



Program

15 October 2015 - Room S11, Seminar Building

09:30-10:00 Registration

10:00-10:30 Conference Opening/Welcome address

Michaela Pelican and Sarah Albiez-Wieck (UoC Forum Ethnicity)

10:30-12:00 Keynote/Public Lecture

Peter Geschiere: "Ethnicity: Precolonial, Colonial and Postcolonial - Africa in Comparison"

12:00-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:30 Panel A: Skeptical voices on precolonial or premodern ethnicity

Scholarly understandings of ethnicity often start from the assumption that only the modern condition makes ethnic classifications relevant. Only with the global extension of European dominance through colonialism the idea of race became a structuring principle on a global scale (Quijano); and while pre-national imperial rule only marginally applied ethnic classifications to maintain its political boundaries, the nation-state defined its territorial boundaries in explicitly ethnic terms (Wimmer).

The first panel gives room to the viewpoint that there is only limited proof – if any – that ethnic classifications mattered in premodern/precolonial societies. If it does indeed not make sense to use ethnicity as an analytical category when studying them, what were the more relevant social categorizations in premodern societies?

Speakers:

Karoline Noack (University of Bonn): "Ethnic" - where did it come from and why we have to get rid of it

Ed Wilmsen (University of Edinburgh): Ethnicity - an easy euphemism for everything: problems in projecting the present onto the past

Yannis Stouraitis (University of Vienna): The political un-importance of ethnicity in the medieval East Roman world

Discussant:

Mario Krämer (UoC Forum Ethnicity)

15:30-16:00 Coffee/Tea break

16:00-18:00 Panel B: Premodern colonialism and archeology

When scholars highlight the importance of colonialism for ethnogenesis and ethnicized politics, they often refer to the European colonialism from the sixteenth century onwards. But what about earlier, premodern forms of colonialism all around the globe? Did premodern empires such as the Romans in Europe, the Inca or Tarascans in America or Japanese rulers also influence the ethnic identity of their vassals? What other forms of groupings, identification and belonging different from the modern ones were relevant? What sources can we use to answer these questions? What methodological difficulties arise when we today study identity and belonging so far back in time? Are archaeological data helpful? The panel addresses these questions from the viewpoint of several regions and disciplines.

Speakers:

Nico Lüdtke (University of Oldenburg): Ethnicity, colonialism and the borders of the social world in sixteenth-century Spain

Yasuko Takezawa (Kyoto University): Parallel marginalization processes in pre-modern times? Jews, Romani people, and "Kawaramono" in Japan

Sarah Albiez-Wieck (UoC Forum Ethnicity): Ethnicity, migration and colonial categorizations in Mexico and Peru

Discussant:

Stefanie Gänger (University of Cologne)

18:00 Book Launch:

UoC Forum 'Ethnicity as a Political Resource' (ed.) (2015): Ethnicity as a Political Resource. Conceptualizations across Regions, Disciplines, and Periods, Bielefeld: transcript.

19:30 Dinner (for speakers only)

16 October 2015 - Room S11, Seminar Building

09:00-11:00 Panel C: Mature colonialism

European expansion and the establishment of colonial rule in different stages (late 16th to early 20th century, including imperialism) has often been considered as a precondition for ethnicity to become a relevant marker on a global scale. By taking into account expressions of non-European colonialism, a comparative perspective permits to evaluate differences and compare similar patterns. The form in which colonial rule was established in many regions of the world seemed to be intimately connected with the use of this marker to establish or reinforce otherness and hierarchical boundaries in order to ensure colonial dominance. In this panel we will explore the ways in which colonialism shaped ethnic politics and the extent to which colonial negotiation regimes were themselves being shaped by racial prejudice and ethnic assumptions in practice.

Speakers:

Alexander Keese (Humboldt University Berlin): Ethnic mobilisation and decolonisation on the ground: a view from West Africa (Ghana, Senegal, Benin), 1945-1960

Saurabh Dube (Colegio de Mexico): Colonialism and caste in India

Antonio Fuentes Barragán (University of Sevilla): Ethnicity, identity and private life in colonial Latin America

Discussant:

Antonio Sáez-Arance (former member UoC Forum Ethnicity)

11:00-11:30 Coffee/Tea break

11:30-13:30 Panel D: Current and political uses of (assumed?) historical ethnicities

Today, in many parts of the world, ethnicity is used a political resource by different actors in their struggle over inclusion and exclusion. This is reflected, for example, in current debates about the exclusion of immigrant 'others', in discourses of autochthony, as well as in the global indigenous rights movement. Often, such discourses refer to experiences of colonial exploitation as the basis for common identification, while at the same making claims to long histories of local rootedness and cultural integrity. They simultaneously reframe the present in view of the past, and the past in view of a desired future. In this panel we will ask: How do postcolonial ethnicities differ from their predecessors? How much historicity is needed for making convincing claims? Is ethnicity or nationality still the primary currency for collective mobilization today? Or is it gradually being replaced by alternative social categorizations, such as religion or wealth? Are we facing new groupisms in our analytical endeavors?

Speakers:

Manuel Fernández-Götz (University of Edinburgh): Celtic identities ancient and modern

Günther Schlee (Max Planck Institut Halle): Ethnicity change and exchange: What is ethnicity worth and what can it be traded for?

Tanja Bastia (University of Manchester): Class and ethnicity in contemporary Buenos Aires

Discussant:

Lye Tuck-Po (University Sains Malaysia)

13:30-14:30 Lunch

14:30-17:00 Final Plenary Discussion and Closing Remarks

Discussant:

Tobias Schwarz (UoC Forum Ethnicity)

Moderator:

Michaela Pelican (UoC Forum Ethnicity)