



Editorial

As a research centre that is closely connected to scholars from within our regions of study, one of the ZMO's goals is to nurture and advance a collaborative ethos with researchers from diverse contexts in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. While academic relationships generally reflect the wider global political and economic imbalances, we aim at addressing and eventually overcoming the scientific dependence that goes along with this and that many take for granted. Along with realising active research partnerships, we continue working towards a more levelled playing field. This means collaborating and »doing research with« the people we study, inviting them for stays and conferences and recruiting our researchers from among them; it goes without saying that we read the scholarship from other regions in their respective languages and discuss it critically. It also means to return, at regular intervals, to a critical re-examination of the terms of analysis that we employ in our fields of study. These are meant to serve as basic pillars for the kind of comparative research we are involved in, and it is a must to examine them critically. We have to make sure that the *knowledge* we produce about cultures and societies elsewhere is indeed based on *ways of knowing* that do not perpetuate the imbalance that we seek to redress. For us, this means true »internationalization«, beyond the mere Anglicisation that is often understood when this fashionable term is invoked. It would, indeed, be good to see the project of academic internationalization overall attempted on multiple fronts and through a variety of connections, based on a wide, multilingual and conceptually sensitive perspective. // K. Kresse

As just announced by the Humboldt Foundation, the ZMO was successful in nominating Birgit Meyer for the newly launched Anneliese Maier Research Award. This means that 250,000 Euro of funding, provided by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) through the Humboldt Foundation, will be made available for a five-year research collaboration project between Birgit Meyer and the ZMO. Meyer, a distinguished anthropologist of religion with regional expertise in West Africa, is currently a Professor at Utrecht University and has long been based in the Netherlands before spending a year at the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin last year. In collaboration with researchers based at the ZMO, she will be pursuing a research project called »Habitats and Habitus: Politics and Aesthetics of Religious World Making« that applies a material approach to the comparative study of contemporary life-worlds of Muslim and Christians. We greatly look forward to hosting her here and to her contribution in shaping and sharpening future research perspectives at the ZMO, especially from comparative and theoretical angles. See <http://idw-online.de/pages/de/news451509>.



» Today the hope of the oppressed and underprivileged has won. Believe me, today Sarajevo has won as much as Istanbul has; Beirut as much as Izmir, Damascus as much as Ankara, Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin, the West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza won as much as Diyarbakir. Today the Middle East, Caucasia, the Balkans and Europe won as much as Turkey did. Today, freedom, peace, justice and stability have become as victorious as democracy,« Turkish Premier Recep Tayyip Erdoğan proclaimed in his balcony speech after winning the parliamentary elections in June 2011. This speech mirrors the role the AKP government has been ascribing to Turkey in the Middle East. While several Turkish observers have criticized the cultural implications of this policy as a form of »Neo-Ottomanism« and its economic efforts as a new type of imperialism, for the AKP it is the consequence of a successful and new, distinctive Turkish foreign policy. For years the AKP has intended to establish Turkey as a regional power along with Israel, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, through economic and trade relations as well as by gaining diplomatic »soft power«. After the demise of the Soviet Union, this policy was first applied to Turkey's eastern neighbours. The republic successfully built on its historic bonds with Turkic states in Central Asia to strengthen its influence. Additionally, since the 1990s, Turkey and Israel intensified their military, strategic and diplomatic cooperation. But this changed at the turn of the year 2008 with Israel's attacks on Gaza and deteriorated further in 2010 when Israeli forces shot



nine Turkish citizens on the »Gaza Freedom Flotilla«. By then at the latest, Tayyip Erdoğan became a hero for many Arabs who saw no Arab government able to stand up credibly for Palestinian rights. Then came the Arab protest movements of 2011. On February 1, Prime Minister Erdoğan took a clear stand in favour of the Egyptian protesters and the developments in Tunisia in a speech that was broadcast on Arabic television channels. In addition to emphasizing the Muslim character of Turkey, President Abdullah Gül and Erdoğan also promoted the laicistic character of the Turkish state in recent months. The latter was cheerfully welcomed on his official journeys to Egypt, Tunisia and Libya. The AKP also makes use of a universal appeal to democracy, human rights and justice to establish Turkey not only as a leading Muslim power, but also a democratic one in the Middle East. »Instead of being a country that emulates somebody's example, we became a role model ourselves.« This is one of the main achievements the AKP government claims to have accomplished since 2002. »Becoming like the AKP« has long been cited for strategic purposes in Europe as well as in the Arab world: first it was an argument to ease Western observers' fear of Islamist forces coming to power and to open talks with moderate forces. Now it has become an answer from Islamist parties like the Egyptian Freedom and Justice Party and the Moroccan Justice and Development Party to let them participate in government.

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Reading Rooms and Travelling Libraries in Colonial India – a Translocal Perspective // Heike Liebau

The development of reading cultures in 19th-century colonial India and the emergence of institutions in which reading was practiced were strongly influenced by two major political tendencies in the society: firstly, by the colonizers' paternalistic and utilitarian educational policy towards the masses of the Indian population and, secondly, by the rising anti-colonial sentiments and the beginning of an organized national movement. Against the backdrop of these broader processes, the emergence and spread of reading institutions as public spaces not only mirror changing political and social conditions in colonial India, but also reveal the intentions of the diverse actors who founded, managed and used these spaces. In the early period of colonial rule, the British had felt no moral obligation or practical necessity to formally educate the Indian people. This approach started changing with the renewal of the charter of the East India Company in 1813, and from the mid-19th century on, regular measures were undertaken to establish an educational system controlled by the colonial state. This development paralleled an expansion of the printing industry and the emergence of printing presses and publishing houses owned by European as well as by local entrepreneurs. While the measures of the East India Company were directed at legitimizing colonial power and creating an effective colonial administration system in order to control and discipline the population, prominent groups of educated Indian circles also became involved in discourses on education, social uplift and identity formation.

These entangled and at the same time contradictory tendencies found their representation in the emergence of various kinds of social groups, including reading associations and institutions shaped not only by the colonial situation but also by contemporary developments

An American poster in the Russian journal KRASNYI BIBLIOTEKAR (Red Librarian), No. 1, 1925



in other regions of the world. From about the middle of the 19th century, so-called Reading Rooms were opened in India, first of all in the big colonial cities Madras, Calcutta and Bombay. While some of the early Reading Rooms were basically book clubs run by Europeans and meant exclusively for Europeans, or were institutions opened under the auspices of Missionary Societies and thus primarily directed towards spreading Christianity, there were also Reading Rooms founded as separate reading-cum-debating clubs or as centres attached to religious, political or professional associations and thus designed for particular groups of the local population. They provided information and supported education and parenting and became places for socialization as well as for political and religious education. Some of them functioned as important forums for debates about current issues in the early stage of the development of print media, for instance the *Madras Hindu Reading Room*, founded in 1853, whose major aim was the »mental and moral improvement of Hindu young men«

according to the Third Annual Report of the Madras Hindu Reading Room (1855:3). It was patronized by the Maha Raja of the south Indian princely state Travancore and by John Bruce Norton, a non-official member of the Madras Legislative Council. Honourable local men, representatives of high castes, belonged to the managing committee. The club was open to male subscribers and worked mainly with English journals and lessons cum discussions. While these early reading rooms were controlled by the colonial administration – they had to be registered, submit reports, etc. – they basically served the needs and expectations of urban regions with a growing educated class involved in commercial business or colonial administration.

However, from the beginning of the 20th century, with a growing number of diverse local organizations and associations directed towards the social »betterment« of the population, the aim and the character of reading institutions also changed considerably. Besides universities, colleges, museums, missions and court libraries, there were other semi-public places for reading and gathering together. These were associated either with religious groups or movements (Hindu, Muslim and Christian), or they belonged to the so-called literary societies or they were institutions connected with professional groups or associations combining reading with sports or other leisure activities. Many of them were privately run and open to subscribers only and thus restricted to a certain group of clearly defined users. Others were maintained by local municipalities and open for participatory activities of the local population. One reason for the growing number of reading institutions in late colonial India was their role as centres for political education and debates aiming at mobilizing the masses through reading and agitation. In 2008, the daily newspaper *The Hindu* described the picture in Madras in that period as »a time when every street in the city housed a reading room mostly owned by political parties«.

From the first decades of the 20th century on, the so-called »library movement«, which had its origins in America in the late 19th century and since then was active in many parts of the world including Europe, Japan and Russia, was also rapidly organized in several parts of India, for instance in Andhra and Tamil Nadu. The international library movement was in-

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But the two sides mean very different things. Movements like the Muslim Brotherhood have made it clear that they intend to copy »AKP's economic success story« only, and not its insertion into a deeply laicistic republic. While

»Western« observers have focused on the AKP as a role model for combining Islam and democratic governance, the Arab world of 2011 still has its reservations against accepting Turkey as an example. The Turkish model of laicism is still far away for most Arab governments, mon-

archies and republics alike. And some Arab observers might well subscribe to the idea that a new form of Ottomanism is on the rise. // *L. von Mende / S. Hegasy*

tensively discussed in journals such as *Modern Librarian*, *Indian Library Journal* and *Indian Librarian* in English, but also in local languages by the *Granthalaya Sarvaswamy* (Telugu) and *Pustakalaya* (Hindi). Indian librarians like the famous S.R. Ranganathan, the »father of library science« in India, travelled to different places of the world to study library practices and then tried to adapt these experiences to the specific Indian conditions.

One major aim of the organized Indian library movement in the early decades of the 20th century was to promote adult literacy and village education, an agenda that to a certain extent had been inspired also by the Russian and early Soviet experience. As in Russia, travelling libraries (for instance bullock cart libraries) were used in rural settings. Similar to the movement in the early Soviet Union, in which members of the youth organization Komsomol actively participated, in India members of Scout groups and the YMCA were involved in the activities of the library movement. In 1929, the Madras Library Association stated: »By way of precedent we may refer to the movement in Russia. In that vast country as in ours, the percent-



*A book market on the street, Delhi 2011
(photo: H. Liebau)*

age of the literate population about 12 years ago [w]as [sic!] quite as small. But through the influence of the library movement, carried on suitable lines, the bulk of the peasant population has, in

one decade, been taught to read and write and rendered fit to the benefit of the rural library service.« (The Hindu speaks on Libraries. Madras 1992: 2). However, while it became a mass movement in the real sense of the word in the early Soviet Union, where many peasants themselves became part of the movement as *knigonostschiki* (book carriers), in India the library movement remained a paternalistic movement promoted by small groups of representatives of an educated middle class. The global library movement of the early 20th century found its expression in India as a social movement with intensity and directions that varied in various parts of the country. Being related to a global development, it was at the same time part of the anti-colonial project in India to politically mobilize the masses through education and reading. Despite these aims, it remained constrained and deeply embedded in the social contradictions of the time and was divided along the lines of caste, class and religion.

Dr. Heike Liebau is a research fellow and coordinator of the working group »Actors in translocal spaces« at the ZMO. Currently she is working on »Competing Reading Rooms. Discourses and practices in dealing with print media in colonial India«.

Why Age Matters to Development Workers in Kyrgyzstan // Jeanne Féaux de la Croix

Despite the accusations of vote rigging, most Kyrgyzstani citizens breathed a sigh of relief this November. It had been a bumpy and nerve-wracking political journey since a popular uprising ousted President Bakiev in spring 2010. A hastily formed interim government had soon found itself incapable of preventing widespread violence between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in the south of the country. But this autumn, the Prime Minister of the interim government, Almazbek Atambayev, achieved a large majority in the presidential elections. His position may have allowed for manipulation, and he may not be everybody's favourite, but most are simply relieved that the elections did not result in violence. Kyrgyzstan's experiment as the only parliamentary democracy in the post-Soviet region seems to prevail.

A tentative but growing sense of stability and continuity also means that government posts will not experience yet more of the reshuffles that Kyrgyzstani NGOs and foreign donor organizations find so frustrating. Over the course of the last eighteen months, the uncertainties over the future of the government had put on hold the ambitious plans of many an organization, from new pasture management legislation to new school textbooks. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the five Central Asian republics have become a com-

petitive place for supra-national agents attempting to shape the independent states and »new« societies that were supposed to emerge after a period of »transition«. Kyrgyzstan is the only country in the world to host a Russian and a U.S. military base and has been so dependent on foreign donor input that Boris Pétric (2005) has called it a »globalized protectorate«. There is a fair amount of popular suspicion of this influence: in whose interest are donors *really* acting? Amid the political upheavals, people nevertheless often feel that somehow development is standing still. Politicians, media commentators and villagers complain over a cup of *chai* frequently about an »ideological vacuum«. This perceived lack of direction is caused by a cacophony of ideas and organisations supporting various ideas, rather than the absence of ideas.

On my long fieldwork visits over the past year, the prevailing mood has been one of marking time and fear of donors withdrawing to work in more stable countries, where they might see quicker returns on their investments. A bit of consolidation is allowing many Kyrgyzstani NGO workers some confidence: if this trend continues, they might see some results from their efforts – and they might keep their precarious jobs for a while. Most of the Kyrgyzstani development workers in the large non-profit sector (in 2008, there

were officially over 11,000 NGOs in a country of five million) are urban, well-educated – and also very young. I have been talking to these activists and professionals, the Bright Young Things of Kyrgyzstan, to find out how they understand their own work and how it is received. European and U.S. donors currently invest very heavily in »knowledge transfer« as a way out of poverty, on the assumption that knowledge creates choice and can change damaging behaviours. But how does this theory work out on the ground, between the offices of the capital Bishkek, and village halls in the mountains?

To answer this question, I have been speaking to Kyrgyzstani development workers in faith-based organizations such as the Aga Khan Development Network, international NGOs such as the GIZ (formerly GTZ) and independent Kyrgyzstani NGOs. In late February, I sat alongside twenty-four-year-old Zarina in a four-day instructors' course on the management of resource conflicts. We tried out a board game on resource management, which we would one day use as a teaching aid in villages. Developed by a Swiss organization and translated into Russian, the game centred on managing a finite amount of water. Faced with different »situation cards«, we »farmers« in the game could choose to cooperate amiably, or try to corner the largest amount of



Kyrgyzstani NGO workers trying out a new water management game (photo: Jeanne Féaux de la Croix)

water for our fields. Spirits ran high as participants debated the rules of the game, how to translate the training from Russian into Kyrgyz, and whether elderly farmers would be able to learn anything from it. Like other NGO workers, Zarina remembered her initial scepticism about such »trainings«, games and other techniques of knowledge transfer, and how she had gradually been convinced by seeing these methods work in practice. Yet Zarina and her colleagues are faced with a difficult situation: as a teacher or expert, Zarina does not look at all like what most people expect of an authoritative teacher, nor are her teaching methods what is expected.

She is young and a woman and works by training in »dialogue« rather than frontal instruction. Young trainers like her therefore model new forms and aims of education that are quite different from what most Kyrgyzstanis experience at home, at school or in higher education. Nevertheless, these young activists and professionals try to find strategies for dealing with these expectations and their effect. Despite its salience and considerable implications, the age factor has received very little attention in studies of development work.

The young Kyrgyzstanis employed in modest positions in hundreds of NGOs should be recognized as one of the cen-

tral nodes of delivering programmes developed by policy-makers elsewhere. In this sense, they are intermediaries as well as potentially influential political agents. But since Zarina's work does not fit the well-worn dualities of »foreign«/»local«, »donors«/»government« and »the people«, her crucial role as a mediator often escapes notice. Following Laëtitia Atlani-Duault (2007: 5), my research investigates development work as complicated interfaces of actors, institutions and representation systems, rather than as a meeting of »the West« and »the rest«.

Contemporary Central Asia is a particularly remarkable field for studying age relations, raising many questions. For example, although young people are credited with being a central force in the huge political changes in Kyrgyzstan, the young volunteers and employees in the NGO sector tend to dissociate themselves from the »rural«, »uneducated« (and sometimes violent) young folk on the streets. Age ideologies and solidarities can lead to quite different forms of political action:

lately, groups of elderly ladies have repeatedly staged demonstrations, even attacking the police. They are particularly effective in doing so, because the police find it much harder to act against them with the kind of force they would likely use against young men.

While age ideologies and a competitive labour market may not leave much room for explicit critique from young Kyrgyzstani employees, this critique often takes another shape. There is a pattern of people gaining experience over a number of years in an NGO, then leaving to create their own organisation, pursuing their own aims in terms of careers and desires to create a better Kyrgyzstan. Over the next two years, I will be taking my study of Zarina and her colleagues in two new comparative directions. Firstly, I will explore how the practices of Kyrgyzstani development workers compare with the activities of the many young Muslim missionaries in the region. Secondly, I will investigate how these current experiences, their ideals of age, progress and knowledge-making relate to »knowledge transfer« practices in the late Soviet period. To this end, I look forward to the next round of conversations with Zarina and many others in Kyrgyzstan in early 2012.

Dr. Jeanne Féaux de la Croix is a research fellow in the working group »Microcosms and the practices of the local« at the ZMO. Currently she is working on »Competing Forms of knowledge in Kyrgyzstan: Inter-generational debates over pastoral Economy«.

activities

18th International DAVO Congress for the First Time in Berlin, 6–8 October 2011

The international congress of the German Middle East Studies Association for Contemporary Research and Documentation (DAVO) was held in Berlin for the first time at the invitation of the Freie Universität Berlin, the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies (BGSMS) and the ZMO. DAVO is a scholarly, non-political and non-profit professional association open to all persons interested in the Middle East and currently has 1,300 members. These are mainly scholars, postgraduates and doctoral students, as well as many representatives of the media, diplomatic services, cultural institutions and other people interested in the Middle East in its widest sense. Middle East Studies here includes a variety of disciplines relevant to the study of an area comprising all Arab states and territories, Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, the Muslim majority states of the former USSR and Israel, as well

as the impact of this region on the development of other parts of the world. Thus, there is a wide range of interests shared by scholars at the ZMO.

500 international researchers participated – twice as many participants as in former years; 252 presentations were given in 75 panels. While the Arab Spring was one important topic, the majority of lectures were given on a very wide variety of other issues. The keynote speech was held by Prof Gudrun Krämer on »The End of Exceptionalism: The Middle East in 2011«. The idea of the Middle East as the final shelter for authoritarian and non-accountable governments has proven wrong by now, which surprised all too many. New social media have been discussed much in this context. Prof Krämer suggested bringing

society back in and thus to research non-virtual social bonds (like neighbourhood networks and trade unions) as well as further societal questions: Which form of society is desirable for the Arab world? What can a market economy »with a human face« look like in the various states and how can pluralistic and open societies be secured? What will good governance be, subsequent to the immense turmoil, and how can laws be re-installed or re-enforced? Finally, we might be witnessing the end of decolonization. The ZMO participated in nine panels with 17 interventions as well as in the workshop talks for junior researchers. ZMO members presented papers ranging from critically discussing ascriptions of »Muslim« and »Islam«, the Holocaust as a metaphor in Mid-

dle Eastern politics, prison literature, youth facing change in Central Asia and the Arab world, locating the popular in Arab countries and Gulf economies in transition. One ZMO panel on »Urban violence in the Middle East« asked how violent activities are linked to the transformation of the physical, political and/or demographic landscape of the city. Another invited scholars to discuss from a comparative perspective how the colonial and the postcolonial state tried to control Islamic institutions and Islamic movements. The complete programme of the congress is accessible at http://www.zmo.de/veranstaltungen/2011/Davo/Program_DAVO_Congress_2011.pdf. The ZMO invited a number of former affiliates from its global network between Tokyo and San Diego.

The Arbeitsstelle Politik des Vorderen Orients (FU Berlin) organized a podium discussion in cooperation with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung on constitutional reforms in Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco, with participation by eminent members of the constitutional committees in the respective countries.

The DAVO congress was accompanied by an exciting visiting programme. The Director of the Museum of Islamic Art, Dr. Stefan Weber, gave a talk for participants about »Collective Memory and Cultural Archive – Roles of the Museum of Islamic Art in the Contemporary Islamic Discourse«. The ZMO organized a press conference for the opening of the DAVO congress that was attended by ten journalists. For audio on demand, please see: <http://www.zmo.de/pressekit/medienecho2011.html#RadioTv>. The centre also showed a selection of four films from the Moroccan Film Days. The ZMO also organized a city tour about minority religions in a majoritarian society: From »eternal bondage« and »fear« to cultural understanding. // S. Hegasy



Borders and Border Crossing – New Perspectives on the Horn of Africa Annual Conference of the Academic Research Association Horn of Africa (WAKHVA), ZMO, 30 September - 1 October 2011



Participants of the conference, from left to right: Rolf Kreuter, Jörg Haustein, Marie-Luise Kreuter, Julian Tadesse, Catherine Griefenow-Mewis

The conference made an attempt to conceptualize borders as manifestations of human imagination. Starting from the assumption that political, economic and socio-cultural processes constantly construct, shape and transgress borders, they produce mindsets and behavioural patterns, consolidate resources and, thus, create perceptions of the self and others as well as related affiliations. Panels on *Law and Politics*, *History and Religion* and *Culture and Language* discussed border constructs within and among social groups and accompanied processes of inclusion and exclusion, which continuously affect both individual and collective self-conceptions

as well as opportunities for negotiation in specific contexts.

A strong focus was placed on physical boundaries and access to material resources. In the case of pastoral communities, border crossing and the allocation of resources are seasonally negotiated and affect territories that transcend the nation state. These examples demonstrate that borders recurrently appear and disappear in the spatial concepts of the local population. Annette Weber's related concept of *soft borders* fits very well into dynamic conceptualizations of space that emphasize reconfiguration, resulting in transformation on all three levels: the lived space, the perceived space and the conceived space.

The materiality of borders was especially highlighted in presentations on concrete architectural forms, such as the *Barrage de Djibouti*. This specific case, which was discussed by Simon Imbert-Vier, also provides a good example of how physical (the barrage), juridical (being judged according to military or civil law) and social borders (such as the proof of being Afar or French) intersect in conflict situations.

Trading Cultures across the Indian Ocean, ZMO, 1 July 2011

On 1 July, the ZMO hosted an international one-day workshop on »Trading Cultures across the Indian Ocean«, organised by Sebastian Prange, Prem Poddar and Kai Kresse. Historical and anthropological, cultural and legal perspectives presented by a dozen researchers based in the UK and Germany shaped a day of lively and stimulating interdisciplinary exchange. Link to programme: http://www.zmo.de/veranstaltungen/2011/Indian_Ocean_Programme_2011.pdf. // K. Kresse

Guest Scholars July-December 2011

Prof. William G. Clarence-Smith, SOAS London ■ Prof. Ashirbek Muminov, Institute of Oriental Studies Almaty ■ Prof. Dr. Abdallah Hanna, Damaskus ■ Prof. Dr. Bettina Dennerlein, University Zurich ■ Dr. Jessica Winegar, Northwestern University IL ■ Mohamed Said, Tanga, Tanzania ■ Dr. Mohamedou Mohameden Meyine, University of Nouakchott ■ Dr. Santanu Das, University of London ■ Dr. Cheikh Anta Mbacké Babou, University of Pennsylvania ■ Dr. Einas Ahmed, Institute of Political Studies Bordeaux/CEDEJ Khartoum ■ Dr. Isam Al Rawas, Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat ■ Maybritt Jill Alpes, University of Amsterdam ■ Daan Beekers, University of Amsterdam ■ Dr. Markus V. Höhne, MPI Halle ■ Dr. Saiful Umam, University of Hawai'i Manoa ■ Prof. Dr. Paulin Hountondji, African Center for Advanced Studies, Porto-Novo ■ Dr. Anke Graness, University of Vienna ■ Prof. Ilan Pappé, European Centre for Palestine Studies/Centre for Ethno-Political Studies Exeter ■ Parvoiz Mullojanov, Public Committee for Development of Tajikistan, Dushanbe ■ Dr. Alima Bissenova, Nazarbayev University School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Kazakhstan ■ Prof. Emil Nasritdinov, American University of Central Asia ■ Dr. Nathan Light, MPI Halle

Markus Höhne's paper on Somalia analysed the dynamics of borders through the lens of loyalties that produce specific knowledge and serve as survival strategies. Knowledge of cross-cutting ties that transgress borders – social, geographical and temporal – informs spatial representations and results in concrete material practices. With regard to the notion of time, Wolbert Smidt used the example of former kingdoms in North-East Ethiopia to demonstrate that allegedly defunct political entities still possess considerable normative power that cuts across legal frameworks of the modern nation state.

Apart from contributions by established scholars, the conference organizers had explicitly encouraged Ph.D. students to discuss their research within the framework of this conference. Due to the overwhelming response, the second day was reserved for them. The (conventional) academic presentations were supplemented by the screening of the documentary »Young and invisible: African domestic workers in Yemen«. The director and anthropologist Marina de Regt presented the film, highlighting the consequences of actual border crossings. // K. Bromber

>Recentering Africa<: The Academy & Terms of Analysis Roundtable Discussion with Prof. Paulin Hountondji, ZMO, 20 October 2011

The African philosopher Paulin Hountondji visited the ZMO for a week in October, following an invitation to stimulate and direct discussion for a Roundtable taking a critical look at the ways the representation of Africa, and African traditions of knowledge and philosophy in particular, continue to underlie (and reflect) wider practical issues of global political imbalance and scientific dependency. Hountondji, a renowned academic, leading member of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP) and former Minister of Culture and Education in Benin, seemed particularly apt to address these topics and their interconnections. He is well-known for his sharp critique of the »ethnophilosophy« of the 1970s, when he spoke up against the distorting representations of African thought and intellectual traditions as static and homogenous. Not only, he argued, was such an essentialist conception incorrect on theoretical and empirical levels, disregarding forms of intellectual and discursive pluralism internal to African societies; it was also politically divisive in that it denied (the possibility of) reference to common epistemological and normative standards. Yet such a view of African societies dominated Western popular thought as much as colonial and early postcolonial scholarship. Against such prejudicial conceptions, Hountondji's work also encouraged and coordinated the empirical and historical exploration of traditions of knowledge and science in Africa and fought against the on-going global dependencies within the academy. In the discussion, Hountondji consolidated his points while voicing a more forgiving tone towards ethnophilosophy seen in its historical contexts. He was complemented by Joshua Kwesi Aikins, a young



From left to right:
Anke Graneß, Josua Kwesi Aikins, Paulin Hountondji, Kai Kresse

political scientist based at the University of Bielefeld, who brought challenging material to the table on »development«, its language use and its political negotiation in Ghana; and by Anke Graneß, editor of the »Polylog« journal for Intercultural Philosophy, whose critical assessment of the current situation, still characterised by a lack of knowledge about intellectual traditions in different parts of the world, included a vision of an engaged and mutually informed scenario for the future. A packed audience participated in lively manner in over two hours of discussion.

The Roundtable was introduced and moderated by Kai Kresse. It was the second such occasion addressing the terms of analysis in African Studies, following a discussion two years ago with the Ghanaian philosopher Kwasi Wiredu about the perils of language. Hountondji's visit was organised and funded through a collaborative effort among the ZMO, the Berlin-based Society for African Philosophy and the Rosa-Luxemburg Foundation, with publicity support from AfricAvenir. // K. Kresse



■ Lecture Series

Beyond Oil and Radical Islam: from Classifications to Links of Economy and Religion in Central Asia

During the Soviet era, religion and economy were conceived as distinct, even mutually opposed spheres with their own rationales (such as »rational actors« on the one hand and »irrational« »otherworldly« motivations on the other). A focus on the impact of religious ideas and practices on economic processes – and vice versa – serves to question the common perception of Central Asia as a region determined by either dangerous religious movements or lucrative oil and gas reserves. The lecture series asks how »religion« and »economy« are shaped and negotiated through everyday strategies and practices.

How do Central Asian actors conceive and put into practice the separations, links, crossovers and mutual constitutions of »religion« and »economy«? The lecture series seeks to foreground Central Asian debates on the relationship between

religious and economic domains in order to query these social, political and social science categories.

This lecture series is a collaboration between the Zentrum Moderner Orient, the Crossroads Asia Competence Network and the Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin. For the lectures please see http://www.zmo.de/veranstaltungen/2011/Zentralasien_2011_12.pdf. // J. Féaux de la Croix

»Phantom Borders« in East-Central Europe

The joint research project »Phantom Borders« in East-Central Europe, in which the ZMO participates, has started a lecture series between October 2011 and February 2012 entitled »Theoretical and empirical approaches to space«. The aim of the lectures is to think about possible approaches to space in the social sciences in general (Gabriele Sturm, 20/10) and to examine different factors configuring space in the region under consideration. Among such factors, economic activity (Kathrin Boeckh, 17/11), demographic behaviour (Sebastian Klüsener, 15/12) and religion (Thomas Bremer, 19/01) will be addressed. The series will close with a case study of the formation of Kosova as a particular territory (Nathalie Clayer, 16/02). All lectures will address questions of spatial ordering and border drawing as the central themes of the joint research project. In particular, they will critically inquire into the persistence of past spatial orders in East-Central Europe. Venue: Centre Marc Bloch, 16-18.00, lectures in German or English. For more, see <http://www.phantomgrenzen.eu/>. // F. Riedler

Urban Studies Seminar 2011/12

This seminar, part of the activities of ZMO and of the EUME research programme (now within the newly created Forum Transregionale Studien), was initiated in 2006 and has since then explored many aspects of urban historical debates about the region in a comparative perspective. This academic year, the theme is »Urban Sociability and Urban Movements (Middle East, North Africa, Iran, Turkey)«. Every second Monday at 5.00 p.m., Berlin-based researchers, EUME fellows and international guests will present their research on cities as diverse as Cairo, Tripoli, Istanbul, Damascus, Tehran and Lahore.

The first session took place on November 28, with Ulrike Freitag and Nora Lafi presenting a theoretical introduction to »urban sociabilities and urban mobilisations in historical perspective«. The full programme is available for download at: http://www.zmo.de/veranstaltungen/2011/Urban_Studies_2011_12.pdf. // N. Lafi

■ Other Activities

Moroccan Film Days, Cinema Arsenal Berlin
1-4 September 2011



From 1-4 September 2011, the ZMO organized the Moroccan Film Days in Berlin in collaboration with Arsenal – Institut for film and video art. During the four-day film programme at the cinema Arsenal, nine films by Moroccan filmmakers were screened and gave insights into the last decade of the Moroccan cinematography, still a rare occasion in Germany. Against the background of the recent events in North Africa, the programme highlighted the diversity and changes in contemporary Moroccan society, reflected in a variety of cinematic approaches.

Parallel to the film days, the ZMO invited four young filmmakers for a one-week visiting programme in Berlin financed by the German Foreign Office. Filmmakers Yasmine Kassari, Swel Noury, Talal Selhami and the producer Noufissa Sbaï presented their films and discussed with the Berlin audience. The visiting programme also comprised encounters with German funding institutions, filmmakers, producers, distributors and ZMO fellows. The guests greatly appreciated this opportunity

to get a deep insight into the German film market and discussed possibilities of collaboration. The German invitees also embraced the chance to meet with the filmmakers and learn more about the filmic landscape and the conditions of film production in Morocco. For some German institutions, these were the first direct contacts with Moroccan filmmakers although during the last 15 years Morocco has become an important site for Hollywood productions as well as German enterprises.

In a lively podium discussion, the filmmakers talked with Sonja Hegasy about their experience of filmmaking in Morocco and discussed with the audience their individual filmic approaches and the issue of a national film culture.

All screenings were very well attended, and the feedback from the audience, the participants of the visiting programme and the press (<http://emajmagazine.com/2011/09/20/quo-vadis-cinema-marocain/>) was very positive and encouraging throughout. This shows how valuable and appreciated a glance at a still-neglected cinematic culture is. // R. Sarreiter

Gesellschaft zur Förderung des ZMO e.V., Annual Lecture, 17 June 2011

The 2011 ZMO annual lecture »Der Streit um Familie, Gender, Entwicklung und postkoloniale Kritik in der arabischen Welt« was held on 17 June by Bettina Dennerlein. She is currently Professor for Gender Studies and Islamic Studies at the University of Zurich and was a research fellow at the ZMO between 2001 and 2007. Her vast range of research interests includes Islamic family law, women's and human rights movements, the role of gender in law and religion and reform movements.

Bettina Dennerlein started her lecture by arguing that since colonial times, the Arab family has been in the focus of discourses and politics connecting aspects of social reproduction and political belonging, of identity and sexuality. For a long time, work in this research field was dominated by ideologically determined dichotomies, such as religion and tradition on the one hand

and modern secular law on the other. Especially questions of family law, which itself even today is often closely related to Islamic law, became points of debate for Islamists as well as for the secular women's rights movement. New research efforts, however, tend to overcome these dichotomies by focusing on particular politics as well as social practices. An example, according to Bettina Dennerlein, is how regulation's relation to power and the normative and political prerequisites for traditional standards of women's rights are being more and more critically investigated. At the same time, social practices related to informal marriages and access to mechanisms of reproduction demonstrate people's agency with regard to social norms and institutional frames. Thus, in reaction to political developments, older ideological oppositions seem to be crumbling. // H. Liebau

ZMO Library

As an integral part of the ZMO, the library sets its sights on acquiring new publications on ethnological, historical and political-scientific issues/topics related to the Middle East, Africa and Asia. It is especially important to acquire recent editions and books published in the countries of interest. Currently the stock of the ZMO library consists of ca. 55,000 printed books and about 80 periodicals.

Beside this stock, the library holds a number of scientific and literary legacies, which attract wide interest in the international research community because of their specific orientation. These collections stem from former associates of the ZMO or from persons whose fields of research were near to or connected with the research work of the ZMO. Thus, the ZMO for instance is the home of the personal papers of the Middle East historian Gerhard Höpp (1942-2003) and the historians of Modern South Asia, Horst Krüger (1920-1989), Joachim Heidrich (1930-2004) and Petra Heidrich (1940-2006).

To make this rich and unique material accessible to a larger research audience all over the world, the ZMO is currently organizing and digitizing the collections. Within the scope of this project, the heterogeneous material is studied scientifically, catalogued and digitized in a consistent format. In the next step, the data is exported to an external server and uploaded. In this way, the database with the digitized documents is accessible for users who visit the homepage of the ZMO. There an electronic inventory search programme with various parameters helps the visitor view the relevant documents.

In recent years, the ZMO has prioritized the editing of the legacies of Gerhard Höpp and Horst Krüger because of the great demand from researchers from different countries and disciplines. The ZMO is planning to expand this project, aiming to register, catalogue and partly digitize all the existing personal collections. Currently, Tilman Böcker is in charge of this work. The upcoming editions of this bulletin will present some of these legacies in detail along with introductions to the life and work of the respective scientist.

For more information on the electronic inventory please see <http://www.zmo.de/biblio/findbuch.html>. // T. Böcker

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news

We welcome **Nils Riecken** as substitute Assistant to the Director from 15 September 2011 to 31 May 2012. He studied History, Islamic Studies and Political Science in Freiburg, Leipzig/Halle and Cairo. In his PhD project at the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies (BGSMS), he is working on an intellectual biography of Abdallah Laroui, a Moroccan historian, intellectual and novelist. Congratulations to our colleague Dr. hab. **Nora Lafi** who completed her habilitation on »Esprit civique et organisation citadine dans l'Empire Ottoman« at the end of June at the University Aix-Marseille.

We also congratulate **Sophie Wagenhofer** and **Britta Frede**, who submitted their PhD theses. **Sophie Wagenhofer's** work is titled »Ausstellen, Verorten, Partizipieren. Das Jüdische Museum im marokkanischen Casablanca«. **Britta Frede's** PhD thesis is titled »Zwischen Kontinuität und Erneuerung: Šaiḥāni (Aḥmad Maḥmūd b. Muḥammad at-Ṭulba alias Mannabba, 1907-1986) und die Entwicklung der Ṭiḡāniya in Mauretanien am Beispiel der faīḍa-Bewegung von Ibrāhīm Niasse (1900-1975)«. On 1 October 2011 she took a position as Research Fellow at the Department of Islamic Science of the University Bayreuth.

Some other colleagues bade farewell. Dr. **Sebastian Prange** left the ZMO at the end of July and has accepted an appointment as Assistant Professor in the Department of History at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

ZMO fellow Dr. **Soumen Mukherjee** was elected Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland in April 2011. Dr. **Aïssatou Mbodj-Pouye** received the distinction of becoming a Lifelong Research Fellow at the CNRS in Paris. She will continue to be an associated colleague in the BMBF project »In Search of Europe«.

Dr. **Caterina Bori** will complete her contract at the end of 2011 and start a fulltime teaching and research position at the University of Bologna. Alexander von Humboldt Fellow Prof. **Michael Provence** returned to the University of California at the end of August; and Humboldt Fellow Dr. **Egodi Uchendu**, who already stayed at the ZMO in 2008/2009, was a guest for three months between June and September 2011. From October 2011 to June 2012, a new Alexander von Humboldt Fellow, Prof. **Baz Lecocq** joins the ZMO. He received his PhD in Social Sciences from the University of Amsterdam in 2002, joined the ZMO as a research fellow in 2003 and took up his current position as Lecturer in African History at Ghent University, Belgium in 2007. His research is situated in the Central Sahara and Sahel. His research topic at the ZMO is »The ›Awad el Djouh Affair‹. Slave Trade, Hu-

man Rights and the Shaping of the Postcolonial World (1948-1962)«.

The ZMO welcomes several new colleagues. **An Seebach** has been employed as curatorial assistant in the project »In Search of Europe« since 1 June 2011. She studied Catholic Theology and Arts in Münster and was member/director of the Künstlerhaus Dortmund from 1994-2005. From 2004 to 2009, she was an artistic-scientific staff member at the University of Hildesheim. Dr. **Yasmine Berriane** started at the BGSMS on 1 July 2011. She studied Political Science, Islamic Studies and Economics at the Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg and at SOAS in London. She recently completed her PhD in Political Sociology at the Institute of Political Studies in Paris on the feminization of local associations in Morocco. In her current research project, she is studying the Soulaliyate movement and its contesting of customary law and practices that exclude women from current land transfer compensations. At the same time, Dr. **Ahmed Badawi** took up research in the SFB 640. He has an MSc in Development Studies from SOAS and a PhD in Political Science from Humboldt University in Berlin. The title of his thesis is »Political Settlement, Discursive Formations and Radical Policy Change: The March of Liberalism in America and the Policy of Promoting Democracy and Good Governance Abroad, 1980-2009«. He previously worked on Palestinian politics and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. At the ZMO he is conducting research on representations of Europe among contemporary Egyptian Islamists.

From August on, **Fatemeh Masjedi** has had a PhD research position in the cooperative project »Urban Violence«. From 1991 to 1995, she studied History at the Tehran Teachers' Training University in Iran. In 2003 she finished an M.A. in Politics and Government and in History at Illinois State University, USA. Her current project at the ZMO is titled »Social disorder in the cities of Tehran and Tabriz in early twentieth century Iran (1906-1920)«.

Dr. **Norman Saadi Nikro** has been at the ZMO since September. By December 2011, he will complete his work on the monograph »The Fragmenting Force of Memory: Self, Literary Style, and the Lebanese Civil War«. It engages the fields of memory studies, psychoanalytic theory and postcolonial literary studies, and it addresses literature and film arising out of the civil war and its uncertain aftermath, mostly on self-representation works of cultural production. The EUME academic term 2011/12 started in October and the ZMO welcomes the new Fellows Dr. **Nurşen Gürboğa**, Dr. **Adam Mestyan** and Dr. **Mostafa Minawi**. **Nurşen Gürboğa** received her PhD. from Boğaziçi University, Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History in 2005. Her research interests cover the history of the late Ottoman Empire and early Republican Turkey, labour history and social movements. During her EUME Fellowship, she will conduct her research project »Istanbul as the City of Lower Classes: Şirket-i Hayriye Steamship Workers (1890-1940)«. **Adam Mestyan** is a historian, specialized in 19th-century Arab and Ottoman cultural history. His doctoral dissertation, entitled »A garden with mellow fruits of refinement« – Music Theatres and Politics in Istanbul and Cairo (1867-1892)«, was based on extensive research in Turkish, Egyptian and French archives. During his stay in Berlin, he intends to transform his dissertation into a book and will prepare a number of articles. **Mostafa Minawi's** PhD dissertation is entitled »Lines in the Sand: the Ottoman Empire's Policies of Expansion and Consolidation along its African and Arabian Frontiers (1882-1902)«. It is based on Ottoman, British, Bulgarian, American and Syrian archival research and explores Istanbul's policies towards the empire's southern frontiers in the late 19th century. During his EUME Fellowship year, he will expand on his doctoral dissertation by investigating the lives and careers of some of the individuals who were the driving force behind Istanbul's new policies on its southern frontiers.

calendar

ZMO-KOLLOQUIUM 2011/12: Not all about Islam, ZMO, 18.00

- 26 January 2012, Prof. *Adeeb Khalid*: Islam, Nation, and State in Central Asia: The Soviet Experience and its Legacy Today
- 23 February 2012, Dr. *Seema Kazi*: Kashmir: Beyond Borders, Ethnicity and Sovereignty
- 29 March 2012, Prof. *Elisa Giunchi*: The Origins of the Dispute on the Durand Line

LECTURE SERIES: Beyond Oil and radical Islam:

- 10 January 2012, 17.00, ZMO, Saulesh Yessenova: ›Tengiz Crude‹ and the Making of a Nation-state in Kazakhstan

- 31 January 2012, 17.00, ZMO, Tim Epkenhans: Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong? Islamic Elites, Business and the State in Tajikistan

OTHER EVENTS

- 14 December 2011, 18.00, ZMO, book presentation »Wegweiser zur Geschichte: Nordafrika«, Dr. *Sonja Hegasy*, Dr. *Hans Hubertus Mack* Dr. *Heinrich Kreft*
- 15–16 December 2011, Die Zukunft der Geisteswissenschaften in einer multipolaren Welt, International Conference, Berlin, Prof. *Homi K. Bhabha*, Prof. *Jürgen Osterhammel*, Dr. *Dyala Hamzah* et. al.
- 26 January – 9 April 2012, exhibition »Roads of Arabia«, Museum of Islamic Art, Berlin

For further information see:
www.zmo.de/veranstaltungen