



– Institute's Colloquium –

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Reclaiming Indigeneity: Disrupting and Unsettling the Legacy of Categorisation and Naming in Southern Africa

There has been a lot of dialogue and activism around the reclamation of identities and cultural heritage on a global, national and local level. In South Africa, over 4.5 million South Africans are legally classified as Coloured people. The Population Registration Act of 1950, Act No 30, defines Coloured people as not white, not black and not Asian. This hierarchy resulted in a four-tier racial classification system used by the apartheid state to divide and rule. The classification of 'being black' had particular implications in terms of every day lived experiences of individual lives, the geographical location where people could reside as well as socio-economic and political repercussions. Within the four-tier national classificatory system, the existence of the Khoe and San peoples and their descendants were crudely annihilated from the socio-economic and political spheres of the country.

This talk focusses on the transition from apartheid to democracy post-1994 that opened up 'spaces' permitting people to re-invent and reconstruct themselves, thinking anew of ways in which to conceptualise their identities. This re-imagination of identity lends itself only to certain 'sections' of the Coloured population and only among those who self-identify as descendants of the Khoe and San people. In this context, the resurgence of reclaiming Khoe and San ancestry is linked to a particular 'kind of indigeneity'. These claims place the African and South African debate of indigeneity on par with the global movement, where various communities and activists are engaged in different forms of political debates and activism. Some of the issues raised by indigenous peoples include, among other things, language revivalism, redistribution and access to land, resources and benefit sharing.

Wednesday, June 5th 2019
4-6 p.m.
Institute of Ethnology
Stuttstraße 21, Raum STU 105 (2.10)

Everybody is welcome!