



Einladung/Aushang

„Welcome to the Slave Market“: Signboards and the Recreation of a Historical Landscape in Ghana

Lecture by Dr. Katharina Schramm (Universität Halle)

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In the wake of increasing international attention to the history of the slave trade and recent African American heritage tourism to West Africa, the Ghanaian state and local entrepreneurs alike have begun to identify more and more landmarks as part of the slave route network. Natural features such as rivers, trees or rocks, which in themselves cannot be clearly distinguished from their surroundings by the uninitiated, now become explicitly associated with camp-sites, slave markets or places of refuge. Along the roads throughout the country one finds signboards that point out formerly hidden or forbidden places to potential tourists. They form part of a pilgrimage circuit by which the contemporary landscape is assigned deep historical significance. At the sites themselves, other signboards have been erected which serve to interpret the landscape along the lines of a dominant tourism narrative. This narrative is mainly aimed at African American visitors. It is presented in such a way that the more recent experiences of inner-continental slave-raiding and -trading appear as part of the *transatlantic* slave system and therefore as relevant to Diasporans.

This lecture examines the processes through which meaning is created and mediated through signboards and oral narratives for both visitors and local communities at those former slave sites. It looks at the way in which different “futures” become associated with the sites – ranging from the potential healing of psychological wounds to prospects for investment and community development – and asks about their mutual overlapping and fierce contestation.

Dr. **Katharina Schramm** holds a post-doc scholarship at the Graduate School Asia and Africa in World Reference Systems (GSAA) at the Martin-Luther-Universität Halle. Her research interests are (African) Diaspora, tourism, identity and genetics, space, cultural policy, state, memory. Her current research project is about “Tracing the Slave Routes - Mapping Diverse Memories: The Emergence of Sacred Landscapes in Ghana”

Weitere Informationen

<http://www.gzaa.uni-halle.de/deu/personen/detail.php?sektion=3&name=schramm&personenstatus=2>