CALL FOR PAPERS

**Interdisciplinary Centre for Global South Studies (ICGSS)** at the University of Tübingen and BMBF/DAAD Thematic Network “Futures under Construction in the Global South” invite abstracts for the:

**International Forum on Global South Studies 2020, Tübingen, 6 – 10 July 2020**

**“Wellbeing and Subjectivity across the Global South” / Futures under Construction**

In view of the multiple current global crisis scenarios, the question arises of how futures in the Global South can be shaped in such a way that it is oriented towards the wellbeing of people and forms of self-determined life. This is why the categories of "wellbeing" and “subjectivity” are currently at the centre of a global cultural and political field of conflict in which the possibilities for shaping the future in the Global South are being negotiated, since, according to Appadurai, the capacity to aspire a good life is very unevenly distributed.

“Wellbeing” plays a key role in the transnational arena of development policies and is, for example, foregrounded by institutions like the WHO or the UN. While “wellbeing” certainly gives coherence to a set of aspirations for the future of mankind, the concept transports certain notions of subjectivity, agency and articulation that demand critical scrutiny.

Unsurprisingly, many prominent commentators and social movements from the South reject implied notions of modernization and development that ignore specific cultural and social conditions and local knowledge. The ensuing cultural and political debates encompass institutional politics, social activism, media modelling and cultural imaginaries including also the sphere of everyday practice.

No less necessary is a debate about “wellbeing” on the epistemological level: where social sciences tend to link the concept to quantifiable categories – as for example in the definition of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – alternative strands of theory criticise the fundamental orientation of such approaches towards the ideal of growth and individualistic progress. Such positions – often articulated from the South – refer to autochthonous concepts such as “Buen Vivir” and “Sumak Kawsay” in Latin America, “Swaraj” in India, “Ubuntu” in Africa or “Country” in Indigenous Australia that are based on a sustainable lifestyle oriented towards community and nature. The general question of compatibility, commensurability or parallelism of these approaches to well-being with global campaigns towards “sustainable development” or a “green economy” is intensively discussed and often denied. Cognate discussions are conducted for example in the globally oriented "International Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services" (IPBES) where “wellbeing” plays an explicit and central role, and is understood within a pluralistic framework of “Western” and “non-Western” values. The “degrowth” movement and associated themes of "décroissance et joie de vivre", shows that similar and connected debates are also gaining a foothold in the Global North.

The Forum seeks to debate various models and concepts of “wellbeing” across the fields of health, education, work, economic prosperity, community participation, cultural creation, spirituality, ethics and sustainability and to question their significance for aspirations for a (better) future. We will discuss how relationships between different models are negotiated in the local, regional, national and global interdependencies of the Global South, in the fields mentioned above, and what effects the enforcement or dominance of specific models of “wellbeing” might have on social, cultural and political and religious practices.
Invited speakers from around the world are among others: Abdoumaliq Simone (University of Sheffield/Urban Institute), Sarah Nuttall (WITS / Wiser), Alberto Acosta (Ecuador), Boris Marañón (UNAM/CLACSO), Danai Mupotsa (WITS), Irma Erloff (University of Pretoria), Soumyabrata Choudhury (JNU), Felwine Sarr (University Gaston Berger).

The 2020 Forum on Global South Studies in Tübingen will combine two formats: a Summer School in which different thematic Workshops and Teaching Panels will be assembled (6. – 8. July) and the International Conference 8. – 10. July this CfP refers to.

Abstracts for individual conference papers or for complete thematic panels addressing these topics (300 words maximum), together with a short bio-sketch, should be sent to networkglobalsouth@es.uni-tuebingen.de by 29 February 2020.

We have a limited contingent of mobility grants and scholarships for PhD-Students for the participation in these events as well as a small number of two-month doctoral research stays (June-July 2020) at the ICGSS, both cases for members of global south network partner universities.

Please indicate in your application if you would also be interested in a two months stay and in both cases whether you are dependent upon a mobility grant / scholarship or whether you are self-funded or supported by your institution.