premier unit for the consideration of border issues represents a great opportunity for the Network.

An innovation of the conference was an explicit engagement with the location of the meeting: Johannesburg. Although Johannesburg is not on an international border, it nonetheless epitomises many elements of bordered societies and polities, including histories of highly securitised and performative spatial divisions between social groups, new social divisions and connections due to cross-border migration, and processes of policing external borders which take place well within the territories of a state. These issues were engaged with through a series of social and cultural events attached to the conference which introduced the conference participants to different parts of the city and allowed them to interact with artists and residents of the cities on border-related themes. These engagements included an evening in collaboration with Goethe Institute at the ArtsonMain complex entitled "Johannesburg: Border City" which

brought together prominent speakers from the worlds of photography, theatre, music and public art; as well as an evening of African music as the popular cultural and music venue House of Nsako in the historically significant neighbourhood of Brixton. The linkage of social events with experiences highlighting the specific character of the conference location was particularly valued by the conference participants, according to their feedback.

Finally, the formal conference was followed by an optional four-day excursion to the South African/Mozambican borderland, which was financed entirely by the participants as an extra cost. Almost half the conference participants went on this excursion. The South African/Mozambican borderland is characterized by one of the earliest and most significant uses of conservation areas as politicized border maintenance technologies. It is also a site of multiple and nested borders, where the national border between South Africa and Mozambique was buffered by several apartheid-era 'homelands' which were to some extent managed as extra-territorial to the South African state and whose spatial, political, social and economic legacies continue to shape the borderland area. Furthermore, various waves and forms of migration from Mozambique into South Africa – including pre-colonial group migration, colonial contracted labour migration, civil war refugees, and post-war informal economic migration – have given rise to and continue to inform ethnic and identity-based connections across the border, even as actual volumes of movement are low. Wits University has a long-standing research facility in the border area, which provided the base for the field trip.

Assessment of the results and impact of the event on the future direction of the field

The above sections of the report already mention several effects of the event for the field, including:

- building stronger relationships between 'Northern' and 'Southern'-based scholars working on African borders and borderlands;
- building a potentially long-term working relationship between ABORNE and the African Union Borders Programme;
- moving the field toward a more theoretically nuanced and comparative grounding;
- broadening the disciplinary breath across which deliberations and exchanges within the network take place.

Finally, there will be two substantive books arising from the conference, including a special edition with the University of Wales Press and a volume within the African Borderlands Series with Palgrave Macmillan. Several possible academic journal special editions or paper contributions are also under discussion.



African Borderlands Research Network (ABORNE)

Annual Meeting 2009:

How is Africa Transforming Border Studies?

**University of the Witwatersrand
Johannesburg, South Africa**

Hofmeyr House

10 – 12 September 2009

Day 1: Thursday, 10 September 2009

Borderlands Theory in Africa

8:30 – 9:30	Registration and Tea/Coffee
9:30 – 10:00	Welcome and Introduction Prof. Paul Nugent (ABORNE) Prof. Belinda Bozzoli (Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research, University of the Witwatersrand) Mr. Peter Conze (GTZ, South Africa)
10:00 – 12:00	Keynote Debate: 'How is Africa Transforming Border Studies?' Newman, David (Ben Gurion University, Israel) Global Border Studies: State of the Art? Coplan, David (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa) African contributions to Global Border Studies Discussant: Gregor Dobler (University of Basel)
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 15:30	Panel 1: This Land is Your Land Chair: Shahid Vawda Donaldson, John W. (Durham University, UK) Challenging the rigidity of the 1964 Cairo Declaration Pophiwa, Nedson (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa) The Zimbabwe-Mozambique Border: From Demarcation to c.1980 Roque, Ana (Tropical Research Institute, Portugal) Rethinking Borders in South Mozambique Wekesa, Peter Wafula (Kenyatta University, Kenya) Old Issues and New Challenges: The Migingo Island Controversy and the Kenya-Uganda Borderland Panel 2: Method in No-Man's-Land Chair: Loren Landau Ogen, Olukoya (Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria) UK Borderland Research in the Niger Delta: Theoretical and Methodological Challenges of Conducting Field Studies in the Oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula Mathys, Gillian (Ghent University, Belgium) Doing Everything Twice: Methodological and Practical Problems of Doing Borderlands Research (From a Historical Perspective) Hiribarren, Vincent (University of Leeds, UK) Teaching and conceptualising the African boundaries in Guinea Trzcinski, Krzysztof (University of Warsaw, Poland) Border issues as a topic in contemporary African philosophy; On benefits that could be derived from the thought of Ifeanyi A. Menkiti
15:30 – 15:45	Tea & Coffee

<p>15:45 – 17:15</p>	<p>Panel 3: Is Colonialism Mortal? Chair: Paul Nugent</p> <p>Bouhdiba, Sofiane (University of Tunis, Tunisia) The Representation of National Borders and the Failure of the Union of the Arab Maghreb</p> <p>Miescher, Giorgio (Basler Afrika Bibliographien/ University of Basel, Switzerland) Namibia's Red Line - South Africa's imperial 'barbarian border'</p> <p>Lecocq, Baz (Ghent University Belgium) About a cock that scratched the sand and drew its marks: Saharan borders in the late 1950s</p> <p>Panel 4: Bounded Citizenship and Ethnicity Chair: Tara Polzer</p> <p>Ikwuyatum, Godwin O. (University of Ibadan, Nigeria) Reflections on the conflict of spaces of National Sovereignty, Citizenship and Ethnicity in the Conceptualization of the South-Western Nigeria and Southern Eastern Benin Republic Borderland</p> <p>Nsamba, A Morris (Refugee Law Project, Uganda) Decentralisation and Territorial Politics? Constructing and Managing Ethnic Identity in Uganda</p> <p>Mazarire, Gerald Chikozho (University of Zimbabwe) The Invisible Boundaries of the Karanga: Considering Pre-Colonial Shona Territoriality and its meanings in Contemporary Zimbabwe</p>
<p>19:00</p>	<p>Book Launch: JoAnn McGregor 'Crossing the Zambezi: the Politics of Landscape on a Central African Frontier'</p> <p>Narina Trogon Restaurant, 81 De Korte Street, Braamfontein (to be reached by foot from hotel)</p> <p>Followed by Conference Dinner</p>

Day 2: Friday, 11 September 2009

Comparative Border Studies

9:00 – 10:30	<p>Plenary Panel: Comparative Border Studies – From and Towards Theory</p> <p>Nugent, Paul (University of Edinburgh, UK) Sizing up Asymmetry: State Logics and Power Dynamics in the Senegambian and Ghana-Togo Borderlands</p> <p>Asiwaju, Anthony (African Regional Institute, Imeko, Nigeria) “Reciprocal Comparison”: Exploring the African Template in Border and Borderlands Studies</p> <p>Dereje, Feyissa (Max Plank Institute, Germany) The cultural construction of state borders: The view from Gambella</p> <p>Discussant: Wolfgang Zeller</p>
10:30 – 11:00	Tea and Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	<p>Panel 5: History Matters Chair: Baz Lecocq</p> <p>Gewald, Jan-Bart (African Studies Centre, Leiden, Netherlands) Beyond the Last Frontier: Major Trollope and the establishment of colonial rule in the borderland of the Eastern Caprivi, Colonial Namibia 1939 – 1954</p> <p>Latmani, Saida (Pr de droit International, Morocco) The Status of Morocco’s Territory: State and Evolution</p> <p>McGregor, JoAnn (University College London) A "natural border"?: The Zambezi frontier and border identities past and present</p> <p>Panel 6: Transfrontier Economies I Chair: Timothy Raeymaekers</p> <p>Udelsmann Rodrigues, Cristina (ISCTE, Portugal) How is cross-border circulation transforming post-war Angolan towns in the southern border regions?</p> <p>Mudyazvivi, Elton (SNV, Zimbabwe) The nature of informal cross border trade and its implications for regional integration: the case of Forbes and Machipanda border posts of Zimbabwe and Mozambique</p> <p>Bonchuk, Michael Omang (University of Calabar, Nigeria) Unrecorded Trade in Imeko-Afon And Ajassor – Mamfe: An Analysis of Unrecorded Trade and Market Integration on Two African Borders</p>
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch

14:00 –15:30	<p>Panel 7: Transfrontier Economies II Chair: Cristina Udelsmann Rodrigues</p> <p>Mburu, Nene (Learning Trust, UK) Meaninglessness of ‘national’ border in transnational pastoralist societies of the Ilemi Triangle</p> <p>Cleveland, Todd (Augustana College, USA) Shifting Identities: The Changing Meanings and Implications of the Angolan-Congolese Border for Africans Operating in this Diamondiferous Borderlands Region (1917-75)</p> <p>Kamuzora, Faustin (Mzumbe University, Tanzania) The Borderland Institutions for Transnational Exchange Markets Transformation</p> <p>Panel 8: Creativity and Power in Border Towns Chair: David Coplan</p> <p>Zeller, Wolfgang (University of Helsinki, Finland) and Dobler, Gregor (Universität Basel, Switzerland) Marginal hotspots. African border boom towns – overview and interpretation</p> <p>Polzer, Tara (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa) Between state and society – local government in South African and Kenyan border districts</p> <p>Raeymaekers, Timothy (University of Ghent, Belgium) A Politics of Transborder Trade in Kasindi</p>
15:30 – 15:45	Tea & Coffee
15:45 – 17:15	<p>Panel 9: Literary and Cultural Frontiers Chair: Giorgio Miescher</p> <p>Schor, Patricia (Utrecht University, Netherlands) Africa dislocating the Portuguese language: José Eduardo Agualusa’s novel trespassing the border</p> <p>Kraśniewski, Mariusz (Polish Academy of Sciences) African literature as a source for border studies - Hausa prose writings</p> <p>Levi, Joseph Abraham (University of Hong Kong) Border and Border Crossing in Lusophone Africa. Dislocation, Assimilation, Language, and National Identity in the Works of Abdulai Sila (1957-), Ondjaki (1977-), Rui Knopfli (1932-1997), and Mia Couto.</p> <p>Belalimat, Nadia (Bayreuth University, Germany) Border crossing and transnational cultural aspects in contemporary Tuareg music history</p> <p>Parallel Workshops and Group Discussions: Methodologies; Publishing Projects; Collaborative Research Planning</p>
18:30 (departure from hotel by bus)	<p>Public Event @ Goethe on Main, Corner Main and Berea, CBD Johannesburg, Border City</p> <p>Film, exhibition, public panel discussion and music. How artistic engagements transform and cross borders in the city.</p>

Day 3: Saturday, 12 September 2009

Managing African Borders: Conflict, Peace and Integration

With the special support of the African Union Borders Programme

9:00 – 10:30	<p>Plenary Panel: Managing African Borders: Conflict, Peace and Integration</p> <p>Okumu, Wafula (Institute for Security Studies) Resources and Border Disputes in Eastern Africa</p> <p>Ahmad, Muhammad (African Union Borders Programme) Integration and Peace through border delimitation and demarcation</p> <p>Zips, Werner and Manuela Zips-Mairitsch (University of Vienna) Kalahari Governance: Nature Conservation and Indigeneity in Southern Africa's Borderlands</p> <p>Discussant: JoAnn McGregor</p>
10:30 – 11:00	Tea and Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	<p>Panel 10: Border Wars I Chair: Thomas Hüsken</p> <p>Schomerus, Mareike (London School of Economics and Political Science, UK) and Titeca, Kristof (University of Antwerp, Belgium) "We see ourselves as unlucky because of the kind of border we have"; Militarized peace along the Sudan/Uganda/DRC border</p> <p>Scorgie, Lindsay (Cambridge University, UK) Peacekeeping in the Borderlands: Confronting Networks of Conflict in Central Africa, from Genocide in Rwanda to Conflict in the Congo</p> <p>Bakewell, Oliver (Oxford University, UK) The changing face of the Zambia/Angola border</p> <p>Panel 11: Policing the Boundary Chair: Werner Zips</p> <p>Davies, John (Sussex Centre for Migration Research, UK) Alien Invasion: They are among us! Understanding how and why the State creates new borders within its political geography</p> <p>Kumar, Rekha A. (University of Botswana) Cross-border crimes: A conceptual study of co-operation, legal and policy framework between Botswana and South Africa</p> <p>Monson, Tamlyn (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa) Alibis for Xenophobia: Producing Knowledge, Reproducing State Borders</p> <p>Ikelegbe, Onovughe O. (University of Benin, Nigeria) Peaceful Co – existence and Sustenance Border Development in the Nigerian Borders</p>
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch

14:00 – 15:30	<p>Panel 12: Border Wars II Chair: Wafula Okumu</p> <p>Vaughan, Christopher (Durham University, UK) Compromising power: the Darfur-Chad border zone c.1800-1956</p> <p>Kurgat, Paul Kibiwott (Moi University, Kenya) In the Horn of the Dilemma: Dealing with Insecurity in The Kenyan, Ugandan and Sudanese Common Borders</p> <p>Seymour, Lee J. M. (Leiden University, Netherlands) Sovereignty, Territory and Authority: Separatism and Africa's Boundary Maintenance Regime Why have Africa's boundaries survived sustained separatist threats?</p> <p>Panel 13: Cross-border governance and politics Chair: Feyissa Dereje</p> <p>Tandia, Aboubakr (Cheikh Anta Diop University, Senegal) Borders and borderland identity in Senegambia. A Comparative perspective of Cross-border Governance in the neighbourhoods of Senegal, The Gambia and Guinea Bissau</p> <p>Golooba-Mutebi, Frederick (Makerere University, Uganda) Political Mobilisation Across Borders: The Rwanda Patriotic Front</p> <p>Hüsken, Thomas (University of Bayreuth, Germany) Reshaping Statehood in the Borderland of Egypt and Libya</p>
15:30 – 15:45	Tea & Coffee
15:45 – 17:00	<p>Closing Plenary</p> <p>Closing remarks on the future of borderland studies in Africa Eric Worby (University of the Witwatersrand)</p> <p>Discussion</p>
20:00 (departure from hotel by bus)	<p>Dinner and Concert: House of Nsako, 101 High Street, Brixton</p> <p>Music by a range of Johannesburg-based African musicians</p>

Day 4: Sunday, 13 September 2009

ABORNE management meeting

Optional Tour of Johannesburg

Monday – Thursday, 14-17 September 2009

Optional field-trip to Bushbuckridge District on the Mozambican border

Monday, 14th September, 6:00: departure from Orion Devonshire Hotel

Thursday, 17th September, mid-afternoon: return to Johannesburg (direct delivery to airport possible).