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**Report 2010 - 2011  
Volume I**

**Halle/Saale**

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Volume I

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Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology

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## Foreword

The members of the *Kollegium* and the editorial board are pleased to present the sixth biennial report of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology. Once again, the report is divided into two volumes: a first volume containing contributions from the various departments, research groups and networks, including publication lists; and a second volume providing further information on the scientific activities and achievements of all researchers.

In Volume I of this report, the directors and the heads of various research units have been free to organise their chapters as they see fit. Thus, readers are presented with announcements of the founding of new focus groups and research groups, reports on the ongoing activities of research groups or of individual researchers, and comparative perspectives on the research results of recent PhD candidates. In all cases, readers will find overviews and illustrations of the work at our institute, along with bibliographic information that will allow them to learn more about various projects or project groups.

We would like to close this brief foreword by drawing attention to the passing of one era in the life of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology and the beginning of a new one. By early 2012, Keebet and Franz von Benda-Beckmann, heads of the Project Group Legal Pluralism, have completed the mission that brought them to Halle: to establish legal anthropology as a field for research at our institute and to prepare the way for the founding of the third department. With them, we look forward to the arrival of the director of the third department, Marie-Claire Foblets, in March 2012.

Jennifer Cash  
John Eidson  
Bettina Mann  
Martin Ramstedt



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## Department I: Integration and Conflict

**Director: Günther Schlee**

*Günther Schlee*

In the years 2010 and 2011, a number of PhD candidates completed their graduate studies successfully, while new PhD candidates and postdoctoral scholars arrived. The twelve doctoral dissertations that were defended during this period were all rated as ‘very good’ or passed ‘with distinction’.<sup>1</sup> Two were supervised by Jacqueline Knörr and will be treated in her section of this report. Ten others were supervised by me and co-supervised by Burkhard Schnepel (in the case of Lindenberg, Abimbola and Turaeva), Richard Rottenburg (for Hoehne and Riester), Ildikó Bellér-Hann (for Roche) and Tadesse Berisso (for Dejene).<sup>2</sup> In one case (that of Donath), Burkhard Schnepel was the main supervisor. In all cases, my colleagues and partners in PhD supervision have provided significant intellectual input into the theses and enriched my own reading of them. Following some brief remarks concerning activities in our department in 2010 and 2011, this report will feature the results of the ten dissertations that I supervised or co-supervised during this period.

### **An Overview of Activities**

Ten new doctoral students and three post-docs were recruited early in 2010. Consequently, the first half of that year was replete with bi-weekly block seminars, during which projects were discussed and the corresponding research questions were adjusted to each other and to fundamental departmental themes. Methodological training was provided as well. Most of the new postdocs and PhD candidates departed for fieldwork in late 2010 or 2011. Those PhD candidates who had already completed fieldwork and were busy writing their dissertations had the opportunity to present drafts of their chapters in bi-weekly meetings of the Department I Research Colloquium, organised by John Eidson and Joachim Görlich.

As in previous years, all members of the department, old and new, were encouraged to participate in our annual retreat, during which we discussed shared interests under thematic headings that had been determined during departmental meetings. In 2010, members of Department I met in the Harz mountains, where they were joined, for part of the time, by participants in the International Max Planck Research School, ‘Retaliation, Mediation, and Punishment’ (see the separate chapter in this volume). Themes for this retreat included Central Asian ethnicity, cognitive measures of eth-

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of writing, two PhD candidates had not yet defended their theses.

<sup>2</sup> Dejene Gemechu’s research was done in the context of the project *Travelling Models in Conflict Management*, which was sponsored by the Volkswagen Foundation and led by Richard Rottenburg.

nic similarity and difference, and methods for researching the ‘life time’ and ‘life history’ of people at our field sites. In 2011, the retreat took place in Mecklenburg, where participants reported on research in progress and discussed the relationship between anthropology and demography.

### **Research Results from Dissertations Completed in 2010 and 2011**

In previous reports, we presented or explored aspects of the theoretical framework for the research programme of Department I. In contrast, this report concentrates on research results, in particular on those contained in the doctoral dissertations that were completed in 2010 and 2011. To recapitulate only very briefly: Our approach consists in two basic parts (see Donahoe et al. 2009; Schlee 2009). One is semantics. Or call it the cognitive representation of the social world. We explore the concepts people use when they talk or think about who they are and how they differ from others. We investigate the range of meanings of collective labels such as ethnonyms and categories of religious or legal significance, the taxonomies they form and the logic of their combination or mutual exclusion. Language comes into play prominently and so does descent, which for social anthropologists refers not to DNA – although we follow developments in the field of evolutionary anthropology with interest – but, primarily, to the contractual and cultural aspects of intergenerational relations, e.g. identifying with one set of ancestors and not with another.

The second part of our theory is about how interests (social and economic forces) affect this conceptual ensemble. Identities change and people change their identities, and we try to explain the choices they make in this regard. Often, such processes of identity change are too slow to be perceived. That is why we focus on changing identifications and alliances in the context of violent conflicts and rapid socio-economical change. (Re-)Identifications in such settings tend to gain speed. Anticipated group size tends to inform identification choices: One might need more allies or one might think that allies who claim a share of available resources are already too abundant – and so on.

These features of our theoretical approach – language and identification, descent and group size, etc. – have informed the research results in recent dissertations, which, in the following, are bundled in pairs, depending on their central themes. These brief, comparative comments are intended not to provide adequate summaries of the dissertations in question but to highlight aspects that illuminate our common theoretical programme and its various aspects.

## Group Size in Tajikistan and Ethiopia

Group size is a key variable in the research of both Sophie Roche and Dejene Gemechu Chala, though in quite different ways. In her dissertation, *Domesticating Youth: the youth bulge in post-civil war Tajikistan*, Roche brings ethnographic data to bear in articulating an anthropological critique and elaboration of a concept well known among social scientists. ‘Youth bulge’ is a deformity of the age pyramid. In a stable or growing population, the age pyramid has a regular conical shape, but in the case of youth bulge there is a protrusion less than halfway up. There are unusually many ‘youths’ in relation both to older adults and to children.

To date, the youth bulge has been understood as a problem: When there are too many young people in relation to societal positions and economic resources, the result is unemployment, social tension, and, quite often, violence. Tajikistan has gone through a gruesome civil war, and it does have a youth bulge. But what is the relationship between the two? Roche does not reject the hypothesis of a link between the youth bulge and political violence but argues that this link is not deterministic: “There is no revolution if young people do not want it to happen, and there can be a huge youth bulge without any unrest”. This means that other variables come into play: “[Y]outh bulge”, writes Roche, “is a useful analytical tool if analysed within a cultural context”.

In particular, Roche examines the cultural definition of youth, which, even in a single country, may vary over time and with changing circumstances. When viewed in this way, ‘youth’ behaves just as any other category that is used for collective identification. The bases of ethnic identification, for example, may broaden to include remote linguistic relatives, or they may shrink to include only people who share a long list of rigidly defined features. Religious groups may open up to court new members or potential converts, but they may also shrink during periods of purification, so that only strict adherents to a complex set of rules are regarded as members. ‘Youth’ does the same: it grows and shrinks and thus behaves like a perfectly normal social identity.

The social forces behind this broadening and shrinking are inclusion and exclusion, which reflect the interests of particular groups of actors. Roche provides an historical example from the 1920s, when the Soviets were trying to establish their rule in Tajikistan. For that purpose, they needed a vanguard of young people to fight tradition and feudalism or, rather, the embodiments of such enemy stereotypes. Throughout the Soviet Union, and so in Tajikistan as well, the Komsomol, the Young Communist League, was established “to collectivize youth under a common ideology, turning them into a group that could be moulded under a specific youth concept”. The definition of ‘youth’ changed in this context, not only in terms of ideological load and political expectations, but also technically. Komsomol was found so useful that the age limit for membership was pushed up to 28, so that more members (and maybe more mature ones) could be included.

A youth organisation such as Komsomol has ambivalent effects on the agency of young people. In Anthony Giddens' terms, it may serve as an enabling or a limiting structure. It is enabling insofar as it broadens the scope of members' agency, at least as long as their activities promote the state ideology. Here, youth is a mobilising concept. Young people are told that they are progressive agents of change, and they unite under the banner of the youth organisation. On the other hand, youth organisations help to keep youth under control. Members are subject to the indoctrination, the expectations, and the discipline of the organisation – this is control through inclusion. Others are kept out and, thus, limited in their agency, as in the case, cited by Roche, of a young man who was not admitted into Komsomol because his family was too religious – this is control through exclusion. Youth activities inside and outside such an organisation are monitored and closely directed.

So far we have discussed two aspects of Roche's theoretically inspired empirical analysis: first, shrinking and expanding concepts of 'youth' and, second, the control emanating from such alterations in classification. The 'control' of people classified as 'youth' leads us to a central concept of her thesis, which has found its way into the title, namely 'domestication'. Roche uses the term 'domestication' in a literal sense: making someone part of the house (Lat. *domus*) or ascribing a role in the household and in the domestic reproductive cycle. Nevertheless, this term also carries the connotation of taming, as in the domestication of wild animals. As long as one is a 'youth', one is not expected to marry or to reproduce. Instead, one is expected to contribute to the maintenance of one's parents and the upbringing of one's younger siblings. The extension of the phase of life referred to as 'youth' (or local equivalents of this concept) and the ascription of a youthful role keeps young men from marrying and from having a household of their own. Marriage and becoming a household head is, then, the reward for a long period of preparation, postponement, subordination and patience. When it is that men actually receive their reward depends, however, on the resource base. With a low or shrinking resource base, one would expect a high or rising marriage age and a very comprehensive youth category. In Roche's words, "The fewer the resources, the larger is the youth category in local constructions". From an individual perspective this simply means that it takes longer to save for one's marriage.

The agencies that enforce this domestication are not exclusively domestic. Because relations between generations are marked by status differences and relations of respect, parents tend not to know much about their children. The Tajik teahouse (*choykhona*), however, serves as a domesticating agency at the village level, because it is there, at the group level, that status differences between generations are played out. Forces of domestication operate even at the international level: Tajik men who go to Russia as labour migrants mature to self-sufficiency, a prerequisite for future household heads; at the same time, they acquire the financial means to support their parents as respectful sons and, if they are lucky, to save for their own future households and for the often crippling expenses of marriage ('conspicuous consumption').

Roche's analysis of domestication supports her contention that the youth bulge hypothesis requires qualification. In strictly demographic approaches to youth bulge, it is assumed that all young men are equal and, thus, countable. Roche demonstrates convincingly that young men are not equal. "Brothers are different like the fingers of one hand", the Tajik say. That is, in each family, birth order determines a young man's role within a broader strategy of diversification. Oldest sons are providers for their parents and younger siblings. In most cases, they become labour migrants and send money home. The youngest son inherits the house of the parents and will care for them in their old age. The chances of receiving more than a rudimentary formal education are best for middle sons, and they seem, generally, to have the most options in life. They also form the larger group from which members of pressure groups, militias and gangs are recruited. This does not necessarily mean, however, that middle sons are 'surplus' or 'superfluous' and thus represent a potential for conflict; rather, they should be seen as members of particular families and elements of a family strategy: "Siblings (...) are the strongest social unit and ensure a family's social security through diversification."

Whether or not the sheer size of youth as a social group becomes a problem and leads to political disruption depends, as Roche demonstrates, not only on their numbers but also on the many different ways in which they can be integrated into larger wholes – i.e., on the opportunities given to them and the roles provided for them.

Group size is also a key variable in Dejene Gemechu Chala's dissertation, entitled *Local Response to the Ethiopian Ethnic Based Federalism: conflict and conflict management among the Borana and their neighbours*. In southern Ethiopia, the boundary between Oromia and the Somali regional state has been fixed by a series of local referenda. This is, no doubt, a 'numbers game', as specific cultural rights and rights of self-administration are given to groups that are small enough to qualify as minorities and large enough to build up political pressure for recognition. Dejene examines such processes with reference to the Borana and the neighbouring groups in the multi-ethnic mosaic of this region.

In the system of ethnic federalism, introduced by the new Ethiopian constitution of 1995, one might assume that the central government has set new rules and that everyone else follows these rules. This would amount to a unilateral attribution of agency to the government. On the other hand, one might assume that local and regional actors are able to manipulate the new policies and the new political terminology to their own advantage, while the central government, apart from providing a conceptual framework, is no longer in control of its own game. Dejene shows us, however, that agency can be found at various levels of political organisation, from local to national, and among various types of actors: elders, traditional office holders (*gada* system), administrators and politicians. The framework of ethnic federalism, questionable as it might be to outside observers, is widely accepted inside Ethiopia. Still, when it comes to determining which collectivities should be classified as ethnic

groups and accorded a certain status within a certain territory, various sets of players engage in different games. This observation resonates with earlier work at the MPI.<sup>3</sup>

Much of the work on the Oromo by Oromo has an apologetic or idealising undertone, but Dejene's work is a notable exception. Avoiding temptations to moralise or to project Oromo unity into the past, he describes close and long-standing relations among neighbouring groups in all their ambivalence. Enmity is a close relationship and can be combined with other close relationships. The Boran respect the Guji (another Oromo group) and Konso as enemies, and killing members of these groups brings greater distinction than does killing a lesser kind of enemy. The Gabra, for most of their history, have been allies of the Boran, but they have also been victimised when no other non-Boran were around to serve as objects of raids and ritual killing. At the same time, all of these groups were mutually interdependent, supplying each other with needed ritual paraphernalia and playing roles in each other's *gada* rituals. In the case of the Gabra, Dejene takes up my findings about such ritual exchanges and expands the list: the Boran receive incense from the Gabra of the Gaar phratry and reciprocate by giving them a heifer (a transfer that triggers the Gaar cycle of age-set promotion rituals) and textile sheets for the *duubo*, the headdress of the senior-most male age-grade. While the Galbo Gabra have a similar relationship with the Sheqal Somali, who have to provide them with the material for *duubo*, the Gabra Miigo *gada* leader receives a textile sheet (the green- and black-patterned one called *rufo*) from the *qallu* of Karrayyu (the senior-most *qallu*, i.e. ritual leader, of the Sabbo moiety of the Boran) in return for a camel bull. If the Gabra Miigo need a new skin for their ceremonial drum, the Metta subclan of the Boran provides a bull for this purpose. Furthermore, the Boran believe that general ritual benefits emanate from Gabra rituals, although they themselves are not allowed to be in the immediate vicinity when these rituals are performed. When, every six months, eight sheep are sacrificed by Gabra at Eela Gallota, a well belonging to the Boran Karrayyu, a blessing is extended to all wells in the pastoral zone that are used jointly by Gabra and Boran. The Gabra Malbe made pilgrimages to one of the two Boran *qallus* (depending on their *tiriso* or interethnic-adoption relationship), called *muuda* (anointment) journeys, to deliver ritual gifts and to receive a blessing in return.

Quite new and of great interest are Dejene's findings about mutual attitudes and ritual exchange between the Boran and the Konso, sedentary agriculturalists bordering the Boran to the west and speaking a closely related language. The Boran acquire ritual paraphernalia from the Konso (e.g. the *kallacha*, a phallic head ornament for

<sup>3</sup> Our research has contributed to a growing literature on ethnic federalism and its effects: see, for example, Dereje Feyissa's study on Gambella, Fekadu Adugna's work on the Oromo-Somali boundary, and the relevant publications of the author. Dejene's research complements the study by Dereje, which is thematically similar but set in a different Ethiopian region; and it fits nicely with my own work, which focuses on some of the same groups south of the border, in Kenya. Dejene's research overlaps with Fekadu's, insofar as both deal with the Gabra and Garri; but Dejene's case studies on the Boran/Guji and the Boran/Konso conflicts deliver new data of great interest.

senior elders), and Konso wives are thought to be propitious and to promote the fertility of the land and the people. All this does not preclude episodes of mutual killing.

Furthermore, while delegations from Worr Dasse, the pastoralist allies of the Boran, periodically visit a Boran *qallu*, the Konso have a ritual specialist (or specialists?), the *poqalla*, who receives high-ranking delegations from the Boran. The first relationship is between a ritual leader and the led, while the second is between ritual leaders.

All this provides some background for understanding the new identity games that are played within the framework of Ethiopian ethnic federalism. In spite of the scepticism of political observers and scholars, ethnic federalism may be regarded as a sincere attempt to solve a real problem. People who understood themselves in terms of ethnicity, or who had no choice but to cope with an ethnic identity that had been ascribed to them, had suffered under a succession of centralist and assimilationist regimes. But, of course, ethnic federalism created a framework for articulating problems and for delineating ethnic and sub-ethnic units, whether by ethnic activists or administrators. Dejene gives a chronological overview of corresponding historical grievances and the various ways of dealing with them. Borrowing the concept of 'translation' from Richard Rottenburg and others, he describes how Stalin's ideas about nationalities and theories of imperialism found their way into Ethiopia, especially through the ESM (Ethiopian Student Movement) of the 1960s and 1970s. Local institutions are also subject to translation. Prudently using the term 'revival' in quotation marks, Dejene describes 'retraditionalisation' as the 'translation' of *gada* institutions and the *gada* vocabulary in a modern context. State promotion and partial appropriation of *gada* institutions accommodates Oromo needs for recognition but may also be viewed as a form of 'pacification'. The peace brought about by this policy, however, is far from complete. At the local level there is more competition than cooperation between *gada* leaders of the different ethnic and sub-ethnic groups.

The Oromo identity unites the Boran, Guji, and others under a broad label and is of relevance on the national level (and in the Guji/Gedeo conflict, during which lorry-loads of Boran came to the aid of the Guji, as Tadesse Berisso has reported). On the other hand, the Guji demand for a separate zone within Oromia on territory to be taken from the former Borana Zone was a cause of conflict, especially with regard to the drawing of the boundary. 'Development' in the form of the foundation of a new university at Bule Hora (Agere Mariam) entered into the bargain as well. So far, the predominantly Guji inhabitants of Bule Hora, whose wishes to be included in the Guji zone have gone unfulfilled, have been mollified by getting a university.

Dejene also examines the cases of the Gabra and the Konso. The Gabra have demanded a (special) district. Failing that, some of them threaten to declare themselves to be Somali, which might lead to a Somali majority in certain border areas. This, in turn, may lead to boundary corrections in favour of the Somali regional state and at the expense of Oromia. In contrast, the Konso were not concerned with claiming cultural rights or political status within Oromia, as they already enjoy such

benefits in their special district of the neighbouring Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State. Nor did the Konso demand a correction of the boundary. They simply crossed it. Theirs is a case of farmers encroaching on pastureland used by Boran pastoralists.

This shows that, when boundaries become too restrictive and one's needs can no longer be met within them, there are often two options: shifting the boundary or crossing it. This applies not only to territorial boundaries, e.g. between the regional state to which the Konso belong and Oromia, but also to temporal structures, e.g. to the dividing lines between the phases of the life cycle. In the Tajik case described by Roche, social forces effected a shift in the boundary of 'youth', an expansion of the category, rather than a modification of its contents. In the Rendille case (and I would be curious to know more about Boran, Gabra, Konso in this regard), the temporal intervals between the initiation rites of age-sets and the corresponding qualifications for marriage remain unchanged; but more and more men have been allowed to marry prematurely, so that the exceptions have become the statistical rule. Borders in time have not been redefined; rather, trespassing has been tolerated. I am not aware of a general theoretical treatment of the conditions under which boundaries are redrawn or simply crossed, but this looks like an interesting question to me.

### **The Role of Language in Identification Processes in Belgium and Kazakhstan**

In her thesis, *Negotiating Language and Identity: the case of Belgium*, Jolanda Lindenberg discusses a long-standing conflict in one of the newer 'nation states' of Western Europe. In 1830, the predominantly Catholic part of the Low Countries was made into the Kingdom of Belgium. The unifying factor was clearly religion; in contrast to other nineteenth century nationalisms, linguistic criteria were not applied. The linguistic divisions were evident throughout history, however. During the First and Second World Wars, for example, Flemings earned the reputation, in the perception of Walloons, of being pro-German.

To accommodate people who insist on their right to speak one of two languages (French or Dutch) in as many contexts as possible, while excluding the other, Belgium has undergone a process that Lindenberg calls federalisation. At the end of this process, we find a country that is neatly divided along linguistic lines. Language has been territorialised. Within the two language areas, there are parallel institutions at all levels of administration. The language you are supposed to speak in an official context is determined not by who you are but by where you are. Linguistic minorities enjoy special rights in well-defined mixed areas.

Proximity to or remoteness from linguistic boundaries tends to harden or soften linguistic identification, Lindenberg argues. Her ethnographic focus is on something that seems fantastic in this age of rapid transport and electronic communication: the wish of some Francophones to establish a land corridor through a few kilometres of

Dutch-speaking territory in order to link the predominantly French-speaking area around Brussels (which officially has a bilingual status) to the major French-speaking zone in the south. To some Walloons, being surrounded by Dutch-speaking areas seems to evoke the archaic fear of being cut off. But from what? From other French speakers who must send wheat supplies to beleaguered Brussels? The absurdity of this idea is a powerful argument for the strength of identification that can be generated by territorialised language.



*A pro-Flemish demonstration, held in the village of Sint-Genesius-Rode, Belgium, in 2007. This village lies in the Flemish region, but some French speakers want it to become part of a 'French corridor' connecting the Walloon region with Brussels. (Photo: J. Lindenberg, 2007)*

Some of the case histories that Lindenberg presents smack of language apartheid (not Lindenberg's term; my apologies if this is an overstatement). In the 1960s, the bilingual, predominantly French-speaking University of Leuven/Louvain ended up on the Flemish side of a newly drawn linguistic boundary. A bitter controversy ensued, and, in the end, the university was split. The Dutch-speaking departments remained where they were, and the French-speaking ones were moved to the other side of the border, where a new university was built 30 kilometres from the old location. The library was split according to odd and even shelf numbers.

Theoretically, Lindenberg relies on the notion of ‘collective memory’ (Halbwachs, the Assmanns), because, during her fieldwork forty years later, she could no longer examine the actual fight but only the old wounds. Methodologically, she uses discourse analysis, mainly of present-day texts from her interviews and her e-mail correspondence, because she is interested in how the conflicts of the 1960s are represented now. Her analysis of discourse includes the enumeration of emotionally loaded phrases and the examination of the contexts in which such phrases are left untranslated. French speakers often leave the phrase ‘Walen Buiten’ (‘Walloons out’) untranslated when addressing Belgian audiences. Maintaining the Dutch term gives the impression that the Flemings were the perpetrators and the Walloons the victims.

In another case history, Lindenberg examines the district surrounding Brussels in which French speakers had the right to vote for Brussels candidates. The Flemings used their majority to split the district so that the new districts were linguistically more homogeneous and special regulations could be abolished. As a result, the Flemish parties gained a few more seats in parliament but only at the expense of violating the previously existing commitment to negotiated compromise between the language-based blocs of Belgium. Again, Lindenberg uses texts – some from the public media, some that she produced as interview transcripts – for close analysis. She emphasises the dilemmas of bilingual people and of people who perceive themselves as cosmopolitan and who were low on the scale of linguistic identification in this episode resulting in increased separation along linguistic lines.

Most Belgians appear to be Herderians or followers of Wilhelm von Humboldt, Edward Sapir, Benjamin Whorf, and Joshua Fishman – even though they may not know anything about any of these authors. They have their own version of *Volksgeist*, which, in their own ethno-anthropology, they call ‘mentality’.<sup>4</sup> As in the case of *Volksgeist*, ‘mentality’ is thought to be closely intertwined with language – so closely that a language, or its semantic framework, is thought to shape the way that its speakers think and feel. If we ask what language stands for, from this perspective, one would have to answer that it just stands for itself and for things thought to be so closely associated with it that they cannot be separated from it.

While this belief in the connection of language with ‘mentality’ is shared by Flemings and French-speakers, there are also differences in how the two languages are perceived. Dutch is highly territorialised. When on Flemish soil, one is supposed to speak Dutch or one of the Flemish dialects. As a result of the policies discussed elsewhere in Lindenberg’s thesis, French has its own language area in Belgium too. But since French is also spoken in Senegal, Haiti, Quebec, and in neighbouring France, it also has a universal touch that Dutch lacks.

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<sup>4</sup> My use of ‘ethno-anthropology’ is analogous to the use of the term ‘ethno-science’. Ethno-science is the system of convictions the group under study holds about what we would call science. Ethno-anthropology is the system of convictions the group under study holds about what we would call anthropology.

Lindenberg concludes that affiliation with a sociolinguistic group has lost much of the class connotation that it once had when the mining industry still prospered in Wallonia and the educated classes all over the world still spoke French. Language is not a marker, as a marker always stands for something else, for what is marked; rather, it seems, in this case, to be a resource. The two sociolinguistic groups defend their right to use their own language in their own areas in the same way as they might claim the timber of their own forests or the water of their own rivers.

Often, language provides access to other, non-linguistic resources: Arabic to Koranic studies, Latin to the Roman Catholic clergy, French (now English) to the world of diplomacy. In Belgium, however, the struggle between the sociolinguistic groups is largely about language itself. People maximise the contexts in which they can speak their own language and do not need to bother about the other language. Bilingualism is still widespread, with, however, more Dutch speakers learning some French than French speakers learning Dutch. But Franco-Dutch bilingualism seems to be declining, and in a footnote Lindenberg suggests that, in the end, a third language might profit from this situation: English.

The role of language for collective identification is quite different in Kazakhstan, as Rita Sanders shows. In her thesis *Why Did They Stay Behind? Identities, memories and social identifications among Germans in Taldy Korgan, Kazakhstan*, Sanders reports that the Germans who have remained in this Central Asian republic, after most have left for Germany, have found a self-definition, accepted by others, that does without language. They contest the importance that German authorities attribute to the German language and reject the language test that has been used to regulate immigration to Germany. They recall a history under Stalin and thereafter, when they had to avoid being heard speaking German in order to hide their ethnic identity. They do not feel less German for not having been able to maintain their language under these circumstances.

Kazakhstani Russians view the Germans positively because of their European origins and their mastery of Russian; but they deny them a separate identity. In fact, from a Kazakh perspective, 'Russian' is a broad category which encompasses other Slavs, Germans and even Koreans. After seventy years of an atheist state ideology, this wider category of 'Russian' is delineated along the periphery of what once was Christendom.

In other contexts, 'German' identity, rather than having dissolved in a wider 'Russian' identity, becomes visible as a subcategory or even a separate category. It is associated (in self-description and ascription by others) with neatness, punctuality, order, and efficiency (stereotypes from which Germans in Germany often wish to dissociate themselves). The ability to speak German is an optional marker, not an obligatory one. This definition of Kazakhstani Germans has the advantage of being both positively evaluated and distinct from that of Germans in Germany.

By stressing virtues such as punctuality and efficiency as markers that distinguish them from (other) Russians, Germans imply that Russians lack such virtues,

a view shared by the Kazakhs. Another difference between Germans and Russians concerns attitudes towards the Kazakhs and their language. While some Germans join (other) monolingual Russians in decrying the discrimination against those who do not speak Kazakh in the new post-Soviet Kazakhstan, others Germans do speak Kazakh. They recall that their parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents, who were unloaded from railway wagons somewhere in the steppe in 1942 without any provisions, could not have survived without the help of the local Kazakhs. Those who learned Kazakh because of biographical circumstances or inclination see themselves as cultural brokers who are different from the typical Russian. Many do well in the Kazakhstani economy and society and have never tried to emigrate to Germany.



*Nobody takes notice of the Wacholder (juniper berry schnapps) truck from Germany. In preparation for the city festival in Taldy Korgan, Kazakhstan, in 2007, representatives of various minorities build booths to present their 'culture'. (Photo:R. Sanders, 2007)*

Small wonder that the remaining Kazakhstani Germans tend to be critical of the German state, of Germans in Germany and of their own former neighbours who did go to Germany. What has become of the 'bridge' between Europe and Asia that the German government pretended to be building by financing all sorts of programmes for Kazakhstani Germans in the 1990s, they ask? Have the German courses not just been used for emigration to Germany? Has the German government not, in reality,

been dismantling a bridge? Where does the money for the posh cars come from, in which emigrants to Germany come back to visit their old towns and villages? Don't they have jobs which require much lower qualifications than the jobs that Germans in Kazakhstan hold? Aren't many of them just housecleaners? Why did they not use some of the money to help their relatives who remained in Kazakhstan? Why do their children, who have grown up in Germany, still speak Russian? Are they really integrated in Germany? Are they as successful there as their old neighbours are back in Kazakhstan?

In a way, Kazakhstani Germans make a claim to be the better Germans, with or without the German language. The contrast with Belgium, in which everything is about language and language only, could not be more pronounced.

### **Composite Nations: studies from Uzbekistan and Burkina Faso**

In her thesis, *Identification, Discrimination and Communication: Khorezmian migrants in Tashkent*, Rano Turaeva also focuses on language.<sup>5</sup> In this report, however, I will compare her findings on migrants from an Uzbek province to the Uzbek capital with Andrea Riester's findings about the negotiation of nationhood in Burkina Faso. Both authors deal with migrants who share the same nationality as the 'host' society, though Turaeva writes about internal migrants and Riester about those returning back to their home country after having first lived as immigrants in a neighbouring country.

Turaeva's human subjects are migrants from the Khorezm province to the Uzbek capital, Tashkent. To cope with their often insecure situation, Khorezmians adopt identification strategies that differ from person to person and, for each person, from one situation to another. Here is where language comes in. The Khorezmian dialect is on the margin of mutual intelligibility with other Uzbek dialects. It can be used as a 'secret' language, which most non-Khorezmian eavesdroppers do not understand; or it can have a greater or lesser influence on the way Khorezmians speak other varieties of Uzbek (e.g. standard Uzbek or the city dialect of Tashkent). Few Khorezmians ever succeed in disguising their origin completely and 'passing' as Tashkentis, because traces of their dialect always betray them.

In a postmodern ethnography of the standard variety (en vogue now for twenty or thirty years), a problem such as this would be dealt with on a purely discursive level. Differences are 'constructed' and people 'over-communicate' or 'under-communicate' the differences. But 'over' or 'under' what? This question is usually not posed, and no independent measure of difference is even attempted. As a trained linguist, Turaeva is in a position to do better. She does measure linguistic difference and

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<sup>5</sup> This thesis, which combines anthropological and linguistic approaches, was co-sponsored by the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen, the Netherlands. A director of that institute, Wolfgang Klein, was a member of Turaeva's doctoral committee and consulted with her regularly.

comes to the conclusion that Khorezmian is almost an outlier when compared to other dialects that are classified as Uzbek. In this context, Turaeva discusses monogenetic models (tree diagrams, taxonomies of language families and subfamilies) and also models of mutual influence among synchronically existing languages. The latter help to account for the results of Iranian influences (e.g. from Farsi or Tajik) and of contact between different Turkic languages as well. She also discusses morphological and lexical differences that distinguish Khorezmian from other Uzbek dialects.

The visibility (or, in this case, audibility) of a difference makes possible the social discrimination to which Turaeva refers in the title of the thesis. Another term could have been second-class citizenship. Because of the Soviet legal heritage in this Central Asian republic, migrants need settlement permits (*propiska*) in order to stay in Tashkent. These can only be obtained through social networks or corruption (a socially embedded practice which is difficult to evaluate in moral terms), and many migrants are temporarily or permanently 'illegal'. This illegality has an impact on in-group and inter-group relations. Khorezmians hide or accommodate each other. Illegality becomes a cause of dependence and even exploitation. Policemen prey on 'illegals' and extract payments from them.

In her thesis, *Migration and Conflict: the integration of Burkinabe migrants displaced from Côte d'Ivoire*, Andrea Riester focuses on people who do not fit into the usual administrative categories of their home country or of international organisations. The 'migrants' or 'displaced' people referred to in her title are known as *rapatriés*, or repatriated people in Burkina Faso; but those who know about the violence in Côte d'Ivoire that led to the expulsion of Burkinabe may wonder why the people in question are not called refugees. All this has to do with legal niceties. 'Refugees', in UN English, refers to people who had to leave their own country, not to people who had to seek refuge there because they were persecuted elsewhere. 'Displaced' normally refers to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), mostly those who, in a civil war, had to leave their homes and flee to another part of the country. The phrase 'externally displaced' does not exist. This leaves Riester with the rather vague terms 'migrants' and 'displaced' for the people she has studied. She also cites the emic term, *rapatriés*, but this is potentially misleading, because some nominal Burkinabe who were expelled from Côte d'Ivoire were, in fact, born there and had never seen their 'fatherland' (*patrie*), Burkina Faso. The term *rapatriés* does resonate, however, with some of the ideas that the Burkinabe state has about the people in question.

Riester takes recent trends in migration research, specifically, transnationalism and its convincing critique of methodological nationalism, as her point of departure. "The current generation of transnationalists", she notes, "has tended to emphasize 'de-ethnicisation' and 'de-migrantisation' by not restricting research to specific, ethnically-defined migrant groups and the transnational fields established by these groups". While dropping this restriction is laudable, one may hope that this new emphasis does not blind transnationalists to new processes of ethnicisation and mi-

grantisation that accompany de-ethnicisation and de-migrantisation. The category of ‘migrant’ itself can be ethnicised, and that also happens to other, primarily religious or geographical categories such as ‘Muslim’, ‘Ossi’ (East German), ‘Black’ (as Russians call people from the Caucasus or Central Asia), Northerner (a highly ethnicised and politicised category that many West Africans use in referring to expastoralists from the arid lands), etc.

Riester emphasises the interaction of the international, the national, and the local level in her analysis. In conceptualising some of this interaction, she uses Michel Callon’s concept of ‘enrolment’. “[T]he [national] government and the [international] development industry have devised two different roles for newcomers: either the needy victim or the resourceful entrepreneur. Local migrant and non-migrant actors enrol into these perspectives in different ways”. Migration has been going on for a long time, but when ‘nation states’ appeared on the scene they reshaped it or even replaced old forms of migration with new ones. “West African transnational migration today can [...] be said to have superseded much older migration patterns and to have been created by migrants and nation-states alike: nation-states are providing an important framework with which migrants and non-migrants have to engage nationally and transnationally” – another example for the interaction of ‘levels’.

A key concept in Riester’s toolkit is integration. In the Global North, integration is also a relevant emic term: it looms large in political debates. In the Global South, ‘integration’ as a concept exists in the shadow of ‘development’. That means that integration can be studied in either the presence or the absence of a political discourse bearing that name. The concept of integration should not be restricted to homogeneity, brought about by assimilation; it should also be studied in the context of heterogeneity or diversity. Riester studies integration with reference to different forms of – or discourses about – diversity, such as pluralism, meta-ethnic identification and autochthony. At the meta-ethnic level, Riester discovers historically developed patterns of interactions among people perceived to be ethnically diverse. “Over the centuries”, she notes, “migration has created ethnically heterogeneous settings in this area through which newcomers can easily participate in different social organisations like neighbourhoods, economic niches, religious associations and communal leisure time activities”.

In introducing us to her field site, the town of Batié, Riester takes us to Europe for comparative purposes, specifically, to the English village of ‘Winston Parva’ as described by Norbert Elias and John L. Scotson in their classic community study, *The Established and the Outsiders* (1965). In the Batié case, the outsiders are primarily non-Birifor, and, before the influx of *rapatriés*, Batié was considered to be primarily a Birifor village. Riester goes on to explain what it means to be Birifor or Mossi or Lobi in terms of linguistic and regional affiliations, and she lays out the recent history of immigration, along with demographic statistics broken down by ethnicity, age structure, occupation, and educational levels.

The theme of the ‘established’ and the ‘outsiders’ is taken up again in a comparison with Liisa Malkki’s findings about Burundi refugees in Tanzania, and specifically in her conclusion that, “almost like[...] [a] tribe, refugees [...] become ‘a culture’, [...] a community”. Having taken a de-ethnicising ‘transnational’ perspective as her starting point, Riester suggests here that her key category, *rapatriés*, has become ethnicised in local usage, at least to a degree. She emphasises the heterogeneity of the members of the category, *rapatriés*, but also shows that collective ascriptions seem to stick to them. “Conflicts between migrants and locals have acquired an ethnic undertone”. That is, irrespective of their older ethnic affiliation, migrants as such are now treated as if they were an ethnic group. In a chapter entitled, ‘Conflicts over Land and the Role of the State’, Riester discusses a new twist to the question of the ethnicisation of the category *rapatrié*. It is, by and large, equated with the politically dominant Mossi, the largest ethnic group in Burkina Faso, to which a majority of the migrants belong. The category, *rapatrié*, is, furthermore, conflated with being rich, capitalist, and enjoying the protection of the state and international agencies.

The dissertations of Turaeva and Riester are both about the composite nature of nations. In the case of the Uzbeks,<sup>6</sup> there are clear sub-ethnicities, which find expression in regional and dialect differentiation. In the case of ethnically plural Burkina Faso, *rapatrié* is a non-ethnic category, with members defined by a particular history of expulsion and resettlement. The *rapatriés* have become ethnicised to some extent, however, both as such and because of the numerical preponderance of a particular ethnic group, the Mossi, among them. In both cases, differences become the basis for discrimination, and the state plays a role in this. In the case of Khorezmians in Tashkent, this discrimination is based on the state’s *propiska* regulations, which allow for the emergence of a distinction between first- and second-class citizens, depending on regional origins. In the case of Burkina Faso, state and international organisations are suspected of discriminating in favour of the *rapatriés*, and this leads to resentment against them in the local population.

### **Networks of Patronage – Kyrgyz politics and the West African second-hand clothing trade**

In her thesis, *The Native Son and Blood Ties: kinship and poetics of patronage in rural Kyrgyzstan*, Aksana Ismailbekova explains kinship and patronage in Kyrgyzstan in terms of interlinked and widely overlapping networks. While most other authors have described patron-client relationships as alternatives to kinship, Ismailbekova shows that Kyrgyz patrons recruit clients among kin – although kinship ties are sometimes stretched or manipulated to legitimate such relationships. Despite her

<sup>6</sup> I here speak of ‘the Uzbeks’ as a linguistic group or dialect continuum, not as citizens of Uzbekistan, because I want to leave the question of the role of the Tajik language and the Karakalpaks and Kazakhs of Uzbekistan aside.

original lack of interest in kinship debates, she notes, "I found I could not avoid taking into account the overarching system of kinship in Kyrgyz society".

Ismailbekova bases her analysis of Kyrgyz kinship on data gathered in two field sites, which are not far from each other and are linked by a multiplicity of events and personalities. She finds a strongly patrilineal and patrilocal form of organisation, requiring women to move at marriage. The geographical distance separating the bride's parental home from the groom's should be neither too great nor too small. Still, the average geographical distance separating families allied through marriage seems to be considerable in comparison to other Central Asian settings. In the oasis of Bukhara, the Uzbek/Tajik villagers seem to perceive it as a major disruption if their daughters move more than a few hundred metres away at marriage (Sancak, ongoing research).

The cousin terminology of the Kyrgyz corresponds to the Omaha type in a very pure form, and the patrilineal ideology expressed by the logic of the Omaha terminology is reinforced by the ideal of the extended agnatic family, with members living in spatial proximity to one another and sharing much of their work and their leisure activities.

In illustrating her points, Ismailbekova follows the career of a man named Rahim, the 'native son' mentioned in the title and the patron in the region where her field sites are located. Rahim manages to have his lineage recognised as noble and makes up for having no brothers (and just two patrilineal first cousins) by acquiring clients among more distant agnatic relatives. His strategies, and the complementary attitudes of his clients, become visible in his main business venture, the former cooperative farm of Orlovka village. As the head of this agricultural enterprise and, more generally, as a patron, Rahim manages to incorporate unrelated clients into his networks in ways that do not necessarily endear him to the reader. There seem to be two ways to avoid paying wages. A Kyrgyz man receives no wages for carrying out a number of tasks; rather, he is simply allowed to live with his family in a shed on the premises. A Ukrainian worker had been promised set wages, but they were usually not paid; rather, the boss kept his passport so that he could not move away.

Drawing inspiration from Michael Herzfeld's approach to 'poetics', Ismailbekova describes a public meeting in Orlovka village in which Rahim exploits his patronage networks in order to undermine a local initiative to construct a mosque on the central square, which he wants to use for other purposes. This is the rhetorical construction or the 'poetics' of patronage. From Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann, Ismailbekova borrows the terms 'on-state' and 'off-state' in order to describe the options open to an actor who may choose to present himself to others as a state official, an informal patron, or just a concerned citizen. These concepts are useful for describing the interplay between private goals and the prerogatives of public office. At the public meeting in question, Rahim pretends to be speaking as a concerned citizen, who appeals to a kind of grass-roots democracy and tries to decide the matter in his favour through a show of hands. His on-state role is played

out in face-to-face discussions on the side. Here he makes use of his privileged access to officials, who have already decided in favour of his opponents but whom he gets to re-open the discussion. In light of Rahim's tactic of playing his on-state role off-stage, Ismailbekova, citing F.G. Bailey, argues that "patrons make the boundary between the public and the private invisible".

The story has a dramatic ending. In 2008, Rahim went 'missing', and by 2009 it had become clear that he was the victim of a political murder. The impression that the reader gains of Rahim in reading this thesis is ambivalent. He is shown to be a strategic thinker with a cool and calculating side, but he is also a charismatic personality who has worked his way up against many odds. His sudden death and the dissolution of everything he had built up, including his extensive network of clients and self-styled relatives, comes as a shock to the reader, who, through close descriptions of so many facets of his life, has become familiar with this young man and cannot help feeling some sympathy for him. It makes the reader reflect once more on lineage-based power politics: What happens if the other side gets the upper hand by being even less scrupulous?

Ismailbekova's thesis also offers much food for thought about democracy. The elections she witnessed were rigged. Can one still speak of 'democracy' if the whole election process is pervaded by kin solidarity, patronage, and gifts of whole packages of unused ballots? Ismailbekova describes patronage as a safety network and a coping mechanism that has come to the fore with the political instability following the demise of the Soviet Union. She sympathises with the various actors, clients, and patrons alike whose fears and ambitions she has analysed in great detail, along with the constraints that limit their options. She seems to suggest that a form of democracy that results not from universal citizenship and individual freedom but from the interplay of patronage, nepotism, and rigging is still democracy. It would be easy to dismiss this position as cynical, to withdraw to the moral high ground and to defend legal principles. To share Ismailbekova's views might make one vulnerable on legal and moral grounds. One might expose oneself to the dilemmas she describes. But no doubt she has shown us that, in this matter, moral judgements are not easy.

Networks of patronage are also a central theme of Olumide Abimbola's dissertation, entitled *Okrika: Igbo trade networks and secondhand clothing*. Second-hand clothing is a globalised trade if there ever was one, connecting the post-industrial world with the 'developing world'. It is monetised and commercial throughout, but it begins with a donation. Consequently, Abimbola's theoretical toolbox includes Marcel Mauss's *Essai sur le don* (1923–1924), to which he refers in contrasting Polynesian ideas about gifts with contemporary charitable donations.

In Nigeria, the second-hand clothing trade depends on networks stretching from local apprentices, who are often junior relatives of the traders, to partners in neighbouring Benin and in distant Britain. One key to the smooth functioning of such networks is trust, a basic concept in the field of economic anthropology.

‘In God we trust, everyone else we monitor’ – this American aphorism, aside from offering a funny twist on a line found on every U.S. dollar bill, points to some basic truths. We need to trust those we cannot monitor, and trust and monitoring exist in inverse proportion to one another: the less information we have, the more trust we need; the less trust we have, the more information we need. Problems of information and trust abound in the second-hand clothing trade. Second-hand clothes that are traded wholesale are shipped in large bales. There is no way to look inside. Clothes may have been sorted according to different categories and packed separately; bales may contain different kinds and qualities in different proportions; and the information given about what and how much they contain may be true or false. Thus, information economics is especially suitable for the study of the second-hand clothing trade, as Abimbola shows in a case study devoted to a trader he calls Jude Aka.

When Jude’s brother asked him to move from Accra to Cotonou to help in his second-hand clothing business, Jude took the ease with which he sold his belongings in Accra as a sign that his compliance with his brother’s request was in accordance with God’s will. He was strengthened in this conviction when members of his parish gave him money to help him move. Thus, even oracles may seem to provide the information that is necessary to do business; but, once he arrived in Cotonou, Jude had to rely on more earthly sources. First, to learn about the quality of the clothes provided by a certain British company, Jude employed a woman to observe sales of the supplier’s goods on the retail market. The next step was to search for other wholesalers who received goods from the same company. Jude did manage to find one such trader, who, however, was enraged, because he thought Jude was trying to ‘steal’ his supplier. Jude had to gather information not only on the quality of the goods but also on conditions of payment and speed of delivery – to avoid having too much money tied up in advance payments to a slow supplier. In the end, however, traders such as Jude must enter into a business relation with very little information; and then they learn from experience. One starts small and sees how the new business relationship develops. Abimbola provides rich descriptions and lucid analyses of this material and much more.

Trust also plays a role in the crucial relationship between a trader and his apprentice. Established traders who accept a young man as an apprentice must trust him not to divert too much money from the transactions with which he is entrusted; and the apprentice must trust that his patron will eventually set him up with a business of his own, which is the whole point of going through an apprenticeship. Clearly, ethnicity plays an important role: traders and their apprentices are all Igbo. In fact, there is a preponderance of younger brothers and nephews among the apprentices; but it is not clear whether this results from the patron’s choice or from obligation. In one case in Abimbola’s account, a trader took the son of his former master as an apprentice (but the master was also an agnatic relative, namely, his father’s father’s brother’s son’s son).

In the second-hand clothing trade among the Igbo, clear expectations are attached to the roles of master and apprentice. In order to reward the apprentice for his services, the master should teach him ‘the secrets of the trade’ and, after about five years, assist him in setting up his own business. Apparently, however, masters and apprentices often fail to live up to the role expectations, if one may judge by the frequency of mutual recrimination. The apprentice accuses the master of withholding the money that he needs to set up an independent business, while the master accuses the apprentice of theft or embezzlement, sometimes rightfully, because the meagre support that apprentices receive from their masters forces them to steal. Normative discourse about apprenticeship thus seems to have little to do with reality.

As in the Kyrgyz case, rhetoric in the Nigerian second-hand clothing trade needs to be studied with regard to its content and also its function. In Kyrgyz politics, the kinship idiom of patronage and the corresponding exchanges of services, support, and protection create mutually advantageous relationships. With the patron’s loss of power, or his death, ways of speaking, ways of acting and the resulting relationships evaporate without a trace. In the Nigerian case, the norms and values associated with Igbo apprenticeship help, first, to maintain expectations and, finally, to justify the breakup of the relationship, once expectations have been disappointed. This demonstrates once more that language serves many purposes beyond expressing referential meaning.

### **Beyond Descent Groups: political identification in Somaliland and Mauritius**

The deconstructionist critique of research on Somali social organisation (e.g. Besteman and Cassanelli 1996) has far overshot its target in declaring clanship to be irrelevant. While it is true that Somali politics cannot be reduced to clanship, neither can it be studied with no reference to clans at all. In comparison to earlier conflicts among pastoral nomads, everything today may indeed have changed – e.g. the contested resources, the incentives provided by the regional and global political and economic environment, the armaments, and the speed of conflict escalation. But militias and political movements are still largely made up of descent-based units such as subclans. Warlords and political leaders ignore clanship only at their own peril.

Clanship and inter-clan alliances stand out as the most important basis of recruitment in Somali society, but the purposes, or the political contents, of the clan-based units are not determined, at least not in a strict sense, by the principle of agnatic descent. In his thesis, *Political Orientations and Repertoires of Identification: state and identity formation in Northern Somalia*, Markus V. Hoehne confirms this perspective with regard both to the importance of descent for recruitment and to the limits of descent for substantive explanations of political action. In periods of insecurity, such as those that have characterised recent Somali history, a generalised fear of violence prevails, causing people to avoid wider alliances and to fall back instead on their

agnatic relatives. One finds numerous examples in Hoehne's thesis, and one might say that, sadly, clanship is now more important in Somalia than in earlier periods. On the other hand, Hoehne also emphasises that other factors beside descent are at work in the formation of political identities. His thesis is devoted to identifying and analysing these other factors.

The Somaliland loyalists, the defenders of Puntland and those who advocate an autonomous Sool-Sanag-Cayn state may tend to belong to a limited range of clans, but that tells us little about their views of history or their visions of the political future. Hoehne focuses on such political contents, showing how shared beliefs and aspiration also affect processes of identification in ways that may corroborate or contradict genealogical ties.

From Hoehne's perspective, emotions should be included among the contents of the political positions with which people identify. In my own writings, I have repeatedly stressed the necessity to go below the level of emblems and markers on the surface of our public selves and to address the role of emotions in collective identification. Now, fortunately, Hoehne has taken up the challenge.

In analysing the collective dispositions of different groups and categories of persons in Somalia, Hoehne borrows the concept of trauma from psychology and the medical sciences. First, in good anthropological fashion, he examines the concept and its applicability to his field site. Should its usage be restricted to the 'West' or can it be applied to Somalia? What are its terminological or conceptual (rough) equivalents in the Somali language? He also discusses biographies of individuals who have had traumatising experiences, most prominent among them the unfortunate Labo to whom the work is dedicated. Aside from straightforward applications of the concept of trauma, Hoehne also explores metaphorical extensions. He distinguishes different kinds of group consciousness with reference to different kinds of collective traumata. These traumata may even inform the consciousness and emotional identification of people who have not experienced them directly.

In addition to trauma narratives, Hoehne also considers different readings of history. He himself adopts the view that critical reconstruction of the past cannot come to definite conclusion. Thus, each generation has to ask its own questions of the past and find new answers. Hoehne avoids the relativist trap of reducing everything to mere opinion and regarding all representations of history as equally valid. There are facts, he insists, but these can be misrepresented, omitted, or reinterpreted. Turning to the history of Somaliland, he presents two different versions of history, one affirming a separate Somaliland identity and one contesting it. Then he proceeds to list the biases, selections and omissions that underlie each version.

By combining his familiarity with recent theories of identification, rich data derived from fieldwork, and in-depth knowledge drawn from the secondary literature on the Horn of Africa, Hoehne contributes to a number of current debates in political anthropology. Let me pick out just two: first, the relationship between ethnicity and

territoriality and, second, the relevance (or irrelevance) of statehood for economic and social development.

Recent work at the MPI, e.g. by Fekadu Adugna, has shown how ethnic groups claim exclusive rights over territories or privileged positions within them, thus obliging their neighbours to do the same or to be put at a disadvantage. After Fekadu's description and analysis of the race for territoriality on both sides of the Kenyan/Ethiopian border, it comes as no surprise that something similar is happening along the border that Ethiopia shares with Somaliland (or north-western Somalia, as the defenders of Somali unity call it). Here, of course, it is clans, not ethnic groups, that fall into these patterns. In both cases, however, territorial exclusivity expands in a mosaic-like fashion. New areas that are claimed exclusively by one group or the other are added to the fringes of a larger territorial mosaic.

Somali clans and subclans have always claimed core areas (*degaan*) to which they return periodically. They regard the wells in these areas and any improvements that have been made to the infrastructure (e.g. dams for seasonal water reservoirs) to be theirs as well. In between the core areas of various clans, there are areas of shared seasonal or sporadic use. For centuries, nomads in the territories that are now in Somaliland have also moved far into the Haud region of what is now Ethiopia (to the north of the Ogadeen region, which may be familiar to readers because of its coverage in the media). In recent years, however, the Ethiopian policy of allocating 'fixed districts and regions to certain ethnic group and subgroups' (compare the section on Dejene's thesis above) have hindered the cross-border migrations of nomads from Somaliland. This, in turn, has led clan groups and subgroups to harden their claims to exclusive rights to territories within Somaliland. Hoehne reports the failure of mediation processes facilitated by the Somaliland government against the background of this wider regional picture.

The main theme running through Hoehne's thesis is the competition among different regional frameworks for the re-establishment of statehood. In foregrounding this theme, Hoehne is following his Somali interlocutors, all of whom advocate re-establishing statehood.<sup>7</sup> But some Western scholars, especially those with 'free market' or libertarian tendencies, have argued that Somali are, in fact, better-off without a state. It is true that Somali have learned to cope with a situation of statelessness or of weak statehood by providing for their own security and developing economic coping mechanisms. Statelessness, however, is not what they prefer. If only to fit into a world of 'nation states' (characterised by international diplomacy, the postal association, and recognition of jurisdictions, along with such correlates as credit-worthiness and enforceable claims), Somali want to have a state or states.

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<sup>7</sup> What re-establishing statehood means varies, of course, from case to case. For the defenders of Somaliland, the main issue is international recognition for a rudimentary state which already exists on the ground (though with a contested eastern border), while for the proponents of an SSC (Sool-Sanag-Cayn) state it would mean carving a new territory out of areas claimed by other entities.

Often the most immediate need is a passport, which allows legal forms of travel and can only be provided by a state.

Hoehne is right to criticise “economic philosophers sitting in well-established states and reflecting on statelessness”. Peter T. Leeson, a recent propagator of stateless solutions, may have a point when he suggests that, in relatively calm periods, statelessness may be preferable to life in a predatory state or in a battleground over contested statehood; but to most readers this may not come as much of a surprise. “Moreover”, as Hoehne writes, “the argument of Leeson [...] that a number of key development indicators show improvement under anarchy (e.g. infant and maternal mortality have fallen; access to health facilities has increased; extreme poverty has decreased) is completely flawed. Leeson does not consider that most of these indicators have improved through massive external aid and flows of financial remittances from the diaspora. Effectively, what helped Somalis to survive and probably to improve in some regards, despite statelessness, was money not generated under conditions of anarchy, but generated in well functioning (welfare) states. A considerable part of the money sent by the Somali diaspora in Europe is actually welfare money”.

In his thesis, *Islamistischer ‘Fundamentalismus’ neu betrachtet: Performative Konstruktion skripturaler Authentizität – mauritische Muslime zwischen nationalen und religiösen Identifikationen*, Frank Donath describes the interplay of ethnic or national origins with religious identifications in Mauritius.<sup>8</sup> Donath focuses on Mauritian Muslims, who make up 17% of the total population. Almost exclusively South Asian in origin, Muslims form a minority not only in Mauritius as a whole but also in relation to Hindus from the subcontinent.

All of the inhabitants of this postcolonial island state can trace their descent from immigrants; therefore, the usual identity discourses about autochthony, indigeneity or native status are absent. The official ideology of Mauritius emphasises polyethnic Mauritianism and the maintenance of diasporic links to various countries of origin. The population of Mauritius is not segmented along clan lines (as in Somalia), nor is it divided into tribes, ethnic groups, or ‘communities’ (as in many African countries or in Uzbekistan) but by the reference to different home countries. In the case of the South Asians, this ‘home’ is an idealized, homogenized northern India in which Hinduism is practiced and Hindi spoken. This creates difficulties for the South Asian Muslims of Mauritius, who must articulate their identity claims against this background.

Mauritian Muslims who are characterised as ‘Traditionalists’ assert Urdu as a holy language of Islam. Although they are Sunnis, they attribute an important role to Ali – the father’s brother’s son and daughter’s husband of the Prophet – as among the Shi’ites. Donath, whose MA is in Islamic studies, argues convincingly that this

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<sup>8</sup> Donath’s title may be translated into English as *New Perspectives on Islamic ‘Fundamentalism’: performative construction of scriptural authority – Mauritian Muslims between national and religious identification*.

feature, often wrongly characterised as an expression of a popular or heterodox form of Islam, is actually a remnant of an earlier orthodoxy that was widespread in the Islamic world. 'Traditionalists' compete with the 'Wahhabiyya', who stress the importance of Arabic and view Urdu as a variant of Hindi and, thus, as a non-Islamic language. Wahhabis often speak a hypercorrect form of Arabic, in which distinctive phonetic features are over-emphasised. They want to go back to what they view as 'early Islam' and to purify their religion of 'later accretions', for example, anything that has to do with the *ghoon* ceremony or with Ali. Although the Wahhabis, like the Traditionalists, are descendants of immigrants from South Asia, their emphasis on Arabic, together with the Mauritian logic of classifying groups by their country of origin, raises the Arabian Peninsula almost to the status of a homeland for them.

Comparisons between Mauritius and Somalia are intriguing. Although Somalia is the only country in the Arab league in which Arabic is not the dominant language, the Somali often say that their language is 'almost like' Arabic (although, within the Afroasiatic language family, Somali belongs to the Cushitic branch and Arabic to the Semitic branch). In addition, the impact of '9/11' on identity discourses in both settings could be fruitfully compared. In the present context, however, I limit myself to the following observation. Both Hoehne and Donath have studied people for whom descent and origins are centrally important, but they have both chosen to emphasise beliefs and convictions as supplementary explanatory principles. In the Somali case, Hoehne focuses on political ideologies and histories of suffering, while, in the case of Mauritius, Donath demonstrates the significance of elaborations on different varieties of Islam.

**Research Group:  
Integration and Conflict along the Upper Guinea Coast (West Africa)**

*Jacqueline Knörr*

The Research Group is part of the Department I 'Integration and Conflict' and focuses on local, regional and (trans)national dimensions of interrelated processes of integration and conflict in the region of the Upper Guinea Coast. Current members are Jacqueline Knörr (head), David O'Kane (senior researcher), Maarten Bedert, Nathaniel King, Anaïs Ménard, Markus Rudolf (PhD students), Christian Højbjerg, Christoph Kohl, and Wilson Trajano Filho (associates).

**Accomplishments and News**

Anita Schroven and Christoph Kohl have both completed and defended their dissertations very successfully. Schroven is now working as scientific coordinator and researcher at the Center of Interdisciplinary Research (Research Group 'The Cultural Constitution of Causal Cognition') at the University of Bielefeld. Kohl is now a researcher at the Institute of Sociology of the University of Munich, where he is working on *Refugee Repatriation and Local Politics in Angola*. He continues to be an associate member of the Research Group, collaborating with it in manifold ways (publications, workshops). Nathaniel King handed in his PhD thesis in the summer of 2011 and will very likely have defended it by the time this report is published. Markus Rudolf has returned to the MPI after a year of parental leave and is in the final phases of writing up his PhD thesis.

Two new PhD students have meanwhile joined the group. Anaïs Ménard has been with us since September 2010. She has an MSc in African Studies from the University of Oxford and an MA in International Affairs and Development from Sciences Po, Paris. She is now working on *Sherbro Identity and the (Re-)construction of Social Cohesion and Nationhood in Post-conflict Sierra Leone*, and is currently conducting field research in Sierra Leone. Her research focuses on the Sherbro, who, due to their particular history, play an important role as a mediating force in interethnic and rural-urban relations and, hence, in the (re-)construction of national identity in postwar Sierra Leonean society as well. Maarten Bedert joined us in January 2011 and is now doing field research in Liberia. He obtained an MPhil in African Studies at the African Studies Centre in Leiden (Netherlands) and an MA in African Languages and Cultures from Ghent University (Belgium). Bedert's PhD project concerns the *Transnational Dimensions of Social and Political Dynamics in Post-war Liberia* and focuses on the north of Nimba County. Since neither the civil war nor the processes of crisis succeeding it can be adequately understood by conceptualising them in boundaries confined by the nation state, Bedert studies how politics are made 'from below', looking at how transnational processes influence

social and political dynamics at the local level. David O’Kane joined the Research Group as senior researcher in February 2011. He holds a PhD in Anthropology from Queen’s University, Belfast, and is now working on *Education Policies in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone*, focusing on the role of such policies on processes of social (re-)integration. Policy is investigated as ‘product and process’; hence, O’Kane studies the ways in which policies are developed, perceived, practised, enacted, and acted upon by the different actors involved.

In December 2010, the third Upper Guinea Coast Conference took place in Halle. The fourth conference will take place in September 2012 under the heading *Transcending Traditional Tropes: new ways of making politics and policies in the Upper Guinea Coast region*. During the past two years, two ‘Workshops in the Field’ have been organised by the group as well as one retreat and several meetings.



*Mobile models of mobile communication, Ghana. (Photo: J. Knörr, 2011)*

In addition to their individual publications, Jacqueline Knörr and Wilson Trajano Filho have co-edited *The Powerful Presence of the Past: integration and conflict along the Upper Guinea Coast* with Brill Publishers. A second co-edited volume on *The Upper Guinea Coast in Transnational Perspective* is currently being prepared for publication by Jacqueline Knörr and Christoph Kohl. One working paper jointly written by members of the research group has just come out, and two others are in the pipeline. In these working papers empirical findings concerning specific

themes are analysed in the framework of the comparative dimensions of the group's research agenda.

At the new Science Gallery of the Max Planck Society in Berlin, the work of the Upper Guinea Coast Research Group will represent the MPI for Social Anthropology in the form of excerpts from an article on 'National Unity in Weak States' (Knörr) and an extract of a film titled *We are Tired of Waiting* (Rudolf).

Sometimes our anthropological research may affect public policy as well. For the first time a German court has enforced a decision as established law whereby female genital cutting/mutilation is acknowledged as prior persecution by a German court (2011). The case involved a female asylum seeker from Sierra Leone. For women who have been genitally cut as part of their initiation into a female secret society (which is the case for most countries along the Upper Guinea Coast of West Africa), who resist the practice and who are therefore threatened and/or persecuted by the secret society in their respective home country, this means they will now stand a greater chance of being granted asylum in Germany. As the lawyer defending the woman in question has stated, the decision was based primarily on a public talk Jacqueline Knörr gave as part of her habilitation defence in 2006.

### **Some Comparative Notes on Local Leadership and Traditional Authority in the Upper Guinea Coast Region**

*Christian Højbjerg, Jacqueline Knörr, Anita Schroven*

Along the Upper Guinea Coast, just as in many other regions of the world, local leadership and ideas of traditional authority are closely intertwined. Local leaders of different character may draw legitimacy from local history and from institutions such as secret societies/sodalities. Politicians may oppose village elders or leaders of secret societies, competing for socio-political leadership positions in the local arena. Or they may combine, in their very person, different positions ranging from political and administrative positions to membership in spiritual and religious institutions deemed traditional. Some of the region's particularities with regard to local leadership and traditional authority will be discussed here and cross-referenced with notions of state and nation, colonial and post-colonial histories, spiritual and religious beliefs, and changing political dynamics as a result of regional and local conflicts.

#### *Local Leadership*

Local leaders are usually members of first-coming families with land titles, also referred to as landlords or ruling families. Due to their position in extended family groups or lineages, they influence large groups of people and thereby wield power over land and linked resources. However, the status of first-comer is contested, and the kinship groups to which it is assigned may shift over time. Shifts in first-

comer-status are not merely historical contestations but contemporary processes that reveal the dynamics of local leadership and the importance of history for local perceptions of legitimate power (Højbjerg 2007; Knörr and Trajano Filho 2010; Schroven 2010a).<sup>9</sup>

Oral history also constitutes a way for people in war-affected communities to try to come to terms with war through reference to the past. Telling history is thus a part of an ongoing experience and social practice. A comparison of local recollections of the past by Mandingos and co-existing ethnic groups in southeastern Guinea and northwestern Liberia points to a significant difference in scale and agency in people's self-perception. 'Forest people', on the one hand, tend to stress autochthony in small-scale settlements, i.e. their status as firstcomers and landowners. 'Mandingos', on the other hand, stress their tradition for large-scale political leadership, their economic role in the history of the Liberian nation state and their role as propagators of Islam (Højbjerg 2007, 2008b, 2009, 2010).<sup>10</sup>

The authority of leaders may also remain informal, based not on election or appointment but on individual qualities and respect. Empirical data from the region attest that such people are usually older men and in some cases women who are members of landholding or founding families and who function as village or town elders. They may not be direct members but tied to these families by intermarriage. Individuals who are attached to landholding families in such ways often serve as councillors to the extended family or the community at large (cf. Schroven 2010a).

Religious and spiritual leaders such as Christian priests and Muslim imams may also serve as councillors to chiefs or elected town councils. Due to the non-centralised organisation of the Muslim clergy, pious men often pursue their education in centres of Muslim learning and return afterwards to their area of origin to become imams of a local mosque. The Christian clergy, on the other hand, are often assigned to parishes outside of their region of origin.

Other leaders in the local arena may emerge from (state) bureaucracies. For example, people who have taken up posts in a particular locale for professional reasons often become part of the local elite and make decisions for the population present in their area. Their authority arises from their professional position, often linked to access to public funds, and also from their potential ties to the (bureaucratic) centre (Schroven 2010b<sup>11</sup>).

<sup>9</sup> Højbjerg, Christian. 2007. *Resisting State Iconoclasm among the Loma of Guinea*. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press. For the other references, see the publication list of this report.

<sup>10</sup> Højbjerg, Christian. 2008. Le 'Master General' et Madame le Maire: structuration d'un ordre emergent de gouvernance dans l'hinterland libérien. *Politique africaine* 111: 68–89; 2009. 'Root Causes': the inversion of causes and consequences in civil war. *Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* 8(2): 1–22. For the other references, see the publication list of this report.

<sup>11</sup> See the publication list of this report.

*Traditional Authority*

Traditional authority is usually understood to be connected to (local) histories and institutions such as extended families, lineages, village elders, and secret societies. Belonging to such corporate groups is, in various contexts, the pre-requisite for being able to claim benefits from patronage relations that form the basis of social relations in the rural areas of the region.

Along the Upper Guinea Coast, access to land and control over its spirits (or gods) is vital for the production and reproduction of human life. The specific access to these beings may be granted within the context of the predominant creation myth of the community or ethnic group. It may also originate from a particular history of migration and conquest that is shared with and recognised by other groups inhabiting the area. Past events that are part of the collective memory or oral tradition legitimate the leadership of particular people over others. Terms of expressing this vary among founding families and landlords, and these variations may affect the status of those over whom these people have authority, e.g. as late-comers, strangers, or clients.

People who wield spiritual powers, whether they are individuals or whole families, are key to the survival and well-being of the community. Due to such powers, individuals hold positions in secret societies, such as the Sande/Bundu sodalities for women and Poro for men, which have the most members and are present in most parts of the wider region. Widespread respect for and fear of secret knowledge allows secret societies as institutions and individual leaders to exert control over collectivities. This is, particularly in Sierra Leone and the hinterland of Liberia and Guinea, closely tied to political leadership. For chiefs in this area, it is still a prerequisite to be a Poro member. Indeed the secret society often decides who can become chief – even if, today, paramount chiefs in Sierra Leone have to be elected by public suffrage. Similarly, politicians on the regional or national level often need to assert their membership in Poro and the secret society's support for their candidacy (Højbjerg 2007, 2008b; comp. Knörr 2010<sup>12</sup>).

In the past as well as in the present, female candidates to Sierra Leonean paramount chieftaincy have in some cases been initiated into Poro, which is otherwise reserved for men. However, women in the position of chiefs can be found mainly in southern Sierra Leone and Liberia, and less in the more Muslim-dominated areas of northern Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Senegal.

Beyond the regional variations in the political expressions of secret societies, a common theme throughout the Upper Guinea Coast region and over different periods of time has been the secret societies' assertion of gerontocracy, through which (social) age and associated rights are controlled – much to the disadvantage of the (socially and physiologically) younger women and men. This has evoked reactions leading to the public humiliation and official banning of secret societies during

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<sup>12</sup> See the publication list of this report.

Guinea's independence period and to the criticism of secret societies in the analysis of war causes in Sierra Leone and Liberia (Knörr 2010).

Creation myths and stories of territorial conquest also result in another form of authority that is more focussed on political life and virtually omnipresent in the Upper Guinea Coast region – chieftaincy. In pre-colonial periods the region had known territorial principalities and theocracies along with local big-men systems which competed, to some degree, with principalities over the control of trade relations and the resolution of religious questions. European intervention involved altering and fixing territorial delimitations and corresponding jurisdictions, and establishing new hierarchies, which included village chiefs, town chiefs, and paramount chiefs. With independence, different countries addressed this legacy differently. Sierra Leone and Liberia maintained chief/paramount chief relations and, in the case of Sierra Leone, formally included them into its parliamentary system. Guinea did just the opposite: chieftaincy was formally abolished a year before independence and former chiefs and their families were charged as collaborators of the colonial power, just as other institutions deemed traditional were attacked by the young state.

*New Actors: NGOs and state reforms*

The above considerations reveal that traditional authority is malleable and that practices of local leadership are intertwined and affected by changes introduced during the colonial and postcolonial periods, especially by the state. Today, actors beyond the state-level – international agencies, NGOs, and international governance institutions – also influence how state and local actors consider traditional authority and practice leadership. Particularly in the wake of the regional wars, these institutions have exerted much influence in Sierra Leone and Liberia, contesting forms of authority that have been considered to be traditional and sometimes changing the way local rule is organised and legitimated.

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## Department II: Resilience and Transformation in Eurasia

**Director: Chris Hann**

### Highlights

- The first Goody Lecture was delivered by Keith Hart on June 1st, 2011: *Jack Goody's Vision of World History and African Development Today*
- Kirsten Endres has been promoted within the framework of the Minerva Programme for outstanding female researchers of the Max Planck Society. She now heads an autonomous Research Group 'Traders, Markets, and the State in Vietnam'.
- Christoph Brumann has joined the Department as a permanent member. He has been appointed Honorary Professor at the Martin Luther University and established a new Focus Group 'The Global Political Economy of Cultural Heritage'.
- Dittmar Schorkowitz has been awarded tenure and is continuing to consolidate his Focus Group 'Historical Anthropology in Eurasia'.
- Chris Hann and Keith Hart published *Economic Anthropology. History, ethnography, critique* (Polity Press, 2011; Italian translation: Einaudi, 2011); the edited volume arising from their cooperation, *Market and Society: The Great Transformation today*, has now been published in paperback (Cambridge University Press, 2011).
- To mark the end of the second decade of "postsocialism", the Department organised a series of seminars under the title *Socialism in World History* (Joint Colloquium, Summer Semester 2010).

**Introduction/Overview**

*Chris Hann*

The years 2010–2011 have seen considerable changes in the Department. In addition to myself, three senior colleagues – Christoph Brumann, Kirsten W. Endres, and Dittmar Schorkowitz – now lead their own Research Groups. This has not altered our practice of meeting jointly as a Department for weekly seminars. All four of us recruited new doctoral students in October 2011. In addition to my responsibilities for the Focus Group ‘Kinship and Social Support in China and Vietnam’, I have continued to share with Stephen Gudeman leadership of the postdoctoral team investigating ‘Economy and Ritual’. Our work on religion after socialism was formally concluded at the end of 2010, when a report was submitted to the Volkswagen Foundation on the project *The Catholic Church and Religious Pluralism in Lithuania and Poland*. The papers from the final conference of that group are currently being edited for publication by Ingo W. Schröder and Kinga Sekerdej. The publications of members of other components of the long-running Focus Group ‘Religion, Identity, Postsocialism’ (2003–2010) are appearing continuously. Although few of those researchers remain in Halle, we have tried to include the most relevant works in the publications section of this report.

The establishment by the Department of a named lecture series in honour of Jack Goody hardly needs any explanation. Let it be clear that this is no memorial series: Sir Jack is now well into his nineties but he continues to research and publish very actively. Both regionally and thematically Goody’s work reflects core interests of this Max Planck Institute, and of Department II in particular. His insistence on the long-term unity of the landmass and critique of Eurocentrism are fundamental to our concept of ‘Eurasia’. In both our historical and our contemporary projects, we see ourselves as taking this agenda forward. The first lecture was delivered by Keith Hart to a large audience on June 1st, 2011; this text has since been published and is available at the homepage. The second Goody Lecture will be given by Peter Burke (Cambridge) on May 16th, 2012.

Looking ahead, another highlight of the coming year will be the conference that I am convening jointly with historical sociologist Johann P. Arnason on *Anthropology and Civilisational Analysis*, June 28–30th, 2012. This follows up on a brainstorming workshop held in March 2010 and forms part of our strategy to expand historical anthropology in Halle, jointly with our Faculty colleagues in history and archaeology at the Martin Luther University. A new International Max Planck Research School (ANARCHIE: Anthropology, Archaeology, and History of Eurasia) will admit its first cohort of doctoral students in summer 2012.

Members of the Department have organised numerous panels, workshops, and conferences in 2010–2011, both in Halle and elsewhere. In March 2011, Aleksandar Bošković and I convened a workshop which continued our explorations of the recent

history of our discipline in former socialist countries. The main focus this time was on the Western Balkans (Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Albania). The major innovation in relation to previous workshops was to open up new comparisons by including a non-socialist case, Greece.

In April 2011, Dittmar Schorkowitz and Sayana Namsaraeva organised a pioneering meeting concerning the management of “ethnic minorities” in Qing Dynasty China. This was part of Schorkowitz’s larger project on majority-minority relations in the “continental” empires of the Eurasian landmass (see his report below and in the previous Institute’s Report).

Stephen Gudeman and I report below on the September 2011 workshop of the Economy and Ritual group devoted to contemporary ritual kinship (godparenthood). The work of this group will be completed early in 2012. We plan to follow up with a similarly structured project in another area of economic anthropology. The focus of the new group will be on industrial labour and inequality in Eurasia. The leadership of this group will be shared by myself, Catherine Alexander (London, Goldsmiths), and Jonathan Parry (London School of Economics). It is hoped that the new researchers will be in post in Halle by September 2012.



*Left to right: Alexandar Bošković, Andre Gingrich, and Chris Hann at the opening of the conference 'The Rise of Anthropology 'on the Margins of Europe', 1945–1991, March 2011. (Photo: Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, 2011)*

**Joint Colloquium**  
**Summer Semester 2010**

**“Socialism in World History”**

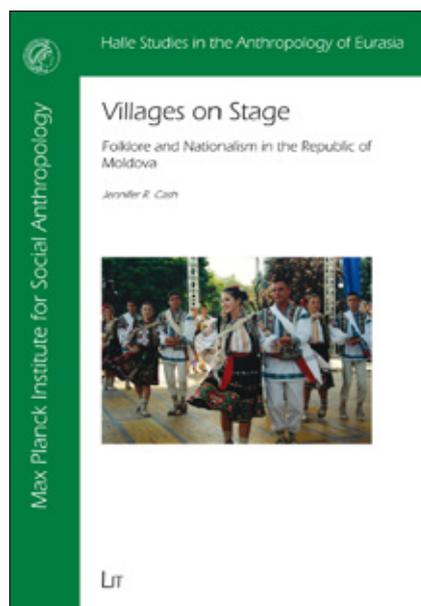
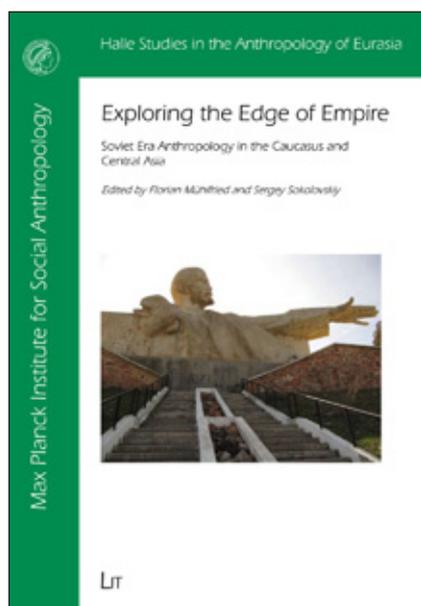
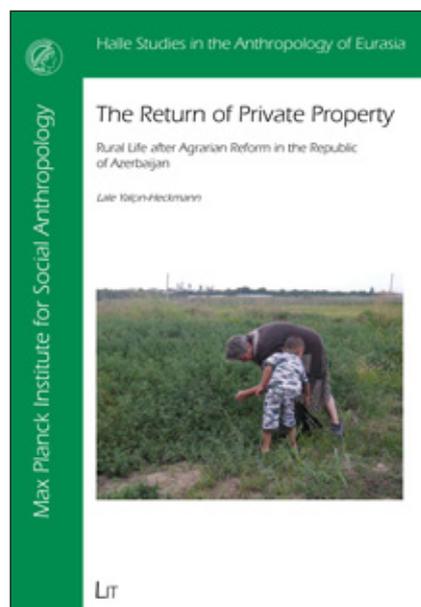
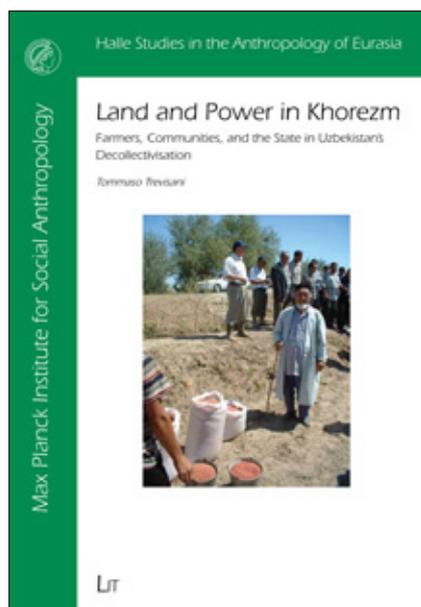


**Tuesdays 16:15 – 18:00**  
**Main Seminar Room**  
**MPI for Social Anthropology**

*Twenty years after the collapse of the Soviet bloc it is time to move on from ethnographic studies of “postsocialism” and pose bigger questions concerning the world historical significance of socialism. Visiting speakers in this lecture series were Stefan Troebst (Leipzig), Alan Barnard (Edinburgh), Alan Macfarlane (Cambridge), Susan Bayly (Cambridge), Michał Buchowski (Poznań), Don Kalb (Budapest), and Matthias Middell (Leipzig).*

***Publications***

Our flagship monograph series *Halle Studies in the Anthropology of Eurasia* expanded in 2010–2011 with a further 4 volumes (see opposite page), taking us to 26 volumes since the establishment of the series with LIT Verlag in 2003. It is intended primarily as an outlet for the work of Department members but is also open to other researchers at this institute, the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, and other scholars whose texts fit the established profile. The main advantage of this series, especially at a time when commercial academic publishers are increasingly reluctant to consider monographs in a small discipline like anthropology, is a speedy production process. Most of the work preparing the manuscripts for the publisher is ably undertaken by Berit Westwood in my office. The main drawback to date has been the performance of this publisher on the distribution side, especially in English-speaking countries; we are working together to solve these problems.



## **Kinship and Social Support in China and Vietnam**

*Head of Focus Group: Chris Hann*

*Senior researchers: Ildikó Bellér-Hann, Kirsten Endres, Friederike Fleischer, Minh Nguyen, Gonçalo Santos, Markus Schlecker, Hans Steinmüller, Xiujie Wu, Roberta Zavoretti*  
*Doctoral students: Giovanni Da Col, Saheira Haliel, Helena Obendiek, Sarah Schefold, Ruijing Wang*

### **Introduction**

This Focus Group was established in 2006 to investigate how the remarkable transformations which have taken place in China and Vietnam over the last three decades have shaped the provision of social support and intra-familial relations. These countries are still formally socialist and the state is a major factor in the provision of social security, as it is in most other domains. Yet the market principle now plays a much stronger role than previously, even in sectors such as health and education, and pensions are generally far from sufficient to render retirees independent of family ties. We examine these tensions in the context of interdisciplinary debates concerning individualisation, the viability of the socialist mixed economy, and the authenticity of East Asian variants of “multiple modernities”.

There has been considerable instability among the research staff in 2010–2011, due to intermission (Xiujie Wu), departure to academic posts elsewhere (Ildikó Bellér-Hann to the University of Copenhagen and Hans Steinmüller to the London School of Economics), promotion to a “Minerva” position within the Max Planck Society (Kirsten Endres) and other factors. New researchers have been recruited at both the postdoctoral and PhD levels, so that as of October 2011 the group is back to full strength. Gonçalo Santos and Roberta Zavoretti will shortly be embarking on follow-up postdoctoral fieldwork in rural Guangdong and urban Nanjing, respectively. Minh Ngyyen is undertaking a postdoctoral project investigating changing patterns of social support among rural Vietnamese households engaging in varying forms of labour migration to Hanoi. This research dovetails with the work of Kirsten Endres’s new Research Group, which she outlines separately below. The project of Saheira Haliel (PhD student) will address generational aspects of social support among Han Chinese working for the Production and Construction Corps in Xinjiang. Ruijing Wang (PhD student) will focus on childhood and the welfare of young persons among the Akha minority in Yunnan.

## **Who Cares?**

The theoretical debates of the first cycle of projects in this Focus Group have been further refined in the wake of the conference *Who Cares...And How?*, which was convened by Friederike Fleischer and Markus Schlecker at the MPI in July 2008. In his introduction to their edition of the proceedings, recently submitted for publication, Schlecker emphasises the need to consider the semantic openness of ‘social support’. He argues for a dynamic model that considers support as an intersubjective process (‘encounters’), during which the support situation is variably experienced. Whether a transaction and its consequences are considered support and who is recognised as supporter and supported are open to negotiation and subject to a host of factors. It is important to disentangle different relations of support as articulated in local narratives. Government policies frequently have unintended consequences, and impinge on local notions and practices of non-state support.

### ***Four Key Themes***

In 2010–2011, building on the earlier work, members of this Focus Group identified four key themes to guide research in the next phases. Despite the premature departures of some of the authors of these ideas, the newcomers will continue to work around them, while modifying them by adding their own specific emphases.

#### ***1. Uncertainty***

Both local networks of social support and government policies of social security represent efforts to increase certainty. Against the background of such practices of anticipating different futures, researchers pay close attention to indigenous notions of uncertainty, fortune, luck, and fate. People hedge their bets and renegotiate conventions such as reciprocity between generations and ritual exchange networks. By researching educational aspirations, labour migration, popular forms of gambling, and local entrepreneurship, researchers will explicitly engage with new forms of uncertainty linked to the expansion of the market principle.

#### ***2. Modes of Relatedness***

While family and kin remain of crucial importance in China and Vietnam, various other forms of relatedness are also important for social support. These include relations between neighbours, friends, or between teachers and students, or, for migrants in large cities, relations with people from one’s home town or county. Relatedness is typically created through practices such as hospitality and ritual, while strangers (including ghosts and spirits) are excluded from the community.

### *3. Moral Exemplars of Care and Protection*

While in the pre-revolutionary past, governance often remained at the level of moral exemplars, and state officials rarely interfered directly in local affairs, under socialism the Chinese and Vietnamese states have penetrated into the ordinary lives of even the remotest communities. In the process, the moral exemplars of socialism (Mao Tse Tung, Ho Chi Minh, the ‘good official’, the model worker) became an essential part of popular culture. The leaders of the Golden Age continue to be invoked in the very different circumstances which prevail today, as models of care and protection.

### *4. The Politics of Human Quality*

Both in China and Vietnam, the dominant narratives of modernity and progress have shifted from class struggle and socialist utopia to entrepreneurship, economic growth, and the ‘quality’ of the population. Continuous adjustment to what is seen as economic necessity (measured and justified statistically) has become the core principle of social policy. Yet the meaning of terms such as ‘human quality’ (Chinese *suzhi*) is always contested. The politics of modernisation and progress also embraces concrete practices of sanitation, hygiene, standardisation, quality control, rural development, and poverty alleviation programmes. All the research projects of this Focus Group investigate how state policies are implemented, translated, appropriated, and negotiated locally.



*Happy harvest, basic security, Dingzhou, Hebei. (Photo: X. Wu, 2007)*

## Changing Fate

The first doctoral thesis to emerge from this Focus Group was that of Helena Obendiek, defended with aplomb at the Martin Luther University in November 2011. Obendiek's work analysed the links between higher education and kin ties in one of China's poorest regions in Gansu province. She found that villagers ('peasants') continue to go to remarkable lengths to ensure that their children receive a college education, even though this no longer guarantees them secure employment – or indeed any job at all. It is the only option open to them to 'change fate', and Obendiek took this local idiom as the title of her work. If people were to lose this hope, and if the energies channelled by the rural population into examination success were to seek other outlets, the basic stability of the country would be jeopardised.

Previous anthropological studies have investigated educational aspirations in urban single-child families (Vanessa Fong) and more developed eastern rural regions (Andrew Kipnis). Whereas Kipnis applies a governmentality approach to understand 'educational desire', Obendiek focuses on local actors' motivations in a poor rural region. The costs of tertiary education have skyrocketed since the late 1990s, such that one year of full-time study costs about six times the local average per capita income. Educational spending thus impacts heavily on familial support arrangements, not least since villagers hardly benefit from any state social security schemes.

During the first two decades of reform socialism, the legacies of the planned economy ensured an ironic confirmation of old Confucian ideals concerning the value of education ('cultural capital') and its connection to worldly power. The successful students of this period who were allocated state jobs in the urban sector became the most important sources of social support in their villages. Obendiek found that socially mobile actors took account not just of their nuclear family but made decisions in the context of larger sibling groups. The 'diagonal' intergenerational support extended for the education of nieces and nephews benefited the graduates' parents indirectly.

Even though compliance with birth control policy was hardly universal in this region and local understanding of the implicit intergenerational contract remained clearly gendered, Obendiek found that parents invested in the education of their daughters (almost) equally to that of their sons. She explained this in terms of the reduced number of offspring, and the prospect that almost all young people would leave the village anyway, if not as students then as labour migrants. Educated daughters would enjoy improved chances of 'marrying up', thus gaining access to more potential resources. They were commonly thought to be more reliable partners in the intergenerational contract, especially as providers of emotional support during old age. Financial support of a daughter's studies seemed to strengthen such emotional bonding, precisely because it went against the patriarchal grain.

With the state cutting back its support of higher education, the interdependence of siblings' fates has increased. Contrary to some theories of individualisation,

reciprocal ties and debts to siblings are therefore crucial in family strategising. Students remain closely intertwined with their natal families long after they leave the village. The national discourse on developing one's *suzhi* (human quality – see p. 46 above) was often contested by students from poor rural areas. They coped with the discrimination they experienced on campus by their classmates from well-off families by asserting superior moral values: they took pride in being considerate of the needs of others and in their diligence and determination, qualities believed to be rooted in the experience of poverty. Yet even successful students with a rural family background found themselves disadvantaged on the labour market, in comparison with urban graduates possessing effective networks of 'connections' (*guanxi*). Poor students constructed relatedness on the basis of their natal county (*laoxiang*), but this was seldom sufficient to lead to a job.



*Three years of senior high school devoted towards a single goal: the national college entrance exam. (Photo: H. Obendiek, 2007)*

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## **Ethnic Minorities and the State in Eurasia**

*Head of Focus Group: Dittmar Schorkowitz*

*Senior researchers: Patrice Ladwig, Sayana Namsaraeva, Oliver Tappe*

*Doctoral students: Fan Zhang, Simon Schlegel*

### **Introduction**

With the establishment of the Department's new Focus Group for historical anthropology in 2009, a first research group was created: 'Ethnic Minorities and the State in Eurasia' (EMSE). This multi-sited project investigates the relationships between ethnic minorities and larger units such as states and empires from a historical and comparative perspective. The group has enlarged its activities through cooperation with specialists on Qing China and two new doctoral students have become affiliated with the group. What started in May 2009 as three pilot studies on the historical dimensions of state-minority relations in the countries of Laos, Vietnam, Russia, and China, has been turned into a joint framework for comparative research. EMSE's research questions are related to different forms of colonialism (internal, continental, and overseas), to nation-states and the cross-epochal legacies of imperial formations, to different types of integration, frontier regions, and statecraft. Conferences and workshops on colonial practices and minorities in Qing China, on colonialism and mimetic processes and on archival methods and theory have ensured that, despite geographical variety, common concepts and methodological concerns contribute to the development of the group's comparative and theoretical focus.

### **Theoretical and Methodological Orientation**

Empires developed lasting strategies for integration. They were experienced in managing socio-cultural diversity and created institutions and ministries for dealing with ethnic minorities. The social and cultural worlds of the latter were the objects of permanent transformation via exchange and transfer, communication and administrative acts, often embedded in hegemonic practices. EMSE's comparative research project *Dealing with Nationalities in Eurasia: how Russian and Chinese agencies managed ethnic diversity in the late 19th and early 20th centuries* (Dittmar Schorkowitz) supports the idea that imperial formations might still be regarded as a cross-epochal, operable variant of governance in Eurasia, as argued by scholars such as Peter Perdue, Jane Burbank, and Frederick Cooper. Widely seen as one of the great projects of political modernity, the transformation from empire to nation-state and the replacement of dynastic bureaucracies by party systems reveals, however, different developments and various forms of completion. As measured by a) the

heterogeneity in socio-political structures, ethnic identities, and languages spoken, b) centre-periphery dependencies, and c) unsettled 'ethnic' conflicts, the project of the nationalising state seems not yet completed, whether in Russia, in China, or in Laos (an empire en miniature).

A conference on *Administrative and Colonial Practices in Qing Ruled China*, held at the MPI in April 2011 with scholars from England, Germany, France, Mongolia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of China (Taiwan), and the USA, stressed the importance of historical analysis to better understand the strategies by which central institutions for colonial affairs, like *Lifanyuan* (Court of Colonial Affairs) and *Libu* (Ministry of Rites), introduced various means of social engineering in order to integrate ethnic minorities. Such studies point to the cross-epochal cohesiveness that empires need especially in times of social change by illuminating different practices that serve to homogenise cultural diversity and to regulate vertical relations of tax or tribute extraction, to adjust legal systems, and co-opt elites. "Institutions do not die", and caesuras are apt to reveal the resources that multi-national states have at their disposal to deal with crises. Focusing on *Lifanyuan* and *Libu* this forum deliberately connected perspectives on the southern and southeastern fringes of the Ming Empire with the Qing-acquired northern and western frontiers. It thus highlighted the continuities of continental colonial management, the Han Chinese perception of the self and the 'other', and processes of 'otherisation' by administrative means. It still, however, remains an open question for further research whether *Lifanyuan* a Manchu invention related to nomadic societies, and *Libu*, governing the tributary relations of sedentary and agricultural groups, simply represent variants, or two different types of colonial administration.

This conference, which emphasised the significance of structural configurations and central agencies of the ancien regime that had an impact in the republican period as well, was prepared by archival studies in China by Sayana Namsaraeva, who assisted in Schorkowitz's project. She carried out research at the First Historical Archive (*diy lishi dang'an*), the library of the National Committee for the Compilation of Qing History (*guojia qingshi bianzuan gongcheng*), and the Institute of Qing History of the People's University of China (*renming daxue qingshi yanjiusuo*). Governmental documents on *Lifanyuan* were one main focus, the management of ethnic diversity in Hulunbuir, a frontier zone bordering Russia (Eastern Siberia), another. The colonial strategies of both empires for the integration of peoples were of particular interest. These strategies are visible e.g. in negotiations over territorial assets and the disputed nomadic population. Attempts to control this particular frontier were directed to the questions of how to keep a moving Mongolian and Tungusic-speaking population within colonial boundaries and how to co-opt their elites into imperial structures.

Integration strategies and encounters of the state with peoples at the margins are also part of an ongoing debate over upland-lowland and state/empire-minorities relations in mainland Southeast Asia which was inspired by James Scott's recent



Present representations and reconfigurations of the local past in the context of official state historiography constitute the discursive aspects of this project. Since the Lao and Vietnamese revolutionary struggles were based on the support of the different upland ethnic minorities in the Lao-Vietnamese border region, their integration into national narratives remains a critical issue. By analysing the example of the former Lao revolutionary stronghold of Viengxay/Houaphan province, the ambiguities of Lao national identity politics are shown to oscillate between the poles of the socialist ideal of multi-ethnic solidarity and the cultural hegemony of lowland Lao civilisation forces. To explore these ideological tensions from a local point of view, the perceptions of ethnic minorities and their role in the making of Lao state history and practices such as the construction and cultivation of national lieux de mémoire are taken into account.

Combining fieldwork (oral history in upland villages) with archival research (École Française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris) not only provides fresh insights into the colonial legacies and life-worlds of ethnic minorities at the margins of multi-national states. It also tackles methodological and epistemological questions of historical anthropology, some of which were discussed at the workshop *Fieldwork between Folders: theories of the archive and the historical anthropology of colonialism*, organised by Patrice Ladwig together with Portuguese colleagues at the MPI in July 2011. This was a follow-up symposium of an earlier workshop *Colonialism and Theories of Imitation*, held at the Lisbon Institute for Social Sciences (ICS) in April that also explored questions related to the cohesive forces and (trans-)continuities of imperial and colonial formations. Both workshops are part of a two-year project on *Colonialism and Mimetic Processes: historical and anthropological perspectives* jointly organised by EMSE and the ICS, and funded by the DAAD.

While the July workshop dealt with theories of the archive, analysed its significance as a state institution, its practices, and the implications for historical anthropology, the April workshop focused on colonialism as an unstable, heterogeneous phenomenon and explored the mediating role of imitative practices. It particularly addressed the notion of 'mimetic governmentality' in the light of the promotion of Buddhism and reconstruction of relic shrines during French colonialism, an aspect closely related to Patrice Ladwig's research on *Buddhist Statecraft and the Politics of Ethnicity in Laos*. In the context of Theravada Buddhist conceptions of statecraft and the position of ethnic minorities in these socio-religious constellations in Laos and bordering regions, this project has mainly been focusing on two areas of research: The role of relics and other Buddhist palladia in traditional and modern conceptions of statecraft, and on theories of colonialism and their application to 'Buddhist governmentality' in French colonial Laos.

The crucial role of Buddhist relics in the formation of Buddhist statecraft from the pre-colonial era to the present period has been investigated by applying insights from recent theoretical discussions on materiality and political theology to anthropology. The project has shown that the reconstruction, erection, and worship of

relic-shrines can be understood as a process of Buddhification of the state, its territory, and population. Archival research and the preliminary analysis of chronicles from Laos and Thailand have attested to significant shifts in the religious-political imaginary concerning relics and statecraft through French colonialism, the communist revolution and the construction of the Lao nation state. However, there are also continuities to be found: both French colonialism and the Lao state promoted relic cults and presented Buddhism as a civilisation force. How this promotion of Buddhism and ethnic Lao lowland culture impinge on the upland margins of a state populated by ethnic minorities will be researched during fieldwork and archival research. Parallels in Burma and Thailand hint at the comparative potential of this line of research for mainland Southeast Asia.

### Outlook

EMSE will continue work on the regions discussed above and develop the topics that have been investigated over the last two years. It will also widen its focus and pursue new insights into the integration strategies of multi-national states and empires in various parts of Eurasia. The departmental conference on *Civilisation Analysis* in June 2012 will be an important forum for dissemination.

With regard to China, we will elaborate a differentiated perspective on the emergence of the multi-national Qing Empire and of internal colonialism, topics which have rarely been dealt with in historical anthropology. Given the lack of comparative approaches to *Lifanyuan* and *Libu* and their subdivisions, further work on Chinese minority relations will be undertaken by historians in external projects in collaboration with Dittmar Schorkowitz. Dorothea Heuschert-Laage will focus on the role of *Lifanyuan*'s colonial administration for the Mongols. Combining institutional history and actors perspectives, this investigation comprises as many of the Mongol-related *Lifanyuan* competencies as possible: diplomacy and foreign relations, genealogy and marriage alliances, communication and tributary embassies, administration and law, ritual and religion, property and trade, mobility and migration control. Focusing on *Lifanyuan* will shed new light on this particular colonial institution and its evolution. In a second external project, Chia Ning will compare the developments of different Qing agencies and investigate the common features and contrasts of *Lifanyuan* and *Libu*. With the empire's expansion, people came under the jurisdiction of various institutions with the result that different agencies were sometimes separately engaged with the administration of nationalities even within the same frontier region. Both studies will make use of the recently published "Manchu-Mongol Archives and Records" (*Qingchao qianqi lifanyuan man mengwen tiben*, 24 vols. 2010). This gives the project a unique opportunity to work with new source material and, at the same time, to critically assess Qing Dynasty historiography on non-Chinese minorities. The doctoral dissertation of Fan Zhang on the establishment of imperial order in

Sino-Tibetan relationships by adopting and transforming cultural concepts of Buddhism and Confucianism fits well into and can profit much from this research agenda.

Parallel to these efforts on Manchu-Chinese institutions, Dittmar Schorkowitz will intensify his research on Russian agencies in order to pursue larger level comparisons between Chinese and Russian institutions. A look at the integration strategies of these two exponents of continental colonialism will be of particular interest since they might expose similar patterns in managing frontiers and ethnic minorities. With his focus on ethnicity concepts as part and function of a timeless “boundary maintaining mechanism” (Fredrik Barth), Simon Schlegel’s doctoral dissertation will illuminate a particular aspect of integration processes and minority-state relations along the northern shore of the Black Sea since the 18th century.

The two projects on Southeast Asia will continue to focus on the impact of internal and overseas colonialism, on the relations of ethnic minorities to the state. Finalising the collaboration with ICS, the research will assess the theoretical implications of notions such as mimesis and imitation. Archival research continues to be a main tool in both projects. In order to explore how Buddhism and ethnic Lao culture impinge on the ethnically heterogeneous margins of the state, fieldwork in Laos (Sayabouli province) and Thailand will be combined with research in French colonial archives by Patrice Ladwig. This will complement the already completed investigations by Oliver Tappe described above. Both sub-projects will continue to explore the socio-cultural dynamics between upland and lowlands that are essential for understanding the relationships of ethnic minorities and the Lao state. In sum, in the next phase, EMSE is going to develop further the analysis of integration types and patterns of multi-national states in various epochs and areas of Eurasia. The topics colonialism, empire and nation-state, and frontier will remain a priority on the research agenda of the whole group, but will be supplemented by a focus on the role of religion (especially Buddhism) in the building of multi-ethnic empires. By establishing a strong, cross-epochal comparative perspective, the project will sharpen its focus on the cohesive and differentiating forces that have shaped the dynamics between ethnic minorities and the state in various regions of Eurasia.

## **Economy and Ritual**

*Group leaders: Stephen Gudeman and Chris Hann*

*Senior researchers: Jennifer Cash, Nathan Light, Miladina Monova, Detelina Tocheva, Monica Vasile, Bea Vidacs*

Both inside and outside anthropology, economy and ritual are endlessly contested terms. Their immediate associations in everyday English are diametrically opposed. The general public probably associates the discipline of anthropology more with ritual and religion than with economics and quantitative analysis, let alone the crises of Wall Street and the Eurozone. However, economic anthropologists have a lot to say about the burning issues of contemporary capitalism. They do so by drawing on their comparative studies of economic systems throughout history, all over the world, pointing out that the Western notion of ‘economy’ is actually rather recent. Multiple connections can be established to the sphere of ritual. On the one hand we observe that, from the summit meetings of world leaders to restaurant tipping customs, many aspects of life inside the economic domain are highly ritualised. On the other, most activities in the domain we most readily classify as ritual, such as ceremonies of the life-cycle or community festivals, have an economic dimension in the sense that their organisation requires the investment of significant resources, both material and immaterial. Without dissolving the categories, we thus begin to perceive how economy and ritual flow into each other. If rituals take us to the very heart of a society’s collective identity, as Émile Durkheim maintained, then even quantitatively-oriented macroeconomists need to take them very seriously. More generally, we argue for re-establishing multidisciplinary links that have been weakened in recent decades through intellectual over-specialisation. In their different ways, scholars such as Thorstein Veblen, Joseph Schumpeter, Max Weber, Marcel Mauss and Karl Polanyi all took the mutual “embeddedness” of economy and society for granted; this is the holistic perspective to which we need to return.

Our project, the theoretical framework of which was outlined in the previous report, is concerned with countries which until twenty years ago had socialist economies. The Soviet Union and its allies aimed to establish a genuine alternative to capitalist markets. Socialist ideology privileged cooperative and state ownership over private property in the means of production, and central planning over free markets. In practice there was much diversity and fluctuation over time. Some countries, notably Hungary, modified central planning through decentralisation and concessions to the market principle. Even here, however, Western economists (and some critical locals) complained that the socialist simulation of markets could never be as efficient as the real thing. Consumers compared their possibilities unfavourably with those available to their rich West European neighbours. Without denying the elements of

liberal idealism which shaped the revolutions of 1989–1991, those popular movements obtained a great deal of their force on the ground from citizens who had long been disgruntled as consumers and who were confident that their standard of living would rise under a postsocialist regime.

Those hopes have been realised for some. But for others, in many countries the large majority, the privatisation campaigns of the 1990s and the gradual integration into capitalist world markets brought dislocation and hardship. The shock was often most acute in the countryside, where collective farms had formed the nucleus of a distinctive social system, often enjoying generous subsidies from the planners. The break-up of this system led to both economic and moral disruption, as earlier projects of the departmental Focus Group ‘Property Relations’ (1999–2005) documented. The aim of the ‘Economy and Ritual’ group is to train a more intense light on adaptations at the community and household level as postsocialist rural economies are drawn into global markets. The Durkheimian tradition alluded to above emphasises the effervescence of collectivities, and we have taken account of the national society as well as the village or small-town *Gemeinschaft*. But our main concern has been to probe deeper into the household units which make up those collectivities, e.g. by exploring how the changed parameters have effected the intimate occasions of life-cycle rituals. Many rituals, such as the Macedonian *slava*, are practised both at the community and the household level. We have investigated the symbolism of such events as well as the material outlays necessary to stage them. Do continuities in ritual expression enable the village to construct a resilient bulwark against neoliberal markets? Or is this bulwark now constructed around a narrower domestic moral economy? Or do we observe, e.g. in rural unemployment and migration strategies, a radical decomposition of every form of solidarity, perhaps even at the level of the family?

The members of this group are all experienced anthropologists who in most cases have returned to communities well known to them through earlier fieldwork. The locations were very diverse: Hungary (Vidacs), Romania (Vasile), and Bulgaria (Tocheva) have all become members of the European Union. This is not an immediate prospect for Macedonia (Monova), let alone for the ex-Soviet republics of Moldova (Cash), and Kyrgyzstan (Light), though these too have been greatly influenced by external interventions and world market opportunities. For example, Kyrgyz villagers have been able to sell beans to entrepreneurs from Anatolia, but international market trends in the wine and tobacco sectors have hit Moldovans and Macedonians hard. Both have experienced massive out-migration and remain among the poorest European states.

Of course there is much internal diversity in all of these countries. While parts of western Hungary have benefited from foreign investment, the eastern village studied by Vidacs has experienced a radical contraction in its agricultural activities. This was reflected in a decline of rituals such as pigsticking, which had flourished in the late socialist era. During the same period, the custom of cementing social relations

outside the nuclear family through the institution of godparenthood also fell into decline. Villagers compensated for atomisation and ritual decline in the private sphere by participating in an efflorescence of ritual activities at the level of the community.

Unlike the impoverished situation reported for eastern Hungary, villagers in the Apuseni Mountains of western Romania (Vasile) have been able to use a new resource, timber, to great advantage. During the socialist period, weddings were small and dowries were limited. With the decline of local state power and a building boom which generated demand for lumber, these villagers have become rich and their ritual life has expanded enormously. At weddings, people provide money and gifts, which effectively serve as a community endowment by which a young couple begin their life; and holding a big wedding can be profitable as well.



*Prominent members of the community pose with important visitors (and the pig) at the 2010 Pigsticking Festival, Eastern Hungary. (Photo: B. Vidacs, 2010)*

Light, who worked in a Kyrgyzstan village of settled shepherds, also reports an efflorescence of ritual life, but for different reasons. Village infrastructure decayed in the 1990s, and social life now focuses on the household. Whereas beans are raised for sale in markets, animals and other products are used to make connections in the community: numerous rituals, from birth to death and commemoration ceremonies, affirm and make social bonds. Most rituals involve slaughtering animals and offering

their meat as well as other products to fellow villagers. Reaching an end in rituals, material life creates and recreates social connections in the aftermath of socialism, while ritual events come to signal the success and autonomy of the self-sufficient household unit.

The use of wine in a Moldovan village, as reported by Cash, offers a contrast to the Kyrgyzstan use of animals. Until the 1990s, wine was the major 'export' crop of the village with the product flowing to the Soviet Union and especially Ukraine; this market has closed, and wine is no longer a commodity that brings in outside resources. The vineyards remain, however, and producing wine has become a sign of household independence: served to others as a ritual of hospitality, wine is stored in the cellar where it may be displayed to visitors as a sign of self-sufficiency. Wine also is used in place of cash to remunerate workers in the field, but here it indicates the recipient is not self-sufficient, may lead to slack work, and promotes drinking that is morally disapproved. Wine in this Moldovan village thus has ambiguous meanings depending on its use, and in some respects offering wine is the reverse of serving meat in Kyrgyzstan, for it can mark distance between people.

The ethnography reported by Tocheva from a village high in the Rhodope Mountains of southern Bulgaria provides a captivating contrast. As in the other research areas, the village economy suffered with the demise of state and collective farms, and many people reverted to the house as the principal economic unit. Today, households survive by combining self-provisioning, full and part-time employment in other parts of the country, and taking in guests in this touristic area. At the house people may raise potatoes and other crops for domestic consumption, and some keep sheep in a cooperative flock. The sheep are milked in common but the returns (made into yogurt and cheese) are carefully accounted and distributed according to the animals' contribution. In this same period, *kurban* – a traditional ritual – has grown into a public event mounted by the village and attracting outside visitors as well as local ones. The *kurban* ceremony, which draws on material and labour contributions from households, is not subjected to any calculation of the offerings and everyone can partake of the meal served. The community connections formed around this economic ritual contrast with the house independence and self-sufficiency attained through agricultural, wage, and tourism efforts.

A degree of self-reliance with out-migration characterises five of the research sites, but the situation in the town of Prilep, Macedonia is different where traditionally people raised tobacco for sale to a state monopoly. With the disintegration of the Yugoslav state, the falling apart of trade agreements, and the loss of European markets, the townpeople have fallen back on local provisioning to supplement work for uncertain wages at the shrinking tobacco factory and occasional transfers from family. The town features high unemployment and a declining economy. Yet the research has found that ritual events are rigorously observed by relying on household thrift and debt, for it is through these celebrations that sociality is forged and maintained, and through such connections people can seek and maintain the few

work opportunities that present themselves. Ritual becomes economy that is turned back into celebratory events, such as the house *slava*.

At this writing, the group members are refining and analysing their ethnographic data and drawing overlaps among their studies. We are both elaborating a new perspective on ritual in relation to economy and working toward a comparative perspective on economy and its social and cultural character. A volume edited by Gudeman and Hann is planned.

Members of the Economy and Ritual group have disseminated the results of their work at various conferences, both to regional specialists and to general audiences. A panel highlighting new forms of work and calculation (subtitled “Coping with Capitalism”) was organised at the meeting in April–May 2011 in Regensburg of the International Association for Southeast European Anthropology. These papers will be published in due course as a special section in the journal *Focaal*.

Four members of the group found forms of spiritual kinship to be of great interest in their village sites, sometimes because of a recent efflorescence, but in one case because the old customs had fallen into desuetude. These colleagues organised an MPI workshop in September 2011, which included numerous outside participants and opened up many wider comparisons. Vasile is taking the lead in coordinating these papers for publication.

The entire group offered a session at the November 2011 AAA meetings in Montreal: *Between Autonomy and Connection. Changing ideas and practices of self-sufficiency in postsocialist Eurasia*.

The group will also offer a session on its core topic of economy and ritual at the 2012 EASA meetings in Nanterre.



*The Economy and Ritual group at a field workshop in Prilep, Macedonia, January 2010; left to right: Bea Vidacs, Monica Vasile, Stephen Gudeman, Chris Hann, Jennifer Cash, Nathan Light, Miladina Monova and Detelina Tocheva. (Photo: R. Gudeman, 2010)*

## **Traders, Markets, and the State in Vietnam**

*Head of Research Group: Kirsten W. Endres*

*Senior researcher: Christine Bonnin*

*Doctoral students: Lisa Barthelmes, Esther Horat*

### **Introduction**

The contemporary globalisation of market capitalism has reinvigorated interdisciplinary interest in the works of Karl Polanyi, whose analysis in *The Great Transformation* had been the inspiration for the notion of markets as ‘embedded’ and ‘disembedded’. However, current perspectives in economic anthropology acknowledge that all economies – whether characterised as premodern, modern, or as ‘hybrids’ – are ultimately embedded and enmeshed in a wide variety of social relations and cultural meanings. Indeed, changing politico-economic conditions entail continuous processes of the (moral, ideological, and social) ‘disembedding’ and ‘reembedding’ of markets, giving rise to complex contestations and negotiations at various levels of society. At the same time, within the context of modernity and global market integration, extensive empirical evidence reveals the resilience and growth – rather than decline or extinction – of small-scale trade, traders, and trading in local markets and diverse sites of the so-called informal economy.

In order to examine how these processes are occurring and being experienced by ‘ordinary people’ in a ‘late socialist’ setting, a new research group was established in October 2011 as the result of my promotion within the Minerva programme. The group takes Vietnam’s everyday marketplaces, – which maintain an important role in the daily lives of the majority of its citizens – as its main focal point for analysis. Local markets are conceptualised here not simply as places where buying and selling activities take place, but also as contested, politicised social spaces wherein a number of big and small power struggles are being played out. Our aim is to investigate the complex entangled webs of social ties, formal/informal networks, institutional/political structures and discourses, and economic forces in which the lives of market vendors and street peddlers are situated. This approach rejects a view of culture as distinct from economy. Instead, we look at how contemporary neoliberal economic ideologies and associated ‘open market’ policies interact with ‘economics of practice’ on the ground in Vietnam, as variously located social actors craft their livelihoods within diverse urban and rural market trade contexts.

## Cultural and Historical Background

As Vietnam shifted from central planning to a decentralised market-economy ‘with socialist orientation’, local markets soon transformed into thriving hubs of privatised commercial activity. In major cities as well as in small towns, trade became ubiquitous, with pavements taken over by street vendors peddling fresh produce and a range of household goods. Market buildings were renovated (or rebuilt) and soon overflowed with goods that reflected new consumer desires and trends in consumption. The reopening of cross-border trade with China in the early 1990s facilitated an ever-increasing (legal and illegal) flow of goods and people across the border.



*Kerbside vendors in a Vietnamese town. (Photo: K. Endres, 2010)*

When the US trade embargo was lifted in 1994, numerous trade agreements with foreign countries were established that contributed to steady economic growth. Since its admission to the World Trade Organization in 2007, Vietnam’s integration into the global economy has gained full momentum. Whereas private trade was heavily stigmatised (though never completely eliminated) during the socialist economy period, it has now become a legitimate, viable, and sometimes necessary, means

of income for many. Although Vietnam remains a one-party state, adherence to Marxist-Leninist ideology has become less important than economic development as a national priority.

On the other hand, the state's current programme of economic development and modernisation increasingly marginalises and, in the case of street vending, even outlaws 'traditional' and 'disorderly' forms of commercial activity (such as street-peddling and outdoor markets) and instead promotes new trade centres and shopping malls that conform to modern standards of hygiene, sanitation, and product quality. Stigmatised as unproductive and tolerated only as a means of survival and not 'selfish' profit during the state-subsidised period, small trade has thus come to represent a premodern, undisciplined economy that thwarts state efforts to implant modernity through rational economic development.

### **Research Objectives**

With a field focus on the trading activities of market vendors, this Research Group aims to shed light on the dynamics of Vietnam's ongoing transition to a market-based economy at the micro-level by examining how late-socialist visions of modernisation, moral orientations, gender ideologies, ethnicity, formal (legal) constraints, and informal opportunities shape small-scale traders' participation in the market. Despite legal reforms that facilitate trade and private commercial activity, private (micro-) entrepreneurs continue to face enormous challenges. Limited access to bank loans, restrictions on associations, constraints in population mobility as well as a plethora of arbitrary fees and regulations all hamper economic agency. Formal regulations are thus often undermined by informal (often corruption-related) practices. Some of the questions that arise in this context will be investigated close-up in Barthelmes' ethnographic project: how does the state mobilise its subjects to conform to its visions, policies, and laws? What are the means and methods through which the government enforces rules and regulations in the marketplace? How flexible are the boundaries between formality and informality, legality and illegality? In which ways do state agencies actually benefit from informal/illegal market activities? And what are the implications of these benefits for the state's moral legitimacy?

In many countries with emerging and transitional economies, small-scale trade and itinerant peddling are largely dominated by women. In Vietnam women comprise the vast majority of street peddlers and market vendors. The group will therefore be particularly attentive to gender issues: What are the identity strategies of female small traders? How do household dynamics and gender ideologies shape the experience of macroeconomic change and the manner in which vendors conduct their marketing? How do these ideologies constrain participation in the new economy and, how do market women (and men) manipulate these ideologies instrumentally to their advantage?

The Vietnamese marketplace is not only a place of economic exchange but also a thriving microcosm of social relations that require the artful balancing of instrumental, moral, and emotional orientations. In which ways do market and street vendors rely on networks of personal relations and social support? How are these networks established and cultivated? Which moral principles and concerns inform market vendors' social relations as well as their trading strategies? These questions relating to the dynamics of social networks in the context of transition link up with ongoing projects in the Focus Group 'Kinship and Social Support in China and Vietnam' and will be at the heart of the doctoral research of Horat.

Following the normalisation of relations between Vietnam and China in 1991, cross border trade was seen by the Vietnamese state as an important opportunity for the economic development of the border region that would create new (or better) livelihood options for Kinh (ethnic majority) lowlanders as well as for the local ethnic minority populations in highland border zones. In contrast to the diminishing importance of 'old-style' marketplaces in major cities, the markets of formerly sleepy border towns – the primary fieldsites of my own research – have evolved into bustling commercial centres catering not only to the local populace, but also to Vietnamese, Chinese, and foreign tourists. Who are the main actors and how are cross-border trade relations established and cultivated by Vietnamese market vendors? How is state power and trade law negotiated at the local level, e.g. in the interaction with custom officials and market control inspectors?

In order to achieve economic development and poverty alleviation in the northern highlands, the state seeks to modernise and upgrade the markets of upland ethnic minorities. Some of these markets have become a popular draw for tourists where 'ethnic' (minority) culture is being marketed by the state, private investors, and diverse groups of local stakeholders. The particularities of frontier area ethnic minority 'trade-scapes' are the focus of Bonnin's postdoctoral research: What is the role of kinship, social networks, gender, language and ethnic identity in upland and cross-border trade practices? How does the Vietnamese state's conceptualisation and commoditisation of 'cultural markets' resonate with how upland residents actually view and use such marketplaces? What is the impact of domestic and international tourism? This project aligns well with current research on ethnic minorities and the state in the Focus Group 'Historical Anthropology in Eurasia', through an overarching emphasis on how upland marketplaces are being used as state instruments to extend control over upland citizens and promote market integration.

Research will be carried out in different local, social-cultural and ethnic settings throughout northern Vietnam. Our results seek to fill a significant gap in Vietnamese economic studies and aim to contribute fresh insights and perspectives to the ongoing interdisciplinary debate on the embeddedness of 'the market' in society.

## **The Global Political Economy of Cultural Heritage**

*Head of Focus Group: Christoph Brumann*

*Doctoral students: Pierpaolo De Giosa, Vivienne Marquart*

In globalised late modernity, public attention appears to shift to the things that supposedly do *not* change. Enthusiasm for cultural revolutions and for getting rid of the past has waned considerably, and almost everywhere in the contemporary world, it is instead the conservation of specific old things and practices for future generations that is converted into a moral imperative. This can be motivated by a genuine interest in these things and practices and their history but often, cultural heritage has a clearly instrumental side, being enlisted to attract paying visitors, bolster political claims, and instil self-esteem in present-day imagined communities.

Increasingly, key actors in this charged field do not only act with local or national horizons but must also position themselves in relation to more distant agencies and their standards. Thus, the goal of this new research group which took up work in the fall of 2011 is to study the global political economy of cultural heritage. The primary focus is the hugely popular UNESCO World Heritage convention, certainly the strongest force in contemporary global heritage politics and a major player in shaping popular ideas about culture. The group combines multi-sited field research of the central World Heritage institutions and their decision-making processes with ethnographic studies of selected World Heritage sites. For comparative purposes, the group also draws on Brumann's earlier research on the social life of cultural heritage in the ancient Japanese capital of Kyoto which will be the subject of periodic restudies. This work complements the departmental focus on history and anthropology, concentrating on present-day imaginations and uses of the past.

### **UNESCO World Heritage as a Transnational Arena**

The *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* adopted in 1972 has evolved spectacularly, becoming the best-known activity of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Almost all states have ratified this international treaty, and 938 sites in 153 countries have been inscribed on the prestigious World Heritage List by now. World Heritage strongly influences conservation policies particularly outside Europe and North America, yet despite its importance, the inner workings of the World Heritage arena remain relatively opaque to outside observers. Initially with Heisenberg funding from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) and since summer 2010 in MPI employment, Brumann is conducting an intermittent, multi-sited study of the World Heritage arena in which he combines participant observation at World Heritage Committee sessions and other official meetings; interviews with key actors

such as the diplomats of nation states, the personnel of the convention secretariat, and the officials of the NGOs and IGOs which serve as advisory bodies (the International Council on Monuments and Sites [ICOMOS], the International Union for Conservation of Nature [IUCN], and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property [ICCROM]); and a critical reading of the flood of related documents.

Research so far has underlined the continued centrality of the nation state and its self-interest in this global arena. The convention was adopted with the lofty ideal of sharing stewardship for humanity's most treasured sites and has undoubtedly encouraged the global exchange of conservation expertise and resources. Yet particularly over the past ten years or so, the growing cachet of World Heritage listings has brought nation states to intensify their political lobbying in this arena, both for new inscriptions and against unwanted committee interference with already listed sites. For a long time, European and North American states have been the main perpetrators, occupying half of the list among themselves, while other world regions have been neglected.

This embarrassing situation has occasioned endless debate and led to what can be called the 'anthropologisation' of World Heritage, that is the move away from an initial emphasis on monumental and elite sites – palaces and pyramids, cathedrals, and historic town centres – to a consideration of everyday life (e.g. vernacular buildings, industrial sites, modern architecture), connections (routes, canals, bridges, railway lines), cultural landscapes (everything from wine regions to sacred forests), and sites with uplifting human-rights messages (e.g. the reconstructed bridge of Mostar, the Bamiyan Valley, or sites connected with slavery). It has also motivated the adoption of a separate UNESCO convention for the intangible cultural heritage of humanity in 2003. As it filters down into national policies, including European and North American ones, this development has significantly broadened global conceptions of heritage. Western European countries, the East Asian states, and a few specially motivated others such as Mexico have been the first to exploit the new opportunities, however, so that against everyone's professed intentions, the regional gap has not closed and poorer states struggle to fulfil the increasingly systematic yet ever more demanding standards.

In the observed three World Heritage Committee sessions of 2009–2011, the accumulated dissatisfaction led to a critical turning point. With several strong committee member states from the Global South as ringleaders, established practices and the (often European or North American) experts' calls for caution have been brushed aside to an unprecedented degree, largely to the benefit of non-European states and their World Heritage candidates. The defendants of the universalist aspirations of the convention, the quality standards of its list, and the sustainability of its institutional workload are appalled, and the upcoming 2011 General Assembly of all signatory states and the 2012 Committee session – the first to be open to the press – promise controversy and uncertain outcomes.



*World Heritage Committee in session. (Photo: C. Brumann, 2009)*

The planned outcome is a monograph (tentatively entitled *The Best We Share: an anthropological view of the UNESCO World Heritage arena*) and a series of journal articles and book chapters, the first of which are already appearing. These publications will dissect a highly prominent transnational arena in a more comprehensive and penetrating way than previous work on the World Heritage institutions. By bringing anthropological methods and sensibilities to a major forum of ‘world-making’, that is the production of global standards and global consciousness, this project will contribute to the emerging anthropology of international institutions. It will also involve an analysis of the ways in which culture – our disciplinary home turf – is now publicly deployed. Finally, it will continue to examine social scientific assumptions that take the falsifying, petrifying, desubstantiating, and enclosing effects of cultural heritage for granted (see Brumann’s ‘Outside the Glass Case: the social life of urban heritage in Kyoto’, *American Ethnologist* 36, 2009).

### **World Heritage on the Ground**

Complementing Brumann’s transnational focus, the other researchers will conduct ethnographic studies of World Heritage on the ground, studying the interaction between global, national, and local-level forces within specific sites. Building on Brumann’s expertise, these will be urban sites, and in an effort to extend the department’s regional coverage, they will be in non-(post-)socialist Asia. De Giosa will

work in Melaka and Marquart in Istanbul, two port cities with impressive imperial pedigrees and major hubs of – in Istanbul, also present – globalisation, as reflected in the built fabric and its multi-ethnic and multi-religious provenance. Neither city is a capital today but both are their nation's premier historical cities, main destinations for cultural tourism, and first-listed cultural World Heritage sites. Melaka is fresh on the list so that the repercussions can still be studied; Istanbul is a veteran but narrowly escaped the List of World Heritage Sites in Danger in the past two years, with several large-scale building projects hotly contested both domestically and with the World Heritage institutions. Both sites comprise a large range of elite (mosques and palaces) as well as commoner buildings (merchant quarters), distributed over vast areas and controlled by a diverse range of stakeholders. In both places, there is also a lively public debate about heritage status and its costs and benefits.

There have been previous ethnographic studies of World Heritage sites. More often than not, these treat the UNESCO designation as a side aspect, however, and in most cases, they do not address cities. While a necessity is perceived to bring together this – so far, largely virtual – community of researchers and a workshop to that effect, entitled *World Heritage on the Ground: ethnographic perspectives*, will be convened by Brumann and David Berliner (Université Libre de Bruxelles) at the MPI in October 2012, there is still room for further research in World Heritage cities. In particular, it is hoped that the local studies will benefit from Brumann's insights into the World Heritage system and his personal contacts to key actors, an asset that preceding studies could not build on. Fieldwork is planned for 2012/13.

### **Cultural Heritage in Contemporary Kyoto**

Cultural heritage has also been important in Brumann's previous research project on the conflicts around the townscape and other public cultural heritage of Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan and stronghold of the most cherished national traditions. In his first year at the MPI and parallel with his World Heritage research, Brumann completed a monograph entitled *Tradition, Democracy and the Townscape of Kyoto: claiming a right to the past* which is currently in press with Routledge's Japan Anthropology Workshop series. Among other things, it focuses on the revitalisation of the historic town houses (*kyō-machiya*) and the float parade of the Gion matsuri, one of Japan's oldest and most famous festivals. Brumann found that many standard assumptions about cultural heritage do not apply here, and he relates this to the urban, sophisticated, and cosmopolitan aspects of both traditions. These allow for greater creativity and eclecticism in dealing with the past and discourage a purely museum-style conservation approach and an exclusively nationalist or localist reading.

Since parallels could be detected in the (re-)appreciation of urban vernacular architecture and urban festivals elsewhere in the world, Melaka and Istanbul will be important to test this connection and explore the conditions of urban heritage in a more systematic way. The Kyoto research will also serve as a methodological

touchstone since the inclusion of a large range of diverse actors and interests – owners of historic buildings, local government bureaucrats, citizen activists, urban planners, university professors, architects, real-estate and construction firms, residents of concerned neighbourhoods, etc. – proved to be very productive. The field studies of the research group will find a model here and a wealth of parallel phenomena. As the situation in Kyoto continues to evolve with the introduction of stricter regulations in 2007, Brumann intends to pursue future developments in regular restudies.



*Renovated traditional town house playing with European-style street cafe elements.  
(Photo: C. Brumann, 2007)*

## Project Group Legal Pluralism

### Heads of the Group: Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann

#### *Researchers*

*Franz von Benda-Beckmann, Keebet von Benda-Beckmann, Judith Beyer, Carolien Jacobs, Martin Ramstedt, Fadjar Thufail (until January 2010), Bertram Turner Mihai Popa (VW Project), André Thiemann (VW Project), Severin Lenart (RE-MEP), Ida Harboe Knudsen (until December 2010), Silja Klepp (Graduiertenkolleg 'Bruchzonen der Globalisierung', University of Leipzig)*

### 1. Introduction

In the reporting period, the members of the Project Group Legal Pluralism continued to elaborate and deepen a number of issues of their research agenda. The main joint activity of the Project Group was devoted to the topic *Religion in Disputes: religious beliefs, law and authority in dispute management*. Building on the ongoing research concerning the relationship between law and religion, the publication that came out of a conference on law and religion (Kirsch and Turner 2009), and a workshop on religion and disputes in post-Suharto Indonesia (Ramstedt and Thufail 2011), members of the Project Group now mainly engaged in ethnographic and theoretical work on disputing processes. This shared concern with the significance of religion and religious laws in the dynamics of plural legal orders was part of the research agenda that we had followed from the beginning of the Project Group. The members of the group continued to work on the core issues, i.e. the dynamics of disputing processes within contexts of increasing globalisation and legal pluralism, resource management, social security, and governance, as well as on the analysis of their ethnographic material and a range of theoretical issues.

Each of the senior researchers has been working on a monograph. Several researchers submitted contributions to forthcoming edited volumes containing selections of papers from three conferences that are mentioned further below. Moreover, Ida Harboe Knudsen (Halle), Carolien Jacobs (Wageningen), and Silja Klepp (Leipzig) successfully defended their dissertations. The PhD theses of Carolien Jacobs and Silja Klepp were published in 2011 (Jacobs 2011, Klepp 2011), while the PhD thesis of Ida Harboe Knudsen was accepted for publication and will appear in 2012.

Other important events included the last international workshop of the Research Group 'Law against the State' which was headed by Julia Eckert, and which ended in April 2010. The workshop had been organised by Julia Eckert, Brian Donahoe, Christian Strümpell, and Zerrin Özlem Biner. In October 2010, Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann, Martin Ramstedt, and Bertram Turner convened the international conference *Religion in Disputes* (see below). The research project funded by the

Volkswagen Foundation convened an international conference entitled *Local State and Social Security: negotiating deservingness and avenues to natural resources in rural area* from June 30 to July 2, 2011, organised by Tatjana Thelen, Larissa Vetter, and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann.

During the reporting period, the staff of the Project Group gradually became smaller. In early 2010, Ida Harboe Knudsen left the group to take a post-doc position at Aarhus University in Denmark, and Fadjar I. Thufail returned to the Indonesian Institute of Sciences in Jakarta. Judith Beyer revised her PhD thesis for publication and started a new research project with Myanmar as its geographical focus. She took maternity leave in early 2011 and will resume her work in summer 2012. Carolien Jacobs' one-year post-doc research position within the Project Group ended in December 2011. Tatjana Thelen divided her time between a position at the University of Zurich and the MPI for Social Anthropology in Halle where she headed the VW project. She submitted her *Habilitationsschrift* in July 2010 and expects to defend her thesis in early 2012. She recently accepted a chair in the Department of Methods in the Social Sciences of the University of Vienna.

## 2. Religion in Disputes

*Franz von Benda-Beckmann, Keebet von Benda-Beckmann, Judith Beyer, Carolien Jacobs, Martin Ramstedt, Bertram Turner*

With its focus on *Religion in Disputes: religious beliefs, law and authority in dispute management* the Project Group endeavoured to contribute to the theoretical debates on disputing processes, and on the role of religion in the globalising world, marked by an increasing degree of legal pluralism. The group employed a broad concept of religion that transcends the bounds of conventional understandings of religion, including official and vernacular versions of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity, messianic and radical movements of various provenance, tenets of faith, eschatological imaginaries and ritual sensibilities as well as modern forms of witchcraft and inchoate forms of spirituality. Taking such a broad perspective on religion and conceptualising religion and law as distinct yet intersecting dimensions of social interaction, rather than as separate societal domains, has proven a fruitful perspective for studying the range of ways in which religion affects processes of dispute management.

Our research has demonstrated that settings which at first sight have nothing to do with dispute management may turn into arenas for dispute management with a religious dimension, such as healing rituals. This has opened a new window on the range of actors involved in disputing processes. Our ethnographic studies have shown that spirits, ancestors, and deities are often seen as important actors in the circle of disputing parties, decision makers, and publics. Moreover, disputing processes time and again move back and forth between modes of dispute management with a more

pronounced religious character and modes that are not primarily defined as such, and in which the religious dimension is more hidden. The perspective developed by the Project Group also highlights some of the more subtle ways in which religious dimensions are invoked and shifts in cognitive and normative orientation occur. A change in focus among the participants of disputing processes may indeed entail important semantic shifts in the understanding of the dispute that in turn engender code switching and even vital transformations of the normative registers themselves. To the extent that participants do this consciously, instances of forum and idiom shopping occur among both disputants and decision-makers.

Building on the group's previous work on legal pluralism, all researchers approached the disputes under study as simultaneously embedded in the socio-political dynamics of local societies and in processes of larger geographical and social scales and temporalities. In many cases (such as the Moroccan disputes studied by Turner), transnational actors seek to imprint their interpretations on local situations but often meet with strong resistance from a local population that mobilises its own ways of understanding against such external interventions. Specific tenets of faith are thereby translated into alternative normative repertoires or seemingly value-neutral technological registers that turn out to have a normative content of their own. Specific instances of disputing can only be understood as part of developments on a larger temporal and geographical scale. Semantic shifts are particularly frequent when participants of disputes operate between different scales. The studies of the Project Group thus exposed the co-occurrence of assorted sets of norms, motives, and values from diverse normative registers in actors' attempts to seek redress, solve disputes, and constitute political order. In these processes, religious registers are articulated in an array of legal registers, comprising state law, customary law, international law, and religious law. Religious dimensions hence may enter into, be substantiated in, and affect the course and outcome of dispute processes at different moments of their unfolding. Like registers of the legal, religious registers provide specific ways in which grievances are created, transformed, or obfuscated, standards of evaluation are set, and sanctions are imposed or avoided.

### **Foci and Findings of Individual Researchers with Regard to the Common Research Agenda**

Changing Relationship between *adat*, Islam and the State in West Sumatra after the Reforms

*Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann*

We expanded on our study of the changing relationships between Minangkabau *adat* (a general term for 'the way of life' or for customary law) and Islam and the state in West Sumatra after the fall of Suharto. We have shown that, at a general political level, the spheres of *adat* and religion become more blurred. Both *adat* protagonists

and Islamic leaders claim competence in defining the correct interpretation of *adat* as well as Islam. Struggles over the authority to proclaim the ‘correct’ balance between *adat* and Islam have led to an emotional and politically loaded *Kulturkampf* among Minangkabau intellectuals and politicians in West Sumatra, emigrant Minangkabau in the major Indonesian cities as well as within the West Sumatran and emigrant community. Besides, there is general agreement that the reorganisation of village government must be based on the principle that the state, Islam, and *adat* are intimately related, but here, too, is disagreement about what this entails in practical terms. On the scale of concrete disputes over property and inheritance, however, the population makes a clear distinction between the two normative orders. In spite of increasing pressure on the part of the Indonesian government and the broadened jurisdiction of religious courts, and in contrast to other regions of Indonesia, the Minangkabau have resisted defining their disputes over these issues in terms of Islam and have not made use of the opportunity of bringing these disputes before religious state courts.

According to *salt*: an ethnography of customary law in Talas, Kyrgyzstan  
*Judith Beyer*

Elaborating on some themes from my field research in Kyrgyzstan which had not been included in my dissertation, I investigated people’s understandings of Islam and their interpretation and situational invocation of the *shari’a* in the context of local-level disputes in rural Kyrgyzstan.

I observed how newly introduced modes of religious dispute management were being adapted to already established social relations, for instance when a council, which had been created by the young village imam as part of the organisation of Friday prayers, was taken over by the old men of the village. These elders proceeded to sustain their monopoly on dispute settlement in this new forum even though they lacked the scriptural knowledge of Islam which the younger imam possessed, and which might be expected to provide the foundation for debates in the mosque. I have argued that by building on familiar ideas and practices of authority and respect which are culturally tied to the elders, the *shari’a* cannot be assumed to constitute an independent legal repertoire. It becomes subsumed (in Kyrgyz: lit. ‘swallowed’) under a broader domain of practice locally referred to as *salt* (customary law). I hold that ‘non-customary law’, such as Islamic law, along with religious dispute management techniques, such as the council in the mosque, become part of *salt* in a process I refer to as customisation.



*In the mosques in rural Kyrgyzstan, novel religious dispute management techniques are established as part of Friday prayer. (Photo: J. Beyer, 2006)*

Towards Reconciliation: contesting normative orientations of Christianity and traditional religion in Mozambique

*Carolien Jacobs*

In the context of our common inquiries, I investigated various modes of conflict resolution by different religious authorities, spiritual healers, and Christian pastors in Mozambique. I have argued that Christian and traditional African religious beliefs could be mobilised against each other even though they were held by the very same persons. My research has demonstrated how the powers and preferences of superhuman forces came to play in the following processes: the different processes that were leading up to reconciliation; the construction of problematic situation images (as conflict, caused by witchcraft, by spirits, by sinful acts); the evaluation of this through truth-finding mechanisms; and the outcome in form of sanctions. While pastors emphasised forgiveness as a necessary prerequisite of reconciliation, with reconciliatory practice mainly consisting of prayer and reading the Bible together, adherents of traditional religion and spirit mediums were required to appease wronged spirits through retaliation or punishment.

Precarious Inclusion: antinomies of “religion” and new fault lines of citizenship in the nomosphere of contemporary Bali

*Martin Ramstedt*

In view of our common research agenda, I concentrated on a number of disputes that were caused by new fault lines of citizenship in contemporary Bali. These followed from a number of regional regulations which had been enacted in the course of the recent decentralisation process in Indonesia. They divided local from national citizenship by inextricably linking the former to a local, vernacular form of ‘Hinduism’. Local citizenship in Bali is now defined by descent from Hindu-Balinese ancestors as well as commitment to regularly performing a plethora of recurrent Hindu-Balinese rituals. The juridification of this linkage of religious and ethnic belonging has enabled the Hindu-Balinese majority to regain a hegemonic position on the island in terms of access to land, political decision-making, and economic development vis-à-vis the growing influx of non-Hindu migrants from other parts of Indonesia. However, in the process, a whole series of new conflicts has emerged not only among the different religious and ethnic communities in Bali but also within the Hindu-Balinese constituency itself. These conflicts have played out in settings marked by inter-village rivalry, local concerns about conversion, controversies about ‘orthodoxy’ and ‘orthopraxy’, tensions between castes and classes, entrenchment of anti-democratic local governance structures, asymmetrical economic conditions, and new opportunities for graft.



*The training of Balinese village leaders by legal professionals. (Photo: M. Ramstedt, 2009)*

Disputing Spatio-temporal Inscriptions of Faith in the Nomosphere of Rural Morocco  
*Bertram Turner*

With respect to the common focus of our Project Group, I concentrated on disputes in rural southwest Morocco which underscore the fact that in certain localities, normatively defined fault lines between the secular and the sacred can fluctuate along temporal vectors. The *mise-en-scène* of these events is the weekly market, which in itself constitutes an interface between economic, religious, and legal activities.

My observations illustrate in what way the assessment of human behaviour in local disputes is informed by spatial and temporal parameters, and how normative and faith-based aspects converge upon them. Such convergences of faith-based considerations and profane ideas about the maintenance of social and normative order testify to a rather fluid approach to world-making which is very much attuned to the vagaries of agricultural life in rural Morocco. In a second step, I have shown how this fluidity has been challenged by representatives of political Islam, stipulating the superiority and absolute authority of their dogmatic reading of the religious in the management of disputes. Local disputing hence constitutes the arena in which Islamic activists push for a universally fixed hierarchical divide between ‘religion’ and ‘non-religion’. In so doing, they challenge the perception of local actors to regard the religious as being inscribed in the nomosphere where all spheres of human life intersect. Such dispute about religion in disputes, I argue, induces translation efforts and conceptual co-modification.



*Local market in the Souss. (Photo: B. Turner, 2003)*

## Introduction to the Conference on *Religion in Disputes*

*Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann, Martin Ramstedt, Bertram Turner*

The common ideas informing the individual projects were further developed in an international conference on *Religion in Disputes* convened by Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann, Martin Ramstedt, and Bertram Turner in Halle on 27–29 October 2010.



*Participants in the MPI Conference Religion in Disputes. (Photo: Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, 2010)*

It was designed to address a theoretical gap in the increasing stream of academic research and political discourses on the role of religion in public life. There already is a substantial body of literature on religious courts which focuses on disputes between individuals, mainly concerning matters of family law. Religion has furthermore become an issue of debate in the context of ‘cultural defence’ in criminal procedures. There is also an abundance of literature on what are called ‘religious conflicts’ or ‘ethno-religious conflicts’, in which religion becomes a focal point for acrimonious identity politics geared to secure political power and access to economic resources for particular groups. The dominant focus here is on violence and human rights infringements caused, or at least legitimated, by reference to religion. All these research traditions have generated important insights into the role of religion in disputes. However, they tend to foreground the negative role of religions as they

emphasise the violence, controversies, and heated arguments that have emerged when of religious authorities are involved and actors employ religious registers in disputing processes.



*Village mosque in Bayur, West Sumatra, with room for 2,500 people. Its architecture largely follows the earlier but much smaller mosque. It was mainly financed by a wealthy Minangkabau emigrant. (Photo: F. von Benda-Beckmann, 2005)*

There are several reasons why the issue of the religious dimensions of dispute management deserves more general reflection and analysis beyond the context of religious courts, cultural defence, and the ethno-religious conflicts that receive the most prominent coverage in both the mass media and scientific literature. For one, we cannot properly understand disputing behaviour if we relegate the role of religion in dispute management to religious courts and otherwise focus on secular modes of dispute management without considering the potential role of religious registers in the attainment of secular ends. Moreover, we cannot fully understand the role of religion and religiosity in society unless we take into account the religious dimensions of dispute management. For the religious may, as our research demonstrates, penetrate public space obliquely through the dynamics of semantic shifts, code-switching as well as idiom and forum shopping that take place when both religious and legal registers impact on contemporary disputing processes. Finally, there is also a more political consideration: The tendency to connect religion with violence

in the domain of dispute management might become a self-fulfilling prophecy. A broader perspective on the role of religion in dispute management therefore helps to mitigate this tendency.

The conference was a fruitful encounter between anthropologists of religion, religious scholars, anthropologists of law, and legal philosophers. The contributions to the conference, a selection of which will appear in a forthcoming edited volume, have provided fine-grained analyses which have greatly added to the imbricated debates on disputing, the dynamics of legal pluralism, and the emergence of religious modernities. In sum, the conference has offered a new perspective with its focus on the changing overlap between normative registers, the idiom shopping and semantic shifts involved in the process, and the creative ways in which actors draw upon religion, while paying attention to the political and social implications of these processes.

### 3. Expanding the Research Agendas

#### *Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann*

Apart from a shared interest devoted to issues of religion in disputes the members of the project group continued to work in the fields most crucial to their individual research projects. While religion and religious law played a significant role in all the projects, the aspects and theoretical issues related to religion varied for each individual researcher.

Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann focused strongly on the significance and dynamics of legal pluralism in the processes of the decentralisation and reorganisation of village government in West Sumatra, Indonesia. They have argued that many aspects of the historical development and the recent period of decentralisation have been misinterpreted in the literature due to an inadequate understanding of law, the relations between different legal orders in a plural constellation, and the relationships between such constellations and social practices. This, they hold, is largely due to the fact that such analyses are usually based on data drawn from single contexts. This concerns, in particular, the treatment of the strikingly unaligned perspectives on the revival of and the increasing prominence of Islam in the public sphere. Relationships within the plural legal constellation tend to be selectively viewed as bipolar, concentrating either on the relation between *adat* and state, or between Islam and state, or between Islam and *adat*.

In the field of property and inheritance, in particular, this leads to an unbalanced view of the significance of *adat* and Islamic law. While most political and scholarly discussions about the recognition of *adat* property rights are nearly exclusively focused on relations between lineages, *nagari*, and the state, Islamic law remains invisible. Following the temporal logic of western legal systems that treat property and inheritance as largely separate legal subsystems, Islamic law is seen to play a

role in inheritance only. As a consequence, the dominant image of legal pluralism in Minangkabau and its role in social and economic change that is taken as a basis for policies is seriously selective and misleading. The von Benda-Beckmanns have shown that, in Minangkabau, *adat* property *is* inheritance, and inheritance reshapes individual property rights into parts of the lineage property complex. In this way the relation between Islamic law and *adat* also affects communal property.



*The central village mosque of Candung Kota Lawas, West Sumatra, after restoration. In the background the hostel for students (asrama) with the classical roof of Minangkabau adat houses. (Photo: K. von Benda-Beckmann, 2009)*

They have also demonstrated that the commonly held understanding of the social working of law that is largely premised on the conventional focus on the disparities between legal rules and actual practice is seriously flawed as it does not adequately capture the many different ways and kinds of social process in which legal principles and institutions can influence social practices. The von Benda-Beckmanns have developed a more sophisticated understanding of the social working of law in plural legal constellations that allows for a more comprehensive understanding of ‘legal engineering’ and its simultaneous and successive consequences in different contexts at different scales of social and political organisation.

The empirical settings in which they have developed their perspective were the recent and entangled processes of decentralisation and the transformations of village government in West Sumatra. However, the perspective has a more general relevance and is also useful for addressing issues of resource management, the revival of tra-

dition and faith based legal orders, the invention of tradition, increasing ‘lawfare’, and the juridification of the political and religious world.

The von Benda-Beckmanns also published a critique of the dominant opinion that *adat* and *adat* law is an invention of the Dutch colonial government and Dutch legal scholars of the Adat Law School (Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann 2011). They argued that the common view has been largely based on a legalistic conception of ‘law’ and ‘customary law’. Secondly, interpretations of the significance of the colonial transformations are based on selective generalisations from interpretations of *adat* in specific contexts. The agency of local people and their intellectual and political leaders is underrated while the actual significance of colonial legal constructions of *adat* law on the legal life of the population is overrated. In the third place, the proposition that the Adat Law School’s descriptions of *adat* law and its significance in legal politics and administration is largely anachronistic. Finally, the authors showed that critics have chosen the wrong target for their deconstructions. They have largely ignored colonial scholars and courts, who grossly and often quite consciously misinterpreted local normative systems in terms of Dutch legal categories.

Martin Ramstedt’s concern with ‘citizenship in plural legal constellations’ led him to expand on issues of intra-state migration and ensuing disputes between different religious communities in decentralising Indonesia.

Here, he concentrated on Sino-Indonesian Buddhist migrants to Bali and their strategies to evade and mitigate conflict with the Hindu-Balinese community privileged by the local citizenship regulations. Far from forming a homogeneous migrant group, and with no access to local citizenship, Sino-Indonesian Buddhists in Bali generally seek to remain inconspicuous and to engage in social welfare projects in order to forge and or maintain solidarity ties with ‘local citizens’, thereby preventing or mitigating conflict. At the same time, each of the Sino-Indonesian Buddhist groups unobtrusively tries to promote different imaginaries that emphasise commonality with their Hindu-Buddhist neighbours, such as reference to a common Hindu-Buddhist past at the time of the Singasari and Majapahit Empires, emphasis on common religious practices (e.g. meditation), or allusion to a shared fear of Islamism. Ramstedt introduced some of the results of his research on problems of citizenship, intra-state migration, and inter-religious relations in decentralising Indonesia with particular reference to Sino-Indonesians in Bali at several international conferences.

He furthermore continued to find and analyze evidence of *Islamization by Law and the Juridification of Religion in Anomic Indonesia*, the results of which he will continue to write up in 2012. Here, Ramstedt has drawn heavily on the insights of the 2009 workshop in Lembang, Indonesia, which he had co-convened with Fadjar I. Thufail. In 2011, a selection of workshop papers appeared in an Indonesian-language collection of essays which he had co-edited with Thufail. The book demonstrates how, in the various cultural citizenship movements that have emerged in post-Suharto Indonesia, religious norms have been articulated using different legal registers,

comprising international law, national state law, religious values-based regional regulations, as well as customary law in order to resolve, transform, or obfuscate grievances. An English version of parts of the book will appear as a theme issue of *Asian Ethnicity*, scheduled for October 2012.

Finally Ramstedt continued his historiographical research on the cultural contexts in which the fathers of the Indonesian Constitution developed contending notions of nationalism (Javanese vs. Indonesian nationalism, leftist vs. rightist notions of nationalism, Asian vs. Western notions of nationalism). In the context of the recent decentralisation and democratisation processes in Indonesia, these notions have regained currency in public discourse.

Bertram Turner continued research in two other main fields within the anthropology of law. Firstly, as coordinator of the Halle section of IMPRS-REMPEP, he continued to engage in research on issues of retaliation. Retaliation is connected to the universe of disputing, conflict settlement, social transgression and deviance, crime, violence and compensation, and punishment. During the reporting period, Turner focused on notions of reciprocity, appropriateness, and proportionality. His activities and findings connected with this research are detailed in the report's IMPRS-REMPEP section.



*Argan merchandising at the road to Essaouira. (Photo: B. Turner, 2011)*

Secondly, Turner continued his research in the domain of resource management in trans-scale arrangements, using the argan tree forest in Morocco as an ethnographic example.

The analysis of the normative framework of its exploitation was extended and the focus shifted towards the emergence of argan oil as a unique local product on the world market. At the transnational scale the argan tree and its oil are endowed with a normative framework that includes among other regulations: a) legal protection as a sustainable resource in form of a UNESCO biosphere reserve; b) a legal concept that allows the production of a premium product required by the world market (e.g. in cooperatives), and c) the legal labels of a fairly traded ecological or organic product with certifications and a protected geographical indication (PGI). This framework positions argan oil in an economy of solidarity and equity which also appeals to consumers in the industrialised world. In this context, Turner analysed the intertwining and co-production of normative and technological strands in the politics of natural resource extraction. He argues that processes involving complex interactions among various legal repertoires at various scales (local customary law, religious law, national legislation, transnational legal templates), on the one hand, and technological innovation, on the other, are qualified to legitimise the social and economic consequences of technology transfer and resource extraction the local population is supposed to suffer. In the process, so the argument continues, such entanglements are induced to transform a local product into an exploitable global commodity. In so doing, scientific knowledge (protected by the law) that provides the necessary framework for resource extraction is produced on the basis of local knowledge (not protected by the law).

While research was pushed forward in these fields, Turner gave special attention to the overlaps and interdependencies of these three fields as the empirical research had revealed. Publications such as the working paper co-authored by Melanie Wiber (Wiber/Turner 2010) reflect these insights in such thematic interconnectedness.

On the basis of her previous research project in eastern Germany, Tatjana Thelen followed the topic of social security in diverse relational realms. In a volume edited together with Haldis Haukanes, they argued that the development of childhood into a separate field of scientific inquiry has contributed to a deflection of attention from its relation to concepts and practices of parenthood. A key aim of their book has therefore been to partly fill the gap between childhood- and parenthood-oriented studies with an in-depth examination of the interrelation between the dominant models of childhood and ideas about proper parenting. They have followed the parallel circulation of ideas on proper childhood and proper parenthood and have argued that if a 'global childhood' is in the process of development, it is paralleled by an emerging 'global parenthood', and both are simultaneously negotiated in the relevant institutional arenas.

In her individual contribution to the volume Thelen argued that post-socialist educational reforms instead of bringing about a modernisation of childhood have

induced a far more ambivalent process. The empirical results showing that the introduction of Western (post-)modern institutions has led to less individualisation allows us to question basic assumptions about western modernisation as well. The topic was also taken up in a joint article with Carolin Leutloff-Grandits that focused on a comparison of the generally underresearched area of grandmothering. On the basis of their research within the EU-funded project ‘Kinship and Social Security’ (KASS; 2004–2008), they argued that while demographic and economic developments might further similar child care practices, national and local contexts vary, and local actors attribute different meanings to their action. Given their varied experiences with public child care and female employment during the socialist period, grandmothers in eastern Germany tend to interpret their own involvement in child care after reunification as a self-sacrifice while grandmaternal care in Croatia is discursively ‘naturalised’ as a motherly donation. Thus, as there was no one uniform socialist experience there is also no singular ‘postsocialist’ condition. Both articles have foreshadowed the more basic critique of othering in research on post-socialism that has stipulated a still ongoing debate in that field of interest.

Further expanding on field of social security, and with regards to processes of ageing, Thelen has argued in favour of a methodological emphasis on practices of care. The study of feeding and sharing food in other than kin relations offers new insights in processes of creating meaningful relations. The topic of creating and sustaining meaningful relations, as well as their dissolution, through care has been analysed in-depth in her *Habilitationsschrift*.

Apart from presenting the findings of her doctoral project at several international conferences, Carolien Jacobs also prepared a number of publications on themes that she had not developed in her thesis. They all fell under the rubric of ‘Religion and the problem of order in Southern Africa’. Some of these publications were already mentioned in the introductory part of our group’s report. In collaboration with Christy Schuetze (Swarthmore College), Jacobs furthermore prepared two publications on collective violence as a form of private justice and the problem of order in Mozambique. The first of them is titled *Lynching, poverty, witchcraft and the state in Mozambique*. The second is titled *Violence against Violence: in search of security and justice*. Finally, there are two forthcoming publications that focus on the ‘agency’ of spirits in disputing processes: (1) ‘Hearing spirits: the role of traditional religion in disputing in Mozambique’, and (2) the bilingual article (English and Portuguese) ‘Spirits at the police station’.

Judith Beyer investigated and wrote on the role of customary law in relation to topics such as authority, genealogy, ethnicity, and politics. Together with Zemfira Inogamova she published the life history of one of her key informants. When in summer 2010 a constitutional referendum was carried out in Kyrgyzstan amidst violent conflicts, she carried out additional field research, the results of which will appear in an article entitled ‘Constitutional faith in Kyrgyzstan’. Two more articles are expected to appear in the coming year: one on the role of the courts of elders in

the Kyrgyz capital Bishkek; the other on gender, reciprocity and the force of emotional practices during funeral rituals. For her new research project on Myanmar, Beyer attended the International Burma Studies Conference in France and carried out short-term fieldwork in Buddhist meditation centres in England and Germany. Moreover, she took two intensive Burmese language courses in order to prepare for her upcoming fieldwork in Myanmar and India in 2012/13.



*Elders and their imam (in the blue shirt) disperse after a gathering. Male elders (Kyrgyz aksakal, lit.: white beard) often extend their dispute-settling capacities to the mosque, thereby curtailing the influence of the imam. (Photo: J. Beyer, 2010)*

#### 4. Research Group ‘Law against the State’

*Julia Eckert*

##### **Researchers**

*Julia Eckert* (Head of Research Group until 2009)

*Zerrin Özlem Biner* (until July 2010), *Brian Donahoe* (until October 2010),

*Christian Strümpell* (until September 2009)

Work on legal pluralism and governance was the core issue of the Research Group *Law against the State* (see MPI Report 2008–2009). In April 2010 the Research Group organised its final workshop, *Law against the State*. The contributors to the workshop began with the premise that in the use of law, law transforms those who use it, and their understandings of the world, their conflicts, and their normative orientations – in other words, their political subjectivities. At the same time, they traced the ways that law itself is transformed in iterative processes. These transformations are historically contingent on the dialectic between the transformations of social relations and the subjectivities that law can bring about, on the one hand, and the transformations in the meaning of laws produced by the interpretations of those who mobilise law for their particular social, political, or economic struggles, on the other. This dialectic reflects the two sides of the sociality of law: first, law’s formative impact on social perceptions; and secondly, its very constitution in the social. Iterations of law occur within figurations, i.e. the relations between actors that are defined by their roles and historical positioning, and that restrict to a greater or lesser degree the transformative potential of iterations. The studies presented at this workshop have demonstrated how and where the struggles over the meaning of norms and categories occur and continue to produce new legal meanings. The results of the workshop will be published under the title *Ethnographic Forays into Law’s Transformations* in the series *Law and Society* of Cambridge University Press, edited by Julia Eckert, Brian Donahoe, Christian Strümpell, and Zerrin Özlem Biner.

## 5. Local State and Social Security in Rural Hungary, Romania, and Serbia (Funded by the Volkswagen Foundation)

*Tatjana Thelen and Agnieszka Pasieka*

### **Researchers**

*Tatjana Thelen, Keebet von Benda-Beckmann, Katalin Kovacs* (project leaders), *Ioan-Mihai Popa, Alexandra Szöke, André Thiemann* (doctoral candidates), *Stefan Dorondel, Slobodan Naumovic, Gyöngyi Schwarcz* (researchers), *Larissa Vettters* (main project coordinator until May 2011), *Agnieszka Pasieka* (project coordinator from June 2011 to September 2011), *Duska Vranjes* (project coordinator since October 2011)

The research interest of the project group on law, social security, and governance branched out in a project launched in 2008 within the framework of the VW program *Unity amidst Variety? Intellectual foundations and requirements for an enlarged Europe*. The project explores the interrelation of local states and arrangements of social security in rural Hungary, Romania, and Serbia. Taking under scrutiny the issues of state transformation by focusing on access to an array of resources, the project provides new insights into issues that have been main topics of the Institute's research agenda. Specifically, it carried on an interest in social security that has also been explored within the Project Group Legal Pluralism as well as Department II (especially within the project 'Kinship and Social Support in China and Vietnam') and the KASS-project.

Coordinated by Tatjana Thelen (in cooperation with Larissa Vettters and Duska Vranjes), the team developed an innovative approach to the comparative ethnographic research in three phases. The first preparatory phase (2008–2009) involved the design of a joint conceptual basis, the compilation of the legal situation concerning the topic in each country and the development of a comparative research agenda including both shared qualitative and quantitative tools. The second research phase consisted of individual fieldwork by three doctoral and three post-doctoral researchers as well as cross- and advisory visits. It was finished by the end of 2010. The third phase (2010–2011) was devoted to an in-depth comparative analysis and the writing-up of dissertations and publications. All three phases entailed joint workshops enhancing the scope and depth of comparison and exchanges with the project's advisors (Halle, 2009; Budapest, 2009; Belgrade, 2010). Moreover, in 2011, an international conference was convened in Halle.

The project's rationale is based on the observation that the political changes in former socialist countries – in the main decentralisation and pluralisation of forms of social security – have produced a high diversity in local state formations. The theoretical starting point is constituted by a combination of the anthropological conceptualisation of social security put forward by Keebet and Franz von Benda-

Beckmann with recent developments in political anthropology that understand the state as a complex web of actors, institutions, policies, and their multidimensional interactions. With the exploration of the new configurations of state formations and social security arrangements the project seeks to overcome simple dichotomies between formal state and informal help and between state and non-state actors. Instead, it focuses on the interrelatedness and embeddedness of state actors in local social security arrangements by taking into account two major fields of state action as analytic domains: access to natural resources and access to social assistance.

Researchers focused their attention on different yet closely related, problems, such as elderly assistance (Thiemann), local leadership and politics (Szöke, Naumovic), access to resources and administrative practice (Popa, Dorondel), the relation between ethnicity and access to various resources (Schwarcz, Dorondel, Szöke, and Thelen). On the basis of the questionnaires, Katalin Kovacs created a common database, which constitutes the basis for further comparative work. In general, thanks to the development of common research tools, cross-visits in the course of fieldwork, and a database of shared field notes, the project took a pronouncedly comparative angle. This, for example, enabled project members to problematise the interpretation of the demise of socialism as a radical break manifested in a diminished role of the state and to show that local state actors may in fact gain in importance in the local negotiations of citizenship rights, which they sometimes use to recreate boundaries of belonging through public performances tied to the administration of these rights. The exploration of the normative basis for these performances indicates that membership is still based on the contribution of work to the common good, which can best be conceptualised as a shifting continuity rather than a sharp break after 1989.

The individual country teams presented additional comparative outcomes during the international conference at the MPI (30 June–2 July 2011). Stefan Dorondel and Ioan-Mihai Popa, who carried out fieldwork in Romania, demonstrated, with the example of the differences in the local application of an EU food programme, the ways in which local imaginaries of the state inform local state actors' practices and feed back into local representations of the state. In their comparison of two Hungarian localities, Gyöngyi Schwarcz and Alexandra Szöke focused on the agency of the mayors and their embeddedness in local networks as important factors toward explaining variation in local state arrangements under conditions of decentralisation. Studying the ways that local state actors imagine the role of the local state, they have demonstrated large differences in providing state forms of social security for particular groups of citizens in the two villages. Focusing on forms of state care for the elderly, André Thiemann and Duska Vranjes have demonstrated how simultaneous projectification and marketisation have led to a (re-)emergence of social ties in the context of a simultaneous discourse about a distant and non-caring state in Serbia.

In addition, the intensive discussions at the final conference added to the main findings of the individual research projects and the comparisons made during earlier joint meetings. These include a) the confirmation that social security is a crucial

aspect of statehood, an insight that has been largely neglected in the anthropology of the state; b) the significance of a relational approach to the state focusing on images and practices that is supplemented with a social network perspective; c) the relevance of the two interdependent domains of social assistance and natural resources for the local state's ability to create and transform resources in complex socio-cultural processes of negotiation, performance, and contestation; and d) the importance of the performance of redistribution in negotiating notions of deserving, belonging, and community.

## **6. Outlook**

### *Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann*

In 2009, the Project Group Legal Pluralism was extended until the end of 2012 in the expectation that by then a new department would have been established and would have started its activities. To our great joy, this hope has become reality and a new director will be able to establish a new department dedicated to the anthropology of law in the course of 2012. With this, the long desired metamorphosis from Project Group to Department can finally take place and provide sufficient space for the development of a larger long-term research program in this theoretically and socio-politically important field. During the year 2012, the remaining members of the project group will continue their research, supervision, and work on several publications, while at the same time participating in the brainstorming process of the new department. The VW-funded project *Social Security and the Local State* has also been extended through June 2012. The members of the group will continue to publish their major findings.

The official end of the project group will be marked by a conference in November 2012 which will focus on the significance of 'time' in plural legal orders, an issue that plays an important role in the research and theorising of the group members, and which has been on the joint conference agenda in 'developing the anthropology of law' (pursued since 2004 in cooperation with Anne Griffiths, Edinburgh University) for a long time. Moreover, the theme is apposite in that it highlights the temporality of the Project Group and the transition from a short-term to a long-term agenda.

## Siberian Studies Centre

**Directors: Chris Hann and Günther Schlee**

**Coordinator: Joachim Otto Habeck**

*Joachim Otto Habeck and Joseph Long*

The Siberian Studies Centre can now look back upon almost ten years of research activity. Until now, the Centre has been operating on a temporary basis. However, negotiations are underway to give the Centre a permanent place at the MPI for Social Anthropology.

The future agenda should build upon the Centre's established regional expertise, methodological rigour and innovative research design. The city of Halle has a long tradition of anthropological research on Siberia, and the city's academic profile has gained from the renewal of this tradition at the MPI. In Germany and beyond, the Centre has earned a strong reputation in a relatively short time for its focus on contemporary social processes in Siberia and for comparative research on the basis of both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.

In the early phase (2003–2006), research took place in four thematic fields, with each researcher designing fieldwork individually. More recently, however, the Centre has been developing collaborative working practices for research design, data analysis and publication projects. In 2006, members of the Siberian Studies Centre started their first comparative research project, with jointly designed research instruments employed simultaneously in different field sites. The project focussed on public cultural institutions, and Houses of Culture in particular. The results have recently been published in a volume edited by Brian Donahoe and Joachim Otto Habeck. This encouraging experience led the directors and coordinator of the Centre to pursue collaborative research models further. An account of the current programme will constitute the main part of this year's report. Other important accomplishments of the Siberian Studies Centre will be presented towards the end.

### **Conditions and Limitations of Lifestyle Plurality**

The current programme – *Conditions and Limitations of Lifestyle Plurality in Siberia* (CLLP) – was laid out by Habeck in a 2008 MPI Working Paper. In a region where the focus of ethnographic research has often been on religious revival, ethnicity, and traditional subsistence practices, and where wider social research often underlines poverty, health problems, and harsh climatic conditions, the aim of the programme was to take a fresh approach to the region as a means of examining the ways that social actors in Siberia exercise agency and reflexivity in pursuing their life-projects. The lifestyle trope invites anthropologists to look at symbolic and autopoietic practices that align social actors with identities and affinities other than ethnic, familial,

or professional groupings. It challenges us to consider consumption and leisure, travel practices and mobility, and self-presentation as moral and aesthetic choices that are not necessarily ruled by ethnic sensibilities or Soviet morality.

In the English language the term *lifestyle* may carry connotations of consumption for its own sake, fuelled by advertisements and glossy magazines. This is not true of the term in German and French (*Lebensstil, style de vie*). As a theoretical concept, lifestyle has been employed by numerous sociologists from Veblen, Simmel, and Weber to Bourdieu, Giddens, and Chaney to describe people's reflexive life-projects. Anthropologists also have much to learn from this literature. The Siberian Studies Centre seeks to make a novel contribution to this body of scholarship rooted firmly in ethnographic description. The concept of lifestyle licenses researchers to study ethnicity, religion, and kinship alongside other meaningful practices and social ties such as peer-group membership at work or school, and belonging to sports teams or fan clubs. All of these categories provide frameworks for associational ties that individuals may, at various times, subscribe to, proudly defend, use pragmatically, or feel ashamed of and reject. The aim of the research programme is to study what frameworks for identification are available in which combinations in different places and how individuals come to terms with them. To this end, the research team is drawing on the theoretical framework of identity and identification developed in Department I (Donahoe et al. 2009, MPI Working Paper 116).

Team members were recruited in two cohorts. The first cohort (Jaroslava Bagdasarova, Ludek Broz, and Stephan Dudeck) was appointed in 2008 and, along with Habeck, identified two intersecting topics within the overall programme for collaborative work: *Changing Habits of Travelling* and *Visual Self-Presentation*, the latter with a particular emphasis on photography. These researchers conducted their own field projects on these themes in 2009–2010, bringing their experiences to bear on collaborative research design with a second cohort of full-time researchers (Joseph Long, Maria Nakhshina, Eleanor Peers, Artem Rabogoshvili, and Ina Schröder) and associates (Tatiana Barchunova, Natalia Beletskaja, Tatiana Safonova, and Denis Zuev) who joined the project in early 2010.

From mid-2008 to late 2011, five teamwork sessions were held to define key terms, research questions, instruments, and analytical techniques. The teamwork session of February 2011 took place in Berdsk near Novosibirsk and included an outreach session where the team presented the programme and its components to scholars of ethnography and sociology in the city of Novosibirsk. Research instruments were tested in short fieldwork periods in 2010 and refined accordingly. Extended fieldwork took place mostly in 2011 and will be completed by March 2012.

### *Visual Self-Presentation*

The visual self-presentation component of the programme emphasises individual and collective techniques used to craft an identity through visual images. We explore the ways that identities are constituted on the Internet or through records of important

moments, events, and locations that are stored in photo albums or otherwise kept or displayed. We are also investigating the way that photographs are used for the maintenance of social networks: how they depict and are exchanged with relatives, colleagues, and friends.

Visual forms of self-presentation have received attention in psychology, cultural, and media studies. But the number of works dealing with the spatial aspect of self-presentation is small. CLLP researchers are therefore exploring the role of photography in negotiating both physical journeys and virtual space. Photographs are often utilised to demonstrate to oneself and others that one has actually been to a destination or experienced an event. We aim to establish how these destinations and events are memorialised. In this respect, this investigation intersects with the biographies of travel discussed below. Since the Internet offers a vast range of digital destinations and events, people whose physical space for action is very limited may seek to act within a large virtual space – in online forums, social networking sites, and chat rooms.



*Young women from a local school's dance ensemble perform on the occasion of "Baikal Day" at the shore of Lake Baikal (background, right-hand side). The celebration is part of the regional strategy for tourism development, Gremiachinsk Pribaikal'skii. (Photo: S. Namsaraeva, 2008)*

For the topic of visual self-presentation the team decided on photo elicitation interviews as its research methodology. Informants are asked to decide on six photographs that characterise important aspects or moments in their lives and are interviewed about each in turn. The researchers examine the semantic content and meaning of photographs for biography and identity, accounting for changing photographic styles and culturally significant aspects of composition. We are also investigating the possibilities and limitations inherent in changing technologies and infrastructures for photo production, storage, and viewing.

### *Changing Habits of Travelling*

This research focus is devoted to the role of travel in people's biographies. Degrees of mobility and habits of travelling have been changing drastically for many inhabitants of Siberia over the last twenty years. In Siberia, the economic hardship of the 1990s meant that many people were rendered immobile. This sudden change affected both indigenous and settler populations, though in different ways. Soviet modernisation brought several generations of European Soviet citizens to the Arctic and Far East. When these resettlement programmes ceased, however, not all of those who wanted to return to European Russia had the chance to do so. Others resolutely stayed put in the new towns, proudly emphasising their "Northern" identity. Since about 2001, the state has resumed the exploitation of resources in the Far North, and new waves of workers have been arriving in some parts of Siberia. The economic collapse of the 1990s also affected the mobility of indigenous communities which, owing to the same modernisation project, had given up 'traditional' travelling technologies. The Soviet state created neatly delineated territories of action (districts and state farms) and travelling occurred along the routes determined by a centralised, hierarchically organised infrastructure. This infrastructure then broke down in the 1990s and has since been restored or replaced only partially.

The Soviet modernisation project encouraged certain forms of mobility and life-projects while inhibiting others. Holiday-making has provided one example for investigation under the CLLP programme. While individual tourism did exist in the Soviet Union, it was considered to be 'wild' – beyond the control of the state's recreational infrastructure. In most cases Soviet citizens travelled to state spas and vacation centres according to a system of earned tokens. Though some of these facilities still exist, contemporary Siberia has seen massive growth in commercial tourist activities and enterprises. Some regions, such as the Altai Mountains and Lake Baikal, now attract thousands of tourists each year from within Russia and from abroad. The upsurge in tourism has changed these environments for local inhabitants and created new losers and winners among them. Moreover, many indigenous communities are now confronted with the question of how to cater to demands for performances of their cultural practices and make them attractive to visitors.

This part of the research programme also examines less spectacular forms of travelling such as visits to relatives and leaving home for higher education or work.

Whether such travels occur by necessity, choice, or a mixture of both, they mark transitions not only from one place to another, but also between points in people's biographies. The task is to examine the significance that these journeys, places, and spaces have in our informants' narratives about themselves.

For the topic of mobility and travel, the team has developed standardised travel biography interviews. These offer insights into both regular travelling habits and tourist travel at different points over the past four decades. The questionnaire is designed to elicit information on the possibilities of travel as well as the meanings attached to travel narratives by informants at different stages in their lives. In addition, team members collect information on changes in transportation and infrastructure for each fieldwork site.

The first fruits of the two core projects are currently finding their way into research outputs. Bagdasarova and Peers, having completed fieldwork, are currently working on a joint paper on visual self-presentation. Broz and Habeck convened a panel on *Movement for Pleasure – the Pleasure of Moving* at the 7th International Conference for Arctic Social Sciences in Akureyri, Iceland. This panel received attention for challenging the conventional tenet that movement in the Far North is necessitated by either harsh environmental conditions or forced relocation.

In addition to these two core topics, researchers have each pursued their own research projects under the umbrella of the CLLP programme (listed in the table below). At the time of writing, some researchers of the second cohort are still in the field. The following sections do, however, suggest some emerging points of convergence in their findings.

### *Tourism and Cultural Exchange*

Broz's completed field project analysed tourism in the south of Siberia, examining, in particular, the transition from state-sponsored tourism, which saw workers travelling in professional groups, to family holidays. Zuev's current fieldwork, carried out in several cities, examines the way that transient and computer-mediated relationships among couch-surfers nonetheless engender senses of solidarity, reciprocity, and social trust for those who invest in the activity. Nakhshina's field project on the White Sea coast documents the transformation of a coastal village into a place of second-home ownership and the consequences for the relations between permanent and summer residents. Schröder's PhD research among indigenous Khanty and Mansi youths explores the importance of youth camps and exchanges as events in which ethnic identity is reaffirmed, but also where intercultural ties are formed in "global education programs", particularly those focussing on environmental concerns. Schröder is accompanying participants from two countries through both stages of this exchange – visits to western Siberia and Germany.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Title of individual research projects</i>
J. Bagdasarova	Ethnotourism in the Far North of Russia: transformation of lifestyles on the microlevel
T. Barchunova, N. Beletskaja	Role-Playing Games: travelling and self-presentation of players (in different cities of Siberia)
L. Broz	Altai – (Re)Birth of a Destination: taste, identity and the new geography of leisure in southwest Siberia
S. Dudeck	Diversity of Lifestyles Between Reindeer Herders' Camps in the Taiga and the Oil City
J. O. Habeck	The Public Sphere of Culture in Siberia: Houses of Culture in and around Novosibirsk
K. Istomin	New Technologies in the Tundra: high-tech equipment, spatial perception, and orientation in the Russian Arctic
J. Long	Urbanisation, Social Networks, and Lifestyle Choice among Western Buriats in South-Eastern Siberia
M. Nakhshina	Coastal villages: economy, infrastructure, community and tourism (Terskii Coast, Murmanskaja Oblast')
A. Oelschlägel	Plurality of World Interpretations: the case of the western Tyvans in south Siberia
E. Peers	Ysyakh: organisation and practice of a Sakha (Yakut) national holiday
A. Rabogoshvili	Officially Recognized and Non-Recognized Ethnic Communities of the Non-Native Population of Baikal Region
T. Safonova	Role-Play, Tourism, and Self-Presentation in Indigenous Culture Camps for Children and Youth, Western Siberia
I. Schröder	Role-Play, Tourism, and Self-Presentation in Indigenous Culture Camps for Children and Youth, Western Siberia
D. Zuev	Computer-Mediated Hospitality Networks in Siberia: investigating reciprocity, trust and social connectivity along the Trans-Siberian Railroad and beyond

*Table: Researchers and research associates of the Siberian Studies Centre (as of October 2011)*

*Lifestyle, Vocation and Traditional Forms of Land-Use*

Some members of the research team work in rural communities that depend to varying degrees on traditional forms of land use. These researchers are exploring the blurred boundaries between subsistence, leisure, and identity markers. Bagdasarova, for example, has visually documented seal hunts at the Bering Strait, while Nakhshina, at the other end of the Russian North, examines the role of fishing in local livelihoods. Dudeck has completed his study on the status of reindeer herders in a western Siberian oil town, focussing on the “Day of the Reindeer Herder” festival. On this regional holiday, herders make public appearances and willingly comply with urbanites’ expectations of exotic natives. Dudeck has explored how the urbanites’ mixture of interest and ignorance offers certain advantages for the herders.

All these researchers examine the degree to which choice is exercised in undertaking traditional forms of land-use today. Individual and familial decisions as to who will continue herding and subsistence practices depend on personal abilities and predilections just as other career options and life-projects do. State subsidies, compensation monies from oil companies, environmental campaigns, and tourists’ demands all provide material and symbolic incentives for indigenous individuals to legitimate and stylise their traditional forms of livelihood. The task is to examine how indigenous inhabitants respond to such forces and opportunities and try to reconcile them with their own interests.



*A Khanty woman from a reindeer-herding family near the city of Surgut uses the sandy ground as a notepad to write down a phone number she is supposed to ring. Mobile phones have become an indispensable part of everyday life all over Siberia. (Photo: S. Dudeck, 2006)*

*Performance, Play and Malleable Identities*

In a region where much has been written on identities as being bureaucratically constituted and seemingly immutable, CLLP researchers are exploring ‘play’ and activities in which identity is experimented with and questioned. Schröder’s PhD research is located at the interstices of traditional forms of ritual and role-playing as a pedagogical strategy in the activities of indigenous youth camps. Here, playful encounters and competitions lend themselves to visual documentation particularly well. Schröder has been utilising film and photography with participants who have proved eager to view and evaluate their own performances, leading to novel forms of data production. Most conspicuously and colourfully, the switch to a different, ‘leisurely’ identity is regularly enacted in the role-playing communities studied by Barchunova and Beletskaja in several cities of Siberia. However drab the everyday routines of the individuals involved may be, they all have come to invest personal resources and emotions in a special form of reality, scripted by rules largely of their own choice.

*Established Identities and Lifestyle Choices*

Rabogoshvili, Long, and Peers have been studying the way that long-standing elements of identity – whether ethnicity or kin and clan relations – are deliberately invested in. As a part of actors’ reflexive life-projects, leisure activities and time are often devoted to ethno-cultural activities and/or clan ceremonies and events. Rabogoshvili and Long study the motivations for pursuing these activities and the institutional forms that they take. This entails examining the degree to which these identities and activities are freely invested in, and how far a perceived duty to nation or kin limits certain lifestyle choices. Rabogoshvili’s current field project documents the national cultural institutions of non-indigenous communities in the Baikal Region, while Long is looking at Buriat kin networks in the city of Ulan-Ude and the changing ways that membership in these networks is constituted through new communication technologies. Peers investigates the annual national holiday of Ysyakh in the Sakha Republic. Her field project has examined how the festival has been re-infused with both spiritual and pop-cultural elements in recent years and why local residents choose to invest so much time and effort into the event. She looks at the way that changing information technologies and institutional infrastructures are used to present and re-present the event in the imaginations of local people, and the political subtexts to these choices.

**Navigating Space (SFB 586, ‘Difference and Integration’)**

Since 2005 Schlee, Istomin, and Habeck have been examining the cognitive underpinnings of spatial orientation and wayfinding among nomadic and sedentary groups in the Far North of Russia. This project is being carried out within the framework of the DFG-funded *Sonderforschungsbereich 586* (Collaborative Research Centre 586

‘Difference and Integration’). The research was described in detail in the Siberian Studies Centre’s 2008–2009 report.

Other former and current MPI Siberianists have also participated in the activities of the *Sonderforschungsbereich*. In February 2011, Donahoe, Habeck, Istomin, Long, Schlee, and Florian Stammer contributed to an international conference in Leipzig on *Nomadic and Indigenous Spaces: productions and cognitions*. Habeck and Stammer are two of three editors of the resulting publication. Habeck also contributed a chapter to a popular scientific anthology published by the *Sonderforschungsbereich* that appeared in October 2011. The book *Nomaden in unserer Welt* will be on sale at the exhibition *From Nomadic Empires to Neoliberal Conquests* in Hamburg from November 2011 onwards.

Istomin is now taking this research one step further. With additional financial support from the Max Planck Society (‘MaxNet Cognition’), Istomin has set up a collaborative project with Juan Dominguez, a neuroscientist based at the MPI for Human Cognition and Brain Sciences in Leipzig. The two will test the hypothesis that preferences for certain navigational styles are not just a product of the brain’s internal structure, but that they also modify its internal structure. Moreover, Istomin expects that differences in navigational strategies may result from individuals being “attuned” to different environments such as open-vista landscapes of the steppe and tundra or forest and city landscapes. At the time of writing the pilot phase of this study has already begun. Wayfinding experiments will be conducted in spring 2012 at a former Soviet military training range not far from Halle where suitable landscapes can be found.

### **Other Activities and Accomplishments**

In addition to its core research projects, the Siberian Studies centre has provided a fertile environment for researchers to come together in different constellations and pursue comparative work.

In 2010 and 2011, Bagdasarova and Istomin undertook a research project on children’s drawing that brings together Bagdasarova’s interest in visual anthropology and Istomin’s expertise in cognitive anthropology. Employing methodologies established in cognitive psychology, children in Chukotka and the Iamal Peninsula were given set drawing tasks. In a MPI Working Paper published in autumn 2011, they reported the results of the project and the difference in cognitive styles established between children from nomadic and sedentary homes.

Working together in the Baikal region, Rabogoshvili and Long have been exploring the differences in Russian cultural policy towards indigenous and non-indigenous ethnic groups. A working paper will be completed in spring 2012 on the changing structures of ethnic organisations (so-called national cultural institutions) in the present political climate.

Workshops hosted by the Siberian Studies Centre at the MPI will open up comparative discussions with scholars working in other parts of the world. These include a workshop on suicide and agency, co-convened by Broz and MLU lecturer Daniel Münster in November 2011, and another on the performance of indigeneity, convened by Long in January 2012.

Three Siberianists (Stephan Dudeck, Katharina Gernet, and Anett Oelschlägel) completed and defended their doctoral dissertations in 2010 and 2011. Dudeck has since taken up a position at the Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, Rovaniemi; while Oelschlägel has received a stipend from the Fritz Thyssen Foundation enabling her to pursue a new research project on Tyvan oral tradition at the Mongolian and Inner Asia Studies Unit and the Scott Polar Research Institute of the University of Cambridge.

## **Outlook**

As noted at the beginning of this report, an application to make the Centre a permanent unit of the MPI is currently being prepared. Subject to continued funding, the goals for development of the Siberian Studies Centre over the next five years are as follows:

- Further research activities within the framework of the CLLP programme, completing the two existing and introducing new thematic foci for future research in 2013, with the goal of making a major contribution to the ongoing social-scientific debate on lifestyle.
- The further development of the Centre as a laboratory for comparative research design beyond CLLP, with research questions and instruments being developed collaboratively before researchers leave for their respective fields. Close consultation with the Institute's three departments will provide the basis for the Centre's future comparative studies and methods.
- The advancement and promotion of the Siberian Studies Centre as a centre for regional expertise, bringing together the depth of regional knowledge and linguistic skills expected from colleagues within Russia, and engagement with the most current theories and debates taking place within contemporary social/cultural anthropology. This role hinges on the continued activity of the centre as a place where scholars from Russian, American and European traditions come together in joint projects.
- The enhancement of the Centre's expertise in the rapidly growing field of Arctic social-science research, drawing on the extensive networks and collaborative relationships already enjoyed by researchers of the Centre.
- The supervision of PhD students, taking into account the steadily increasing interest of students to pursue a PhD with a Siberian focus and the absence of any anthropology department in German-speaking academia that has this regional focus.

## Max Planck Fellow Group ‘Law, Organisation, Science and Technology’ (LOST)

**Max Planck Fellow: Richard Rottenburg**  
**Project: Biomedicine in Africa**

*Richard Rottenburg*

The LOST Group’s main project was *Biomedicine in Africa*, the active research phase of which, financed by the Max Planck Society, stretched between 2006 and 2011.<sup>1</sup> For the last Report (2008–2009), I presented a summary article relating to one key aspect – experimentalisation – that touches on all empirical projects. Since the synthesis, analysis, and writing-up of the findings of the individual research projects will take a few more years, it seems appropriate for this report to present those findings that are available at the moment and to additionally describe those two projects (Schramm and Park) in which the research is not yet complete but which continue with other funding.

During the five years of research work, the empirical projects clustered around three topics:

1. Intersections of biomedicine and traditional medicine;
2. The co-production of global health and African social orders through mass treatment of HIV;
3. Biomedicine, bioscience, and social orders.

The LOST Group organised four international conferences, three of which will result in edited volumes: *Biomedicine and Governance* (publication in 2012); *Bodies and Embodiments* (no publication); *A World of Indicators* (publication in 2013); *Evidentiary Practices – Domination – Publics* (publication 2014). The LOST research programme started well before it was funded by the Max Planck Society (2006–2011) and continues thoroughly strengthened following the end of this financial support, in the framework of new research programmes, one of them being the Special Research Programme of the German Research Foundation with the title *Adaptation and Creativity in Africa: technologies and significations in the making of order and disorder* (see <http://www.spp1448.de/>).

The following report is structured according to the three topics that evolved during the years of research and discusses those particular projects that have already resulted in substantial results and publications (see publications list).

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<sup>1</sup> Another activity of the LOST Group is in the field of *Travelling Laws and Governance* which will not be addressed in this report as it is also part of the IMPRS REMEP.

## **1. Intersections of Biomedicine and Traditional Medicine**

### **1.1. Global Traditions, Tanzanian Medicines**

*Stacey Langwick*

Across Africa, legislative bodies are overturning old colonial laws prohibiting traditional healing. Traditional medicines are being legalised; governments are explicitly promoting their development; and the WHO is helping to fund new laboratories to investigate medicinal plants. This project, now completed, studied the history and emergences of ‘modern’ traditional medicines in Africa. It focused on the ways in which traditional medicines have been sparking novel forms of scientific experimentation, shifting boundaries between science and non-science, and challenging actors to grapple with new kinds of translation, i.e. with new possibilities for connection, appropriation, growth, and innovation. Since the stakes are high, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the African Union are trying to position themselves as mediators between national governments and multinational agencies such as the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Stacey Langwick found that strategic and technical questions about integrating different ways of knowing the physical body and healing its afflictions are now also political and ethical questions about integrating different ways of knowing and healing social bodies, such as nations and regions.

Tanzania offers a powerful example of how national governments throughout Africa are partnering with international organisations to define and research traditional medicine. For more than forty years, Tanzania has explicitly linked local, national, regional, and global desires in its efforts to develop traditional medicine. Such linkages work to scale-up traditional medicine from a ‘merely’ local to a global category of knowledge and practice, by drawing together the work of healers, the social dynamics of rural communities, the investigations of scientists, the claims of nation-states, the dreams of regional organisations, and the aspirations of multinational agencies. The development and promotion of traditional medicine demand that these actors be thought about and brought into the same (conceptual, analytical, bureaucratic, and legal) frame. As of yet, however, there is no consensus on how this should happen. Rather, the relationships and hierarchies between these diverse actors are debated and decided project by project, often in highly specialised languages.

This project anchored its investigation in laboratories in Tanzania. It focused on the experts, medicines, and technologies of three Tanzanian laboratories specialising in scientific investigations of herbal medicines. The publications (in the appendix) by Stacey Langwick reflect the special attention she paid to the relations among scientific/laboratory work, new legal and governmental apparatuses, and public hopes for traditional medicines.

## 1.2. Modernisation of Traditional Healing in South Africa

*Julia Zenker*

This PhD project, now completed, dealt with the modernisation of traditional healing in South Africa. Julia Zenker explored how traditional healers in Port Elizabeth perceive and negotiate their relations with a changing social world and how they actively position themselves in the arena of South African health policy. She showed how three rationalising trajectories – professionalisation, standardisation, and legalisation – impacted their practice and ultimately defined their experience of modernisation.

The starting point for the research was the arena of health seeking and the therapeutic options patients had in Port Elisabeth. Central to the project were encounters between healers and biomedical professionals during workshops that aimed at bringing about change in the practice of traditional healers but also other forms of interaction such as conferences on health related topics, a medicinal garden, and pharmaceutical research on healers' plants. The project shows that the process of legalising traditional healing can be depicted as part of a search for an independent, South African way of healing linked to the concept of the African Renaissance and part of a nation-building process focussed on the creation of a post-apartheid identity. Through this valorisation (which also involved scepticism toward biomedical concepts of AIDS treatment expressed by the former president and his health minister), the concept of an African Renaissance had been translated into real political consequences.

The use of Weber's concept of rationalisation was central to the analytical part of the project. In this vein, the practice of traditional healing has to be subject to legislation in a democratic South Africa. This has to acknowledge the principle of equal treatment before the law, to ensure certain rights – such as protection against quackery – and to enforce accountability for all those involved in the production of a public good like health. Linked to the process of legalisation is the unavoidable standardisation of elements of traditional healing, which makes them legible to both the sciences and the state. Hence, the main argument of the project is that a modern state, which is guided by the rule of law and the principle of equality before the law, has no alternative but to subject the profession of healing to juridification and thereby standardise some of its aspects according to bureaucratic logic. Only in the standardised form of law can traditional healing, which was formerly illegal and excluded from the realm of the (apartheid) state, be made legible and 'known' for its final transference into the arena of the new democratic state of South Africa.

## **2. The Co-production of Global Health and African Social Orders through HIV Mass Treatment**

### **2.1. HIV Mass Treatment in West Africa**

*Vinh-Kim Nguyen*

This project, now completed, extended research on the response to the AIDS epidemic in West Africa to examine the growth of mass treatment programmes as emergent assemblages of law, organisation, science, and technology. Mass HIV treatment programmes were originally conceived as the response to a humanitarian emergency: the impending wave of deaths from HIV in Africa, where the vast majority of the world's infections are concentrated. They constituted, at first glance, an exceptional response to the usual business of global health. However, closer ethnographic scrutiny reveals several important aspects: First of all, the exception has become the norm: not only because HIV treatment is for life, but because humanitarian emergencies, defined in terms of the impending mass loss of life, now frame global health programmes in general. Second, the organisation of the response, initially conceived of as a 'vertical' one-issue programme, has changed as the exigencies of succeeding at mass treatment require the bundling of ever more services: food aid, counselling, income supplementation, etc. The result has been the advent of therapeutic quasi-states, where the health sectors of entire countries are mainly managed by NGOs or American universities. The third aspect has been the emergence of a new science of HIV specifically concerned with managing the epidemic, whose central questions have emerged as a result of the increasing use of biomedical technologies to control HIV. Diagnostic technologies, such as viral load monitoring, and therapeutic interventions, such as viral load reduction, have made new approaches possible in the governing of life in Africa. For example, the notion that systematic, mass treatment of the entire HIV-positive population can be used to eradicate the epidemic has recently become the holy grail of efforts to control HIV, spawning massive clinical trials that hold the potential to generalise new social practices. The findings from this project are now being mobilised in a new project that examines the articulation of global health and global war post-9/11.

### **2.2. The Supply Side of ART: users, drugs, and technologies in organising mass ART-programs in Uganda**

*Sung-Joon Park*

This project, still ongoing, investigates the co-production of scientific and political orders in the global circulation of technologies and models through which pharmaceuticals are made available in Uganda. The research project asks how pharmaceuticals shape ideas of scientific truth and social justice. How are novel therapeutic apparatuses of life-saving pharmaceuticals emerging in countries like Uganda? How

are such live-saving and expensive pharmaceuticals embodied in social, scientific, and political practices in Uganda, where health infrastructures have been exposed to crises, wars, and global humanitarian interventions for many years? In what way do these pharmaceuticals constitute global public goods and what are the scientific, social, and economic implications?

The empirical research clusters around the following themes: (1) “antiretroviral therapy (ART) and the projectification of health”; (2) “availability of medicine and commodity insecurity”; and (3) “epistemic practices and evidence-based global health pharmacy”. All of the themes, each of which builds upon the others, has analytical and conceptual dimensions that speak to various scientific debates and controversies on AIDS, development theory, and global health. For instance, one of the central topics of this project is the stockout of free ARVs in Uganda. In order to understand the significance of these stockouts, opposed to many other things that can run out-of-stock in Uganda every day, it is important to understand the emergence of large-scale infrastructural apparatuses to scale-up access to ART and to institutionalise free access to treatment in Uganda. These apparatuses of mass ART-programmes comprise a broad set of elements such as infrastructures, technologies, regulations, clinical standards, and social technologies, through which HIV patients are constituted as ‘clients’ of a treatment programme. It is through these therapeutic apparatuses that needs for antiretroviral medication and the huge budgets of donor organisations can be made calculable and accountable.



*Health indicators at Awach Health Center, Uganda. (Photo: S.-J. Park, 2011)*

In this respect, the therapeutic apparatuses in making ART and populations calculable can be understood as paradigmatic examples for contemporary forms of institutionalising access to what Adriana Petryna and Arthur Kleinman describe as ‘global pharmaceuticals’. Such apparatuses have intended and unintended economic, political, and moral effects that are made visible during the stockout of ARVs. Furthermore, these apparatuses are extremely exceptional and unpredictable where the global circulation of knowledge, moral claims, and technologies is mediated by the thick web of projects and interventions that often replace governmental structures. In addition, the demand for evidence-based interventions in health care and biomedical research in Africa to translate these global pharmaceuticals into a therapeutic option has increased significantly over the past few decades. Such evidence-based interventions, however, systematically ignore various questions of political power and mask the situatedness of social practices in producing data and providing health. They thus pose important questions as to how contemporary figurations in global health raise and institutionalise ideas of a human right to access health services and to equality in free access to ART in a highly uncertain context, in which there are lacks in all types of material security.

The project’s three themes are also interlinked through ethnographic research as a situated and positioned engagement with moral dilemmas, social conflicts, and, more importantly, anthropological problems that emerge in the co-production of scientific and political orders in the Ugandan AIDS epidemic.

### **2.3. HIV and the Moral Economy of Survival in Kenya**

*Ruth Prince*

This project, now completed, addressed the intersections of bodies, health, and illness with biomedicine, technology and government, focusing on large-scale health interventions in Kenya, East Africa. Located in the city of Kisumu, it explored the practices and negotiations of value that take shape around medical technologies, clinical care, disease and illness identities, welfare, scientific knowledge, and expertise, where providing health care and welfare is an experimental intervention organised largely outside the state. Ruth Prince investigated the implications of new medical technologies, expanding public engagements with science, and the intricacies of biomedical practices. She explored how these relate to moral economies of care, survival and hope, as well as to neoliberal governance and political economy. The study situated these issues within broader patterns in global health interventions and transnational forms of governance. The fieldwork was conducted in hospital wards, government clinics, NGOs, and donor-supported patient support centres as well as among residents of Kisumu city.

The research engages with recent literature on biosocialities by exploring how entanglements between viruses, people, and medical technologies are creating new social identities and forms of belonging, as well as raising questions about definitions

of disease, normality, and well being in and outside of medical practice. As antiretroviral treatment programmes embody experimental sites in which development, global health, and humanitarian interventions converge, the project has also led to re-thinking the consequences of these mixed sites of healthcare, welfare, research, and intervention for the political landscape and the future of the state provision of health care in Kenya and East Africa more broadly.

### **3. Biomedicine, Bioscience and Social Orders**

#### **3.1. The Stones, the Bones, and the Genes: classification practices and narratives of human origins in post-apartheid South Africa**

*Katharina Schramm*

This ongoing project examines the emergence of new forms of biologisation across various fields of knowledge and practice in South Africa following apartheid. In South Africa, the sciences of human origins have a long and multidisciplinary history, involving paleoanthropology, physical anthropology, archaeology, and in recent years increasingly genetics. Inasmuch as the early fossil finds of Raymond Dart (Taung Child, 1925) and Robert Broom (Mrs Ples, 1947) were regarded as proofs for the evolution of humankind in Africa, the scientific discourse on human origins has from the start been closely linked to ideas about the contemporary difference between ‘races’ that were at the foundation of apartheid politics.

This project is concerned with the genealogies of these classification practices and their ongoing and/or shifting significance in contemporary science. It looks at the dynamics between the formation of scientific classifications (mainly in relation to biological concepts of ‘populations’, i.e. race and ethnicity), their historical situatedness (in different contexts, such as the Pan-African and Black Consciousness Movements, apartheid, and the “African Renaissance” in post-apartheid South Africa) and their political and legal impact on notions of self and collective identities. How are symbolic categories of belonging translated into biological concepts of ancestry and relatedness, and vice versa? In other words: How do concepts of (cultural) heritage intersect with those of (biological) inheritance?

Scientific laboratory, public sphere, and political practice are analysed as mutually constitutive. Biological classifications and identities are thus understood as deeply political and connected to ideas of national belonging. The project aims to concretise both the epistemic objects that are central to it (e.g. ‘race’, ‘DNA’, ‘specimen’, ‘ethnicity’, or ‘citizenship’) as well as the social actors that are involved in the various translation processes between science and the public (i.e. scientists, politicians, museum workers, consumers, and activists) and the assemblages in and through which they are connected (i.e. collections, archives, sequencing machines, human remains, etc.).

### **3.2. Globalizing International Health: the cultural politics of ‘partnership’ in Tanzanian malaria control**

*Rene Gerrets*

This project, now completed, investigated the recent rise to dominance in international health of ‘partnership’, an organisational form that has become prominent in infectious disease research and control efforts in low-income countries around the world. Since the late 1990s, hundreds of large-scale transnational collaborative undertakings involving ‘partners’ from the public and private sectors and civil society have come into being. Fuelled by soaring donor funding for the reduction of communicable diseases in poor countries, the spread of partnership – a notion connoting mutuality and equity – occurred in contexts characterised by profound disparities in power and resources. These contrasts are particularly pronounced in international health, a field linking disparate people, interests, and places in the global North and South, raising the question of how partnership actually plays out in practice. This historically grounded ethnographic study of the partnership phenomenon poses two interrelated questions: How does partnership happen and how do we study the processes through which partnerships form and function?

Gerrets addressed these questions by examining a partnership engaged in malaria research and control in southern Tanzania. Malaria – a ‘disease of poverty’ that, without sufficient socioeconomic improvements, often defies technological interventions – served as a socio-historical lens for exploring the changing relationships between science and governance during a century of international control efforts in tropical Africa. By tracking the knowledge practices of different parties, a pivotal activity in (health) development interventions, he traced the shifting contours and dynamic interactional structures of a partnership, analysing the indeterminate, sometimes contentious processes through which disparate agents and organisations sought to create a functioning whole. Exploring the often-derided elasticity and ambiguity of partnership in social reality, he investigated how it became enmeshed into patron-client dynamics, enabling influential actors to extend their power base by controlling resources and coercing subordinates. Finally, this study examined how sociocultural conventions and language practices during data collection shape, even ‘distort,’ expert knowledge about malaria.

The research has resulted in several publications and in a number of manuscripts. Another result from this study is a three-year ethnohistorical research project (funded by NWO/Open Research Area in Europe for the Social Sciences) examining, jointly with scholars from London and Paris, *Memorials and Remains of Medical Research in Africa*.



*Data collectors interviewing mother and sampling blood for malaria testing, Tanzania. (Photo: R. Gerrets, 2006)*

### **3.3. Shifting States of Science in Eastern Africa**

*Wenzel Geissler*

This project, now completed, was pursued by Wenzel Geissler together with colleagues in Kenya and London and was anchored in the western Kenyan city of Kisumu. One part of it, more historical in orientation, focused on a section of the Kenyan Ministry of Health, the Division of Vector Borne Diseases (i.e. diseases transmitted by vectors like malaria, dengue-fever, etc., DVBD), which was the main medical research body in the area between the 1940s and the 1980s. Wenzel Geissler collected archival materials about the DVBD's work – with a specific interest in medical research fieldwork and interactions with study subjects and other local residents, as well as the role of British and Kenyan scientists – and interviewed former and present DVBD staff, with the aim of gaining insights into past scientific practices and ethos, as well as the present state of the organisation and its staff.

The second part of the project, more ethnographic in orientation, was a study of HIV research conducted by the Kenyan Medical Research Institute (KEMRI), which, since the 1980s, has emerged as the leading institution for transnational medical research in Kenya – replacing the DVBD and taking on some of its staff – and in particular its long-term collaboration with the US federal agency Centers

for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which is running one of the largest medical research sites in Africa near the city of Kisumu. This fieldwork, extending over three years, was centred around one four-year clinical trial of HIV prevention, conducting ethnographic fieldwork on all levels of the trial, gathering material and documentary evidence, as well as interviews with research staff, scientists, medical practitioners, research subjects, their relatives, and many others who were in some way involved in medical research projects in the area. The main publications (in the appendix) focussed both on scientific practices and the lives of those engaged in them, and on the production and dissemination of research findings. The studies also resulted in several follow-on projects, including a collaborative study on *Street Level Health Workers: producing public health in the African city* (funded by the Wellcome Trust), and a larger research project on *Memorials and Remains of Medical Research in Africa* (funded by ESRC), conducted jointly with colleagues from London, Amsterdam, and Paris.



## **International Max Planck Research School ‘Retaliation, Mediation and Punishment’ (IMPRS-REMEP)**

*Bertram Turner*

### **Outline**

The International Max Planck Research School ‘Retaliation, Mediation and Punishment’ (IMPRS-REMEP) was constituted as an interdisciplinary research network connecting four Max Planck Institutes and two universities. The contributing partners are the Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Law in Freiburg/Breisgau, where the central administration of the Research School is based, the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law in Heidelberg, The Max Planck Institute for European Legal History in Frankfurt/Main, and the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle/Saale. The cooperating universities are Albert Ludwigs University of Freiburg and Martin Luther University, Halle-Wittenberg. The research activities of IMPRS-REMEP in Halle are organised in particular by Department I ‘Integration and Conflict’, headed by Günther Schlee, and the Project Group Legal Pluralism, headed by Keebet von Benda-Beckmann. The Research School’s university partner in Halle/Saale is the Seminar for Social and Cultural Anthropology, represented by Richard Rottenburg. The REMEP coordinator in Halle is Bertram Turner.

IMPRS-REMEP appeals to young researchers in criminology, disciplines of jurisprudence such as criminal law and international law, legal history, and social anthropology, especially the anthropology of law and conflict. An integral part of the interdisciplinary Research School is a PhD programme integrating dissertation projects within the framework of the REMEP research focus. The total number of students involved in this network is currently 33. Scheduled at first for two cycles within a period of six years, the research interest of IMPRS-REMEP goes beyond the scope of a doctoral programme and aims at the establishment of an interdisciplinary dialogue between social anthropological and jurisprudential research. Regular winter schools with international experts featuring workshops and conferences on specific topics have been included in the research design.

### **Research Agenda**

The Research School offers an integrated curriculum, which is designed to provide access to the respective theoretical and methodological basic inventories and empirical approaches of all participating disciplines. The individual research projects are thus embedded in an interdisciplinary format.



The research agenda focuses on the fundamental question, common to the disciplines of social sciences and humanities, of how peace and social order are negotiated, constructed, maintained, and re-gained. In particular, traditional approaches to reconciliation and mediation are being adopted in the context of conflict and post-conflict societies, amending and – partially – replacing well-established systems of punishment mainly based on concepts of retaliation.

REMEP research at the Max Planck Institute in Halle/Saale concentrates on the fields of legal anthropology and conflict studies in the broadest sense of the terms. The focus of analysis is directed towards conflict and conflict settlement procedures (retaliation, mediation, punishment) in plural legal contexts and also includes strategies for inclusion and exclusion in conflict situations. Of equal importance are issues pertaining to the social construction of conflict parties and their identity patterns. This research programme encompasses dispute management within or among various groups and institutions at various levels of social organisation: in semi-autonomous social fields such as kinship groups and local groups; within or among ethnic or religious communities, both within or across national borders; among states; or in transnational settings. Research topics range from conflict resolution in egalitarian societies to conflict management procedures in (post-) conflict societies, for example, in the form of transitional or restorative justice or reconciliation processes. The interaction of global, local, and translocal processes thus acquires special analytical importance.

The point of departure for the conceptualisation of the research programme is the reconsideration of the theoretical debate on the connection between procedural repertoires and a lack of enforcement capacities in conflict situations at various scales. The rationale is questioned of the comparisons drawn between the procedural repertoires that on the one hand sovereign states refer to, when in conflict with each other, and on the other the repertoires actors dispose of in social formations characterised by the absence of a central political authority. The programme proceeds on the assumption that analogies and the comparative analysis of such procedures of dispute settlement, in different settings that are characterised by the absence of central authority, still offer epistemological insights if adapted to processes of globalisation and transnationalisation.

This assumption leads on to the following basic consensus among all contributing disciplines: The management of conflict and the settlement of disputes in plural legal settings undergo a partly radical reconfiguration under conditions of increasing transnational integration due to accelerated translation processes.

The anthropological component of the integrated interdisciplinary curriculum includes anthropological theories that connect procedural repertoires of conflict and dispute with schemes of governance and norm-generating processes, with explanatory models of conflict generation (naming – blaming – claiming) and strategies of avoidance in analysing the optional run of events in conflictive relationships following the logics of retaliation and compensation.



## **Benefits from Transdisciplinary Cooperation**

Cooperation with criminologists, legal historians, and experts in criminal and international law can provide fresh input to anthropological research on global and transnational processes such as the ongoing processes related to the increasing transnationalisation of law and its consequences. This allows for a widened scope on translocal and transnational interactions.

Since the establishment of IMPRS-REMEP the ambitious project seems to be progressing well in terms of bringing about epistemological benefits for all the contributing disciplines. The greatest advantage has manifested in a sensitising process that allows students and faculty members to avoid mutual misunderstandings resulting from different terminologies and prioritisations of perspectives when doing research on the same or comparable topics. This entails much more than just a growing interest in each other's work, as the research projects have also led to the identification of analytical overlaps and the possible adoption of new perspectives. In the course of time a number of overarching topics have been identified and put on the research agenda such as the impact of global governance institutions, especially the International Criminal Courts (ICCs), the impact of transnational securitisation politics, and the importance of global financial flows for the management of conflict. Also in the field of methodology interaction took place. Jurisprudence projects increasingly adopt an empirical component while taking the social workings of the law into consideration, while anthropological research accepts the transformation of social realities into normative texts as an indispensable component that can be successfully addressed through anthropological theory. Logics of retaliation and compensation have been controversially discussed with respect to the role of the state and its institutions in the maintenance of order, and in relation to differing social conditions. The best proof for this progress is the agenda of the transdisciplinary conference on retaliation mentioned below.

## **Current PhD-Projects**

During the reporting period (2010–2011) the IMPRS-REMEP has entered into its second triennial term. The initial Halle group was composed of five PhD candidates affiliated with the contributing research units in Halle. In the second cycle, this group was reinforced by four more students. While the students of the first cycle have entered the final writing-up phase, two of the second cohort, Immo Eulenberger and Zahir Abdal Kareem, are currently doing field research in East Africa. The other two, who joined most recently, Stefanie Bognitz and Fazil Moradi, are now preparing their field stays. As can be seen in the individual lists of activities, REMEP students were involved in publication projects and actively participated in conferences and workshops beyond the REMEP framework. The PhD projects cover a wide range of topics within the REMEP research agenda.



*At the Margins of the South African Lowveld: the dynamics of disputing in plural legal orders* (Severin Lenart)

In exploring the social working of law, Severin Lenart discusses the dynamics and processes of dispute management in a context of revitalised tradition. By conflating locally signifying fields of contention and social interaction ranging from the production of locality to witchcraft and the negotiation of intimate relationships, he offers an original perspective on disputing as a form of local ordering.

*Organising Accountability and Criminal Justice in South Africa* (Johanna Mugler)

Johanna Mugler's thesis explores how South African criminal justice employees are held accountable, through which mechanisms and with what consequences. The project brings the question of the everyday workings of regulatory authorities and institutions into focus in places like the new South Africa where they have never been self-evident, just, or predictable.

*Disputing amidst Uncertainty: procedures of dispute management in 'post-war' times – a disputing parties account, Bamyan/Afghanistan 2009*

(Friederike Stahlmann)

Analysing the decision-making processes of dispute management, Friederike Stahlmann's project explores the effects of the war-prone Afghan past on the current conditions of the legal order. Focusing on the parties' understandings of the present and expectations for the future, her research aims at an understanding of the realisation of dispute management procedures in 'post-war' times.

*Competing Practices in Conflict? How nomadic Fulbe (b)order their world*

(Ab Drent)

The areas in Cameroon's Far North Province, which nomadic Fulbe cattle herders move through, are characterised by varying socio-political and ecological conditions. This research investigates how competing practices co-exist in these different contexts by studying processes of institutionalisation and bordering, as well as the conflicts these processes entail.

*Rights-based Organisations and Legal Aid as Reconfigurations of Public Justice in Rwanda* (Stefanie Bognitz)

This research project looks into the public justice sector in Rwanda, which has been reconfigured by civil and (para-)legal organisations facilitating access to justice. This is manifested within the legal-political framework of post-transitional justice where memory, truth, reconciliation, and justice are permeated by resentment, mistrust, and silencing. Legal aid, legal aid clinics, and paralegals emerge as noteworthy passage points in conflict mediation and dispute resolution and are thus significant in terms of empirical research.



*Negotiating Social Justice in Post-Ba'ath Iraq: recognition and reparation campaign against the Iraqi state* (Fazil Moradi)

This research project is set in the current context of conflictual politico-legal processes in post-Ba'ath Iraq. The politico-legal shift in Iraq has come to entail a space of possibility for the survivors of *Al-Anfāl* (literally: 'the spoils') Operations to claim reparations. *Anfāl* is now nationally and internationally recognised as genocide committed by the Ba'ath regime against its Kurdish population in 1988. The ethnographic study thus explores the ways in which involved civic and political actors translate existing domestic legal avenues, international human rights norms and global models of reparations to articulate and negotiate a measure of social justice for *Anfāl* survivors.

*The Ateker Region: entangled frontiers and ethics of interaction*  
(Immo Eulenberger)

This project examines the relation between the structures of resource control, community building, and violence regulation that appear to correspond with different models of societal organisation. Eulenberger looks at the dynamics of the interaction between such differently structured systems using the Ateker region in north-east Africa in the border region of Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Sudan as an example, where semi-nomadic ethnic groups speaking the same Eastern Nilotic language display high cultural diversity.

*Processes of Ethnic Identification in the Course of Land-based Conflicts in South Gedaref State, Eastern Sudan* (Zahir Musa Abdal-Kareem)

The project investigates the issue of identification in relation to land-based conflicts in south Gedaref state, eastern Sudan, with reference to the relations between mobile herders and sedentary farmers. The key question is whether land-based conflicts are affected by land overutilisation. Ultimately, more complex webs of conflictive parties turn out to be involved.

*Dispute and Dispute-settlement in Post-war South Kordofan, Sudan*  
(Ghefari Elsayed)

During the last civil war in South Kordofan, Sudan, the sense of ethnic unity and distinctiveness there became much more pronounced. Within this context, we can observe how conflict management and dispute resolution persist as questions in South Kordofan today. In addition to dispute resolutions in local courts, where different legal repertoires meet, other institutions, networks, and narratives relevant to conflict and conflict management are examined as well.



## REMEP Activities

The Halle group's meetings on issues specific to REMEP have contributed to maintaining a strong shared identity among PhD students who are also an integral part of their own particular departments or research groups. The 2010/11 period began with a Winter University session in Alsace, France in January 2010. The Halle group members reported on the current state of their research projects and on their first analytical results after their fieldwork connecting their empirical data with REMEP's theoretical framework.

The decision has been made to intensify the transdisciplinary dialogue on theoretical and methodological pluralism within the REMEP network and to organise an additional workshop to this end and to prepare for an international conference on retaliation, one of REMEP's three basic fields of endeavour.



*REMEP Winter University February 2010 in Alsace. (Photo: C. Hillemanns, 2010)*

The Bad Lauterberg Workshop took place in September 2010, overlapping the annual Department I retreat. It was composed of a series of theoretical panels self-organised by the Halle PhD Group and a plenary on retaliation. Its aim was to come up with a conceptual framework in preparation of the international conference mentioned above. Faculty members and professors Albrecht and Schlee, and Halle REMEP coordinator Turner contributed papers on trust and retaliation, on *shari'a*-based

and customary retaliatory relations in the failed-state context of Somalia and on the representation of retaliation and revenge in the media and in the newspapers. Yazid Ben Hounet (CNRS, Paris) offered a paper on retaliatory practices in Algeria, which navigate between national law, *shari'a*, and local custom.



*Work group at the workshop in Bad Lauterberg, 2010. (Photo: B. Turner, 2010)*

Responsibility for the organisation of the Winter University 2011 was again assumed by the students. Apart from the presentation of the new research projects and the report on ongoing research, four workshops were held to which PhD students and invited experts contributed. The first workshop thematised the international community as an acephalous society, the second was devoted to the ethnography of law enforcement, and the third looked at the blurred boundaries within REMEP. A regional workshop united the projects with a focus on northeast Africa and the issue of interrelated conflicts.

In summer 2011, the series of four introductory teaching workshops organised by the contributing Max-Planck Institutes went into its second cycle. The workshops provide basic understandings of the REMEP-related research agendas of the contributing disciplines. The final workshop in that series was held in Halle in July 2011 and offered an intensive look into social anthropology, including kinship studies and fieldwork methods. Further teaching units addressed the anthropology of law and of



retaliation, the anthropology of conflict and disputing, and an introduction to situational analysis. This workshop was joined by PhD students of Priority Programme (SPP) 1448, *Adaptation and Creativity in Africa*, which is funded by the German Research Foundation. Members of REMEP also participated in the subsequent SPP workshop on comparative methods.

### **Conference *On Retaliation***

The highlight of the REMEP programme so far was the international conference entitled *On Retaliation*, held in Freiburg in October 2011. The conference topic and issues were conceptualised by Günther Schlee and Bert Turner in Halle, and it was organised by Carolin Hillemanns in Freiburg. We succeeded in attracting a number of distinguished experts in the field of retaliatory studies from a wide range of disciplines, thus even enlarging our transdisciplinary framework further. There were two major reasons for this decision. First, we considered it to be helpful to enhance our mutually sensitising transdisciplinary approach by taking into consideration the findings of other disciplines such as psychology and economics. Second, in the transdisciplinary environment of the conference, the participants were able to identify a number of shared basic assumptions and principles of the concept(s) of retaliation despite the wide range of hitherto disconnected disciplinary discourses and research agendas. The contributions to the conference made it evident that concepts of retaliation inform human agency in a variety of circumstances, ranging from the individual to the collective, from the workplace to war, and from simple strategic avoidance to the excessive use of violence.

## Training, Cooperation, and Networking

*Bettina Mann*

Research activities at the Institute are integrated with and supported by a variety of training opportunities, organised in-house, and through cooperation with the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg (MLU), other nearby universities, the Max Planck Society, and other research institutions and initiatives at the international level. These collaborations were previously described in the 2008–2009 Report. Thus only a general summary and highlights from 2010–2011 appear here.

Many of the Institute's training opportunities and collaborations are specifically related to our doctoral training programme. For example, the MPI belongs to the interdisciplinary research cluster *Society and Culture in Motion* (SCM) with a number of departments from MLU. The Graduate School of the research cluster is a major local partner in doctoral training.

The Institute also participated in the EU-funded Marie Curie Early Stage Training Programme *SocAnth*, which aimed to promote the further institutionalisation of anthropological research and teaching in Central, Eastern, and South-eastern Europe. This programme successfully concluded with a final conference in Budapest in summer 2010. A video documentation of the conference, in which doctoral fellows of the programme presented their results to an audience of distinguished international scholars, is available at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/mariecuriesocanth/>.

For the period from 2010 to 2012, the Max Planck Support Foundation and donors from the circle of supporting members of the Max Planck Society has provided funding for 20 MPI doctoral students to acquire field languages and important dialects. Most of these languages can only be learned at the specific field site due to very limited number of speakers, and the absence of books or other learning aids. By the end of 2011, ten PhD students have already profited from this programme.

Moreover, the Institute and the Seminar for Social and Cultural Anthropology have established an 'Advanced Course on Theory and Methods in Social Anthropology', that is offered each winter term, to provide Master and PhD students with advanced preparatory training in the discipline. The coursework includes lectures by professors and a tutorial led by senior staff. The MPI regularly organises small workshops and study days on specific topics in cooperation with colleagues from MLU, as well as workshops in the field and field visits by supervisors, which facilitate intense exchange between doctoral students and local institutions and researchers.

The Institute also organises a variety of seminars, colloquia, and workshops to facilitate the development and inspiration of research-in-progress. The Institutes' Colloquium jointly organised by the MPI and the Seminar for Social and Cultural Anthropology of MLU served as a forum for invited speakers to discuss new concepts and ideas, which inspire the research agenda of both institutions. In the summer term of 2011, for example, a group of senior researchers invited international

scholars to contribute to the overall subject *Traces of the Colonial: critical reflections on (post) colonial theory*. The Institute also continued the “Werkstatt Ethnologie” (Anthropological Workshop) as a stage for our own researchers to present their work. Presentations during 2010–2011 took a variety of forms, including formal talks, roundtable discussions, and film screenings. Regular fieldwork preparation and writing-up seminars, organised by senior researchers, are also offered in all Departments and Research Groups.

Finally, the Institute provides specific trainings to promote field research, data analysis and archiving, and the continual improvement in the presentation of research results, including through new and innovative media. Language training in German and support for the acquisition of necessary field languages is provided to all levels of researchers. Complementary trainings in ethnographic film and social network analysis were offered to researchers by externally recruited experts. Courses in academic writing in English were also offered by external trainers and MPI staff. Anja Sing offered one such course drawing directly on her experience as translator and language-editor at the MPI. As part of fieldwork preparation, training in the use of specific soft- and hardware has been offered either by MPI staff and externally recruited experts.



*The Supporting Members' Lounge at the Annual Assembly of the Max Planck Society, Berlin 2011. (Photo: Max Planck Society, 2011)*

## Addressing Young Academics and Vocational/Professional Training

As part of the collaboration with MLU, each winter term, the MPI organises an introduction to the Institute's library resources and research programme for entering undergraduates. Students are also informed about all events open to young academics, as well as possibilities for internships.

The Institute took part in the Germany-wide 'Max Planck Day' on 11 November 2011, during which we presented our work to pupils from local schools and introduced social anthropology as a discipline and subject of study.



*Pupils from schools in Halle visiting the Institute on the occasion of the Max Planck Day 2011.  
(Photo: Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, 2011)*

In addition to academic training, the MPI continued to offer training of administrative personnel as *Verwaltungsfachangestellte* (in the German dual system of professional education). In total, the Institute had four trainees in the reporting period. Two of them finished their training at the MPI in 2010 and were immediately offered positions in other academic and non-academic institutions.

## Library Report

*Anja Neuner*

The Library aims to determine and to respond to the Institute's needs for literature and information in the fields of social anthropology and neighbouring disciplines such as sociology, history, political science, economy, and philosophy. The collection strongly relates to the research areas and projects of the Institute, and focuses on the regions of Africa, Europe – in particular Eastern Europe –, Central Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, and Siberia.. Library services include acquisition, systematisation, provision, document delivery, as well as library usage including training in the use of the classified physical and electronic collection. The library seeks to provide ideal facilities, excellent information services, and an environment to support social anthropological research on a high international level.

The Library's collection currently comprises 31,000 monographs, nearly 4,000 journal volumes, and 178 subscribed printed journals. A growing number of audiovisual material and maps add to the collection.

Moreover, researchers of the Institute have access to a vast number of electronic resources. These include major bibliographic, abstract, and full-text databases, information portals and virtual libraries, e-book collections and e-journals. The Institute greatly benefits from the Max Planck Society's (MPS) basic provision (*Grundversorgung*) and the programme National Licenses of the German Research Foundation (DFG) providing an extensive range of interdisciplinary electronic resources in social sciences. The library's task is to identify the local information demand for electronic resources that are to be integrated into the central basic provision of the MPS. This demands close cooperation with the Scientific Information Provision Max Planck Digital Library (MPDL).

The Library continues to be an active partner of the Virtual Library of Social Anthropology (EVIFA) located at the Humboldt University, Berlin.

In 2010, the Library applied for the "Read Japan program" by the Nippon Foundation. They donated a package of 100 books for a better understanding of contemporary Japan to scholarly libraries worldwide. The Library received classic monographs on Japanese culture and society, politics and international relations, economy, literature, arts and history for a new research group tackling the study of Japan. Furthermore, the Library continued to systematically build up a base of relevant literature for the fields "Historical Anthropology" and "Economic Anthropology". The Library Committee – with members of each Department – provides support in subject-related matters and is primarily responsible for the continuous stock building in all research themes.

Due to the expansion of the physical collection, 2,500 volumes annually, the complete open access monograph and journal collection was re-shelved in the years

2010/2011. Since then, more space became available for library usage. The collection is sorted systematically using the Library of Congress Classification.

In April 2011, the complete institute research outcome in terms of publication data migrated from the current MPS repository eDoc to the new MPS institutional repository PubMan. This is an improved repository software, which is part of the eSciDoc infrastructure, a joint development by the MPDL and the FIZ Karlsruhe. PubMan supports scientists and institutes in the management of their publication data. It allows storage, management, and enrichment of publication data and provides the data for re-use by other web-services.

The Library is also open to external users with an anthropological interest as a reference library. Especially researchers and students of the Seminar for Social Anthropology of the Martin Luther University benefit strongly. In 2010/2011, the library welcomed around 1,200 external users.

## **IT Report**

*Gordon Milligan*

Two important new interrelated software systems, programmed in-house, came into operation in 2010. The Institute website was re-launched in a new design and with a content management system (CMS) back-end based on the open source java-based OpenCMS. The OpenCMS installation and base code were modified in order to integrate fully with the I-DAT data administration system developed at the Institute and expanded over the past development cycle into a new version with greatly improved functionality; and to encompass the internal Intranet communication platform inside the Institute. In combination, the two systems offer an integrated software system for the administration of staff related data, office and guesthouse allocation, and the presentation of this data, combined with other enriched content, for the institute website. Day-to-day production of the institute website pages has now been successfully decentralised to various sub-webmasters across the different departments, allowing more direct control and swifter editing of pages without the need for intervention from a centralised IT editor.

In 2011, it was recognised that a new and more fundamental reorganisation of the Department was necessary in order to be able to live up fully to the expectations and demands placed upon it by an ever growing scientific staff with very diverse requirements. To assist in this process, the Institute brought in an external adviser to help guide both IT Department staff and the Institute as a whole through a period of restructuring and redefinition. Wolfgang Glatthaar will continue to oversee this process into 2012 as Acting Coordinator. The Department's restructuring has already brought a number of changes, the most important of which is the establishment of a permanent IT Committee with the task of identifying and prioritising the most important areas for the investment of IT time and resources. To allow the depart-

ment to concentrate more on long-term project planning, the old system of telephone hotline support for users at the Institute was replaced by an online written reporting system, which allows support to be better coordinated, and also brings with it, the ability to better analyse recurrent problems that require more thorough attention.

The need for archiving and online publication of primary research materials has been identified as an area of growing interest and importance in the modern scientific community in all research disciplines. To move further forward in this area, the Institute has been continuing its cooperation with the MPI for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen because of that institute's expertise in online archiving. We are also exploring further possibilities for cooperation with the central Max Planck Digital Library. These contacts in turn bring the Institute into contact with wider initiatives and cooperation in digital archiving taking place at the European level. In addition, the specific interest in kinship studies by Halle anthropologists has been addressed through a separate software development project carried out in Nijmegen that links genealogical diagrams to archived data about individuals in these diagrams.



*Fieldwork workshop of the Research Group 'Integration and Conflict along the Upper Guinea Coast', Ghana, 2011. (Photo: D. O'Kane, 2011)*

## Publications

This list also includes publications based on research done while at the MPI although the researchers are no longer with the Institute.

### Department I: Integration and Conflict

#### *Books*

- Bakonyi, Jutta. 2011. *Land ohne Staat: Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft im Krieg am Beispiel Somalias*. Mikropolitik der Gewalt 5. Frankfurt am Main: Campus.
- Bochow, Astrid. 2010. *Intimität und Sexualität vor der Ehe: Gespräche über Unge-sagtes in Kumasi und Endwa, Ghana*. Beiträge zur Afrikaforschung 44. Münster: LIT-Verlag.
- Ciabarri, Luca. 2010. *Dopo lo Stato: storia e antropologia della ricomposizione sociale nella Somalia settentrionale*. Collana storica del centro studi per i popoli extraeuropei dell'Università di Pavia 23. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Feyissa, Dereje. 2011. *Playing Different Games: the paradox of Anywaa and Nuer identification strategies in the Gambella region, Ethiopia*. Integration and Conflict Studies 4. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books.
- Jacquesson, Svetlana. 2010. *Pastoréalismes: anthropologie historique des processus d'intégration chez les Kirghiz du Tian Shan intérieur*. Nomaden und Sesshafte 14. Wiesbaden: Reichert.
- Nicolas, Andrea. 2011. *From Process to Procedure: elders' mediation and formality in Central Ethiopia*. Aethiopistische Forschungen 75. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Nieswand, Boris. 2011. *Theorising Transnational Migration: the status paradox of migration*. Routledge Research in Transnationalism 22. New York, London: Routledge.

#### *Edited Volumes and Special Issues*

- Behrends, Andrea, Stephen P. Reyna and Günther Schlee (eds.). 2011. *Crude Domination: an anthropology of oil*. Dislocations 9. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books.
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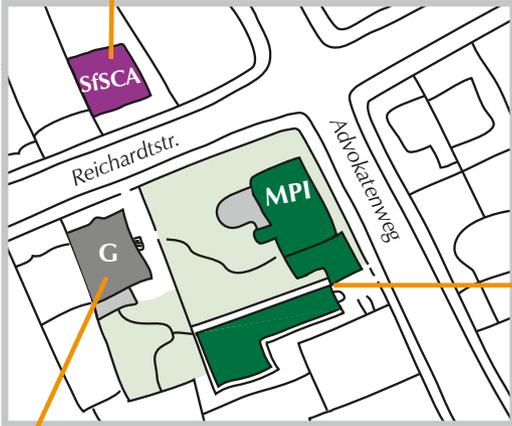


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