



Associates of ZMO



Alexander von Humboldt
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Food Insecurity and the Making of the African Red Sea World, 1818-1977

Dr Steven Serels

This study is the first in-depth analysis of the social, political and economic factors that have led to the endemic food crisis among pastoralist communities in Eastern Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti and Northern Somalia. Since the nineteenth century, these communities have suffered because their economic strategies were progressively eroded by a set of exploitative processes that allowed colonial states and a small group of non-state elites to seize locally managed resources. The loss of these resources negatively impacted the food security of the region and recurring food crises forced many to abandon traditional livelihoods and to seek out work either on large-scale commercial agriculture schemes, in regional cities or in Gulf States. This project has four major goals: (1) to chart the shifting economics of pastoralism and to correlate these shifts with patterns of access to food; (2) to examine the relationship between repeated food crises and the establishment of modern states in the region; (3) to explore the ways that religious and lay indigenous elites coped with development of structural food insecurity; (4) to uncover the lived experience of the slaves held in bondage in the region during acute food crises.



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Illusions of Change? A Cultural History of Progress in Ethiopia

Dr Izabela Orlowska

This project investigates how progress has been understood, imagined and represented by ideologies of Ethiopian regimes, after the collapse of the monarchy in 1974. While the political culture of Ethiopian pre-industrial society was entirely embedded in its social practice, now it operates within a globally dominant political system. This project intends to examine the tension between global trends and locally established structures of power. Its hypothesis is that the deeply rooted socio-cultural patterns of behaviour continue to leave their imprints on politics and the understanding of progress and development.

The project addresses questions such as: how have been the ideas of progress represented in official state rhetorics (in text and in speech) and its iconography? Who is being addressed and who is represented as agents of progress (e.g. the revolutionary, the party, the people or the leader)? Based on the assumption that symbols in order to be effective need to refer to a familiar stock of imagery, I ask if the indigenous symbolic repertoire is incorporated. Or has the globally recognised concepts become indigenised, if so how? What external images and notions of progress are incorporated and why? How did the tension between the external forces (ideologies) and the local specificity of power express itself?



The Arab-Palestinian Minority in Israel: The Municipalities' Crisis

Dr Rami Zeedan

This project will focus on the local political history of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel (within the Green-Line). This sector, which constitutes 20% of Israel's population, is an ethnic minority living in cities with ethnically diverse populations and in ethnically homogeneous cities and villages. This project aims to investigate the long-term crisis in these cities and villages of this sector. As an ethnic minority in the "Jewish and Democratic State", the Arab sector has been affected by the government policies implemented by the Jewish majority. The Arab sector leaders accuse the central government of discriminating their municipalities and pointing this as the generator of the crisis. The central government, however, points the inappropriate local management policies and the lack of leadership by the Arab local leaders themselves, as the reason of the crisis. This research will discuss the discrimination of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, their local management policies and leadership, and the relationship between these two to the crisis occurring within these municipalities. The contribution to the failure will be examined in these topics: the education; the financial; the political and leadership; the cultural and ethical; the institutional; the service providing; infrastructural factors; and more.