Rethinking African History

Background

The CRG group 'African History' has been in existence for several years. As the sole disciplinary collaborative research group it aims to act primarily as a platform for discussion of historical issues related to the African continent, its place in the world and within African studies. Thus, its debates tackle historical, historiographical and methodological questions in the widest sense: new research questions, archival source collections, historicizing approaches in other disciplines, new approaches in historiography, etc.

The group does assemble not only historians, but all Africanists (and even non-Africanists, such as imperial historians, world history specialists and others) interested in or working on historical subjects related to Africa. It explicitly invites people from the library as well as 'junior' scholars such as PhD students.

It is this CRG’s intention to continue in this format. An important justification for this is found in the fact that, as a field, African history is rarely treated on its own merits – neither at the ASCL, nor at other university platforms. The CRG African history therefore intends to act as a platform assembling all those working at the University of Leiden, as well outside of it, on African historical questions.

It should be noted that the aim of this CRG is not to discuss issues that fall more within the remit of current affairs or current political issues, such as crisis situations, violent conflicts etc., unless they raise questions about the nature of contemporary history and history-writing (i.e. involving analyses with diachronically deeper perspectives).

Activities

This CRG will primarily provide a forum for scholarly presentations. In addition, the CRG aims to boost historicizing approaches in African studies by organizing workshops that may also result in joint publications (such as in the African Dynamics series).