



Call for Papers

Postcolonial Justice: Reassessing the Fair Go

29 May – 1 June 2014 in Potsdam and Berlin, Germany

The joint 14th Biennial GAST and 25th Annual ASNEL and Conference investigates practices and norms of justice in a postcolonial world. While the term 'justice' suggests the pursuit of a globally valid set of social, political or aesthetic norms, 'postcolonial' is often associated with the deconstruction of precisely such norms and values as hegemonic colonial or neo-colonial constructions, variably in the interest of the coloniser, global capital, or a cosmopolitan elite. Nevertheless, unless they wish to fall into the pit of radical culturalism, postcolonial projects themselves must rely on the postulation of transculturally and transnationally valid norms. On the most general level, then, the concept of postcolonial justice forces us to rethink the problem of universality against the notion of local and cultural particularity. This joint conference seeks to promote exchange on this important and timely issue and will address a broad range of questions that relate to the interests of its two convening associations.

Founded in 1989, the Association for Australian Studies is a politically independent, interdisciplinary organisation devoted in the public interest to furthering scholarship concerned in the broadest way with Australia and to promoting Australian studies, both in teaching and research, in German-speaking countries.

In line with this interdisciplinary approach to Australian Studies, GAST invites panels and papers that address postcolonial justice in Australia. Australia famously considers itself as the country of the 'fair go' and yet heated discussions around the notion of justice continue to be fought out in the public domain. Often (though not exclusively) concerned with the legacy of Australia's colonial past, these debates revolve around questions of obligation and recognition, reparation and restitution, reconciliation and forgiveness. GAST seeks to approach these issues through trans-disciplinary dialogue, inviting papers from the humanities, the social sciences, history of science and law. Possible contributions may address the following issues, among others:

- historical perspectives on postcolonial justice and the politics of reconciliation, restitution and retribution, including the legality and legitimacy of colonisation;
- the (un)just distribution of social, economic and natural resources, challenges and opportunities for sustainable development, and social opportunities in present-day Australia, etc.;

- postcolonial justice and the law, including land right claims and mining disputes, the history of the civil rights movement in Australia, and the legal ramifications of Kevin Rudd's 2008 Apology;
- literary and artistic articulations and negotiations of rights claims; the role of the arts in remembering and working through historical injustice, etc.;
- the role of the media in human and social rights debates, including analyses of the ways in which media products resist or contribute to inequitable social structures;
- debates over Australia's cultural and scientific heritage, including the contested status of Australian objects in European museums, etc.

Conference locations:

Most of the sessions will take place on our campus *Am Neuen Palais* in Potsdam, in close proximity to the Prussian palaces and gardens and about 40 minutes from Berlin on public transport. One conference day will be organised at the transcultural arts centre *Werkstatt der Kulturen* in Berlin.

Please send your proposals by **30 November 2013** to: pocojust@uni-potsdam.de

We ask international guests who would like to attend to respond with a (preliminary) title by **15 May 2013** in order to facilitate possible funding opportunities.

For further information, please refer to the conference website:

<http://postcolonialjustice.wordpress.com>

Conference convenors:

Prof. Dr. Anja Schwarz, Prof. Dr. Lars Eckstein, and Prof. Dr. Dirk Wiemann

Institut fuer Anglistik und Amerikanistik

Universitaet Potsdam

Am Neuen Palais 10

14469 Potsdam

Germany