CALL FOR PAPERS.

WAPSN Symposium 2018, Bamako, late April/early May 2018 (exact date tbc)

This call for contributions to the WAPSN symposium 2018 invites proposals on the topic of space, borders, conflict and insecurity in West Africa.

In West Africa, conflict and insecurity are constantly depicted as transnational or spilling over borders. Terrorism is said to destabilise countries throughout the Sahel region; maritime insecurity is presented as spilling over into all Gulf of Guinea coastal countries; and West Africa appears to be at the centre of a network of organised criminality that has extended its tentacles from South America to Europe.

Space and borders in West Africa are at the core of our analyses of the causes of conflict and insecurity. For example, porous borders and traditional trading routes that cut across state borders are often incriminated in assessments of insecurity in the region. Space and borders are also central to the policies that are elaborated to deal with conflict and security issues. Indeed, the West African bodies used to mediate or to implement security policies are increasingly chosen according to their geographical scope. At the same time, the ways in which policy-makers and academics link insecurity, space and borders also have an impact on the organisation of West Africa as a political space. For instance, prioritising the G5 as the most appropriate body to deal with terrorism in the Sahel can have an impact on the legitimacy of ECOWAS as a regional security actor.

The WAPSN symposium 2018 welcomes contributions engaging with these issues and providing theoretical and empirical material, as well as methodological reflections on:

**Conflict, insecurity and borders**: In which ways are conflicts and insecurity spilling across borders in West Africa? What are the latest developments? How are the narratives on the transnational dimension of insecurity produced and with what effects?

**West African policies, borders and space:** What are the appropriate geographical levels to deal with transnational security issues in West Africa? Is there overlapping and/or competitions between various West African institutions and bodies? In which ways should geographies of insecurity determine policies?

**International interventions, borders and space**: As French Operation Barkhane has developed a regional dimension, will this be a common feature of international interventions in West Africa? What are the effects of this new feature of interventions on the management of insecurity, sovereignty, access to international resources, or on the inclusion and marginalisation of actors?

**The construction of regional space and security practices**: How are security practices in West Africa (re)defining the West African political space? Are new ‘security regions’ appearing such as the Sahel and the Gulf of Guinea? What are the consequences on ‘West Africa’?

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