Conference Reports

Dynamic Alignments and Dealignments
in Global Southeast Asia

Freiburg, 24–26 June 2015

Southeast Asia is a region of vibrant economies, cultural diversity, and volatile polities. It is a region characterized by multiple forms of alignments and dealignments that influence its societies. The analysis of alignments, meaning cooperation and coalition-building, and dealignments, which include processes of fragmentation, disintegration and conflict, is therefore of great significance to understanding past, present, and future developments in the region.

On 24–26 June 2015, the interdisciplinary research group "Dynamic Alignments and Dealignments in Global Southeast Asia" at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies (FRIAS) organized a conference on the topic of Southeast Asia's cooperation cultures. The conference presented the work in progress of the institute's fellows, which centered on (1) the changing nature of political cooperation; (2) the repositioning of alterity and identity; (3) the politico-economic consequences of alignment and dealignment in the local settings of Indonesia and the Philippines; and (4) transcultural historical interactions in Southeast Asia. Around twenty speakers examined these questions from the disciplinary perspectives of political science, cultural anthropology, economics, and history.

In his keynote lecture Hal Hill (Australian National University) argued that the Southeast Asian economy is currently on the rise, as evidenced by high economic growth rates, rising living standards, and its growing share of global trade. Besides mentioning the diversity of political systems and the region's economic disparities, Hill highlighted the policy areas in which Southeast Asia has performed well. These include export-oriented industrialization, resilience in coping with economic crises, successful transitions to democracy in Indonesia and the Philippines, and progress in regional integration. However, there are still issues of concern, such as educational reforms, demographic transition, rising inequalities, and environmental sustainability. Hill also asked whether Asia is ready for global leadership and if there will be a cohesive group of nations able to exert such leadership. For the rest of the world this coincides with the question of whether the rise of Asia will be a zero sum game, something Hill denied.

The first session on "The Changing Nature of Political Cooperation in Southeast Asia", convened by Jürgen Rüland (University of Freiburg) and chaired by Mikko Huotari (MERICS), concentrated on the changing patterns of political cooperation in the region from a political science perspective.

Addressing what turned out to be one of the central concerns of the conference, namely, Southeast Asia's relations with China, Mark Beeson (University of Western Australia) stated that the key problem that ASEAN needs to overcome in order to respond to China's growing importance is the ineffectiveness of its institutions, such as, the ASEAN Regional Forum. For Beeson, the crucial obstacle to more effective regional cooperation lies in ASEAN's recalcitrant retention of sovereignty norms.

Stefan Rother (University of Freiburg) highlighted a major dealignment between the discourse of an elite-driven ASEAN and people's concerns as voiced by civil society organizations. However, he identified dynamic alignments among these organizations potentially able to rectify ASEAN's democratic deficits. By applying his approach of "alternative regionalism", Rother explained how democratic spaces can be "carved out from below." Yet his case study on the ASEAN Civil Society Conference and the ASEAN Youth Forum demonstrated the limited political space available for civil society in democratizing ASEAN. Rother thus raised the crucial question of whether and how a region can become democratic if its member states are not.

In the second panel, chaired by Muhadi Sugiono (Gadjah Mada University), Pavin Chachavalpongpun (University of Kyoto) explained how a domestic crisis had led to more intense rivalry between China and the US in Thailand and the wider region. According to him, the responses of the two competitors to the latest coup in Thailand on 22 May 2014 may be categorized as interventionism versus pragmatism. The Chinese pragmatic approach could lead to shifting power relations in China's favor and could markedly affect ASEAN's cohesion. However, Pavin suggested that competition between China and the US could also have positive effects. It might, for example, encourage other powerful actors such as Japan, India, or Australia to play a more active role in the region.

Jürgen Rüland addressed in his presentation the interplay between domestic and foreign policy and its consequences at the regional level. Applying a role theoretical model, he focused on the question of whether Indonesian democratization has changed the country's foreign policy role conceptions and thereby influenced policymaking at the regional level. Rüland demonstrated the diversification of Indonesia's role concept and the growing significance of democracy. Concerning the complex yet important question of the effects of Indonesia's foreign policy role on ASEAN, Rüland pointed to various democracy-enhancing developments in ASEAN prom-

inently promoted by the Indonesian government. Among these are the ASEAN Charter, the ASEAN Security Community, the Bali Concord II, and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights. Still, the meaning of democracy in Indonesian role concepts appears to be ambiguous, as it is a localized vision of democracy which owes its specific form to the deeply entrenched influence in society of anti-liberal organicist concepts of state and society.

Salvador Santino Regilme (Northern Illinois University) took the opposite perspective when discussing the impact of foreign policy on domestic policy. He queried whether foreign aid could undermine human rights and examined this question in the context of the cooperation between the United States and the Philippines on counter-terrorism measures. Regilme argued that the convergence of political interests and the policy preferences of donor and recipient governments crucially influence human rights outcomes.

Convened by Judith Schlehe (University of Freiburg), the second session, entitled "Repositioning Alterity and Identity: Anthropological Perspectives" focused on the intersubjective level of transcultural encounters reflected in social imaginaries. In a panel chaired by Anna Maria Wattie (Gadjah Mada University), Martin Slama (Austrian Academy of Sciences) studied the multiple positioning of Hadramis in Indonesia and their entanglement with alignments and dealignments with the Middle East. The representation of Hadramis as a social group with roots in the Arabian Peninsula is reflected in the various terms applied to them. For example, in colonial times Hadramis were categorized as "foreign orientals", which implied a social position "in between society" as opposed to "in the middle of society". After 9/11, they became increasingly associated with terrorist attacks and were represented as "extremists in the land of moderate Islam", as Slama put it.

Examining the situation of Iranian students in Malaysia, Olivia Killias (University of Zurich) reflected on their feelings of belonging with respect to their Muslim identity. She found that the distinction between different strands of Islam has major repercussions on the identity of Iranian students. However, exclusion from Malaysian Sunni mainstream Islam as reflected in anti-Shia stereotypes does not necessarily facilitate intra-ethnic solidarity. In fact, Killias encountered wide-ranging suspicion among Iranian students, which she explained with reference to their prior experiences in Iran, where they learned to have "two faces".

In the panel chaired by Ariel Heryanto (Australian National University), Eva F. Nisa (Universitas Negeri) and Judith Schlehe (University of Freiburg) asked what imaginaries of alterity and identity Indonesian students of Al-Azhar University in Cairo derived from encounters with the Middle East. Combining Nisa's insider view and Schlehe's outsider perspective, the

presenters showed that transcultural encounters do not automatically create boundary transgressions and transnational alignment. While Nisa emphasized the role of Azharites in promoting moderate Islam in Indonesia, Schlehe stressed the limits of religious education, which she explained with reference to lackluster class attendance and the segregated everyday life of Indonesian students in Cairo. Schlehe and Nisa suggested that the cultural and religious orientations mediated by Indonesian Azharites should be understood as related to a new positioning of the religious in the context of middle-class spiritual economy and new subjectivities.

By combining on- and off-screen perspectives, Evi Eliyanah (Australian National University) and Mirjam Lücking (University of Freiburg) showed how the Arab "other" is contrasted against the Indonesian "self", working as a reference point for the identification of good and evil and as evidence of the moral superiority of Indonesians. Lücking explored how pilgrims and labor migrants who have visited the Middle East distinguish themselves from Arab men and women. In addition, Eliyanah illustrated how gendered representations of the "Arab World" are displayed in a range of Indonesian movies.

"Political-Economic Consequences of Alignment and Dealignment in Localized Indonesia and the Philippines" was the title of the third session. Convened by Günther G. Schulze (University of Freiburg) and chaired by Hal Hill, the main objective of this section was to identify the consequences of political alignment and its antipode, political rivalry, on political and economic outcomes in Indonesia and the Philippines from an economic perspective.

A paper presented by Joseph Capuno (University of the Philippines) studied the effects of political competition on fiscal and economic outcomes in subnational Philippine jurisdictions. Past studies on the Philippines found an ambiguous relationship between political dynasties (a proxy for political competition) and local development. Capuno showed that provinces with higher numbers of officials belonging to the same political clan receive higher per capita transfers for public services. However, these transfers do not seem to have a significant effect on provincial development.

The paper by Gerrit Gonschorek (University of Freiburg) and Günther G. Schulze analyzed how the political (non)alignment of districts and the president's party affect discretionary central government spending in Indonesia. Preliminary empirical evidence suggests that a district's political alignment with the president and its geographic proximity to the president's home district significantly increase central spending for infrastructure. The socio-economic development of a district, on the other hand, seems to play only a minor role in the distribution.

In a panel chaired by Krisztina Kis-Katos (University of Freiburg), Antonio Farfán-Vallespín (University of Freiburg) showed that incumbency is far more important for the re-election of local politicians in the Philippines than membership in a political dynasty. As political dynasties are usually considered a main obstacle to good governance, this has important implications for political reform efforts. If the high incumbency rate is responsible for the perpetuation of dynasties, according to Farfán-Vallespin, reforms trying to increase electoral competition should focus on incumbency advantages.

In another paper, Capuno, Farfán-Vallespín and Schulze examined the killings of journalists in the Philippines. They indicated that the probability of the murder of journalists can be predicted by institutional and economic factors. Particularly interesting are the correlations between the probability of the murder of journalists and the level of local corruption, the quality of local institutions, and characteristics of the media in the province.

Joseph Capuno and Christian von Lübke (Arnold Bergstraesser Institute) showed that good governance may be facilitated by elite competition. By comparing two Philippine cities with similar backgrounds, but distinctly different elite constellations, they demonstrated that more intense elite contests are accompanied by better governance outcomes. These findings confirm that, in the absence of credible judicial and societal controls, public performance remains contingent on the extent to which established elites keep each other in check.

Convened by Sabine Dabringhaus (University of Freiburg), the last session "Historical Perspectives on Transcultural Interactions in Southeast Asia" concentrated on transcultural processes of (de)alignment in Southeast Asia from a historical perspective. In a panel chaired by Nurul Ilmi Idrus (Hassanuddin University), Agus Suwignyo (Gadjah Mada University) discussed *gotong royong* as a social, non-state institution of welfare and citizenship and elaborated on its changing role in the process of Indonesian state formation. The introduction of the *gotong royong* by the Javanese changed the nature of communal service cooperation in Indonesia from an externally imposed mechanism for lower class people to a unifying point of identification. Hereby the institutionalization of *gotong royong* not only strengthened communal service cooperation, but also stimulated consciousness of the individual's position vis-à-vis the state.

In her presentation, Katja Rangsivek (University of Copenhagen) explained the importance of the return of King Prajadhipok's ashes for the reinvention of the Thai Monarchy. King Prajadhipok was the first Thai monarch to abdicate and go into exile, where he died in 1941. By the time his ashes

were returned to Bangkok, the monarchy had regained some of its stature in Thai politics and was about to establish its present omnipotence.

The last panel chaired by Kiyoshi Fujikawa (University of Nagoya), focused on "Chineseness" in Southeast Asia. A presentation by Sai Siew Min (National University of Singapore) looked at a Chinese association in today's Indonesia, known locally as the Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan (THHK). The THHK was founded in 1900 and tried to establish modern schools to teach Tjia-Im, or Mandarin to Chinese children. The THHK offers a significant example of how diasporic Chinese nationalism developed in a fully colonized setting and responded to events and dynamics different from those unfolding in semi-colonial China. Its development can therefore be situated within what Rebecca Karl has described as the "global moment" of Chinese nationalism, as opposed to the archaic model of "overseas Chinese nationalism".

Han Xiaorong (Lingnan University) showed that state and non-state agents played significant roles in the cultural exchange between China and Vietnam in the pre-modern period. Whereas the actions of Chinese state agents in Vietnam in the pre-modern period were similar to the civilizing missions of modern colonialists, today the Chinese and Vietnamese states have become much more powerful than their pre-modern predecessors in regulating cultural interaction between the two countries. Although Sino-Vietnamese cultural interaction was bi-directional, it was asymmetric: Chinese influence on Vietnam was much stronger than Vietnamese influence on China.

The conference contributions portrayed a region whose institutions and social fabric are in a state of accelerated flux. Established cultures of co-operation have come under strain from an increasingly tense contest between a largely Western form of modernization and a strong backlash by forces seeking alternative responses to globalization. Each of these approaches to modernity results in divergent alignments of social forces, different forms of cooperation and inevitable dealignments with erstwhile coalition and co-operation partners. The result is a deep insecurity about the direction cultural change should take in order to cope with the largely external challenges facing the region. This holds true for the institutional setting at the regional level, where ASEAN navigates between a more EU-inspired model of re-gional cooperation and the informal norms propagated by the ASEAN Way, the region's long-established repository of cooperation norms. The same holds true at the local level, where economic growth seems to be impeded by clientelist networks, which in many cases still prevail over more legalistic approaches to the allotment of central state resources. Alongside this contest over cultural orientations and alignments lies increased interest in the Middle East, the Arab world and Middle Eastern Islam, even though – as the anthropological contributions suggest – when directly exposed to these cul-

tures during the *hajj* or tertiary education, such new alignments are often seen in a critical light. In a region characterized by a high degree of structural diversity from the outset, this obvious lack of cohesion may also impede attempts to keep external forces at bay and to strengthen its global position.

Anna Fünfgeld / Gerrit Gonschorek

Scales of Knowledge: Zooming In and Zooming Out

7th Annual Conference of the Cluster of Excellence "Asia and Europe in a Global Context"

Heidelberg, 7–9 October 2015

The Cluster of Excellence "Asia and Europe in a Global Context" held its seventh Annual Conference *Scales of Knowledge: Zooming In and Zooming Out* at Heidelberg University from 7 to 9 October 2015. The conference was organised by the Cluster's Research Area C "Knowledge Systems" and revolved around the much discussed phenomenon of scales of knowledge. In an opening keynote lecture, four morning and nine afternoon sessions, 13 panels comprising 48 senior and junior researchers considered knowledge observation and production from multitudinous vantage points. Convinced of scales' importance and versatility, the participants explored their use in the analysis and narration of history, anthropology, medicine, geography and other fields.

Framed by the Taiwanese ensemble *3peoplemusic*'s journey through musical scales of East and West, past and present, indigenous and global, George Marcus (Irvine) opened the conference with a challenging keynote lecture. A noteworthy suggestion was to not only zoom in and zoom out, but to dare and stop in the middle of a zoom. This idea resonated well with the conference's outspoken goal to scrutinise scales' potential to overcome lingering dualisms such as "global and local" and "macro and micro". While not all elements of his speech found a strong echo, he certainly set one recurring theme of the conference by stressing the importance of zooms into the micro level.

On the second day, Pablo Blitstein (Heidelberg) showed how important insights into argumentative practices were to be gained by zooming in on specific discursive moments. By investigating the writings of Kāng Yǒuwéi,

he established that the "Chinese nation" could inversely be conceived as being based on either cultural or racial identity in early 20th century China. This difference was shown not only to depend on whether the argumentation scaled to the various peoples of China or to foreign political powers, but also disclose global discursive trends. Simon Partner (Durham) expertly deconstructed the mesh of spaces and times that intertwined in the peculiar world of Yokohama in the 19th century. By studying the life of Shinohara Chūemon, who went from the countryside to the city, from peasant to merchant, and ended in bankruptcy, he retraced how events on a global scale conditioned the lifeworld of one specific individual. By aligning the global with the local, he made a strong case for the factitiousness of the seeming polarity of both concepts.

From a medical vantage point, Ananda Chopra (Heidelberg) retraced the changing scales behind the Ayurvedic diagnosis of depression. His analysis of modern Ayurvedic practice led him to distinguish between a traditional perception and a more recent one approximating modern bio-medicine. However, the fact that contemporary practitioners of Ayurveda also rely on the influential religious text *Bhagavadgītā* led him to suggest that there is a third, sociocultural dimension to nosological scales. He effectively cautioned against a simplistic view of medical diagnosis that single-mindedly prioritises bio-medical diagnosis and therapy. Similarly critical concerns were raised by Stefan Ecks (Edinburgh), who surveyed the World Health Organisation's changing definitions of depression and the globally scaled effects of the organisation's recommendations.

In the afternoon panels, Kathrin Kohle (Heidelberg) retraced the resourceful blurring of scales between local megachurches and global media ministries. She analysed how individual leaders were able to cater to both scales equally well by contrasting "real" elements of identification in the events at the local level with the potentially supra-regional and international appeal of anonymised televangelist media events on a global scale. Esther Berg (Heidelberg) analysed the two-facedness of the Singaporean City Harvest Church by contrasting the scales of the government and the adherents. The church's politics were shown to overemphasise its concern for social services in its struggle for governmental recognition, but to shift its slogans' focus to affirming late-modern and neo-liberal messages when recruiting and exploiting its members.

Dominik Berrens, Katharina Hillenbrand, Sonja Gerke and Simone Gerhards (all Mainz) presented an exceptionally homogeneous panel on problems of emic and etic perspectives. Berrens opened the field by exploring "das nächste Fremde" as an adequate description of our relationship with Greco-Roman texts. He traced how we were neither able to adopt an

emic nor a properly etic perspective due to historical entanglements, but were instead rather uncomfortably left between the two. Hillenbrand picked up on this idea and warned against feeling too close a familiarity with Greco-Roman texts. She cautioned against reading either scientific or literary texts from a naively assumed emic perspective, as this could lead to blindness towards conceptual variation and the subsequent substitution of wrong concepts. Gerke departed from the Greco-Roman sphere and explored how "inside" and "outside" views were differently applied in dealing with ancient Egyptian texts. She explored phenomena surrounding Egyptology as an active scale in conditioning specialists' approaches to source materials. Gerhards took another step back and reflected on the limits and opportunities that zooming in and zooming out presented in dealing with ancient texts. As opposed to Hillenbrand, she warned not against the risk of feeling too close to a text, but of blindly applying etic analytical categories to it.

The last day kicked off with two panels on scales of environmental knowledge. Julia Poerting (Heidelberg) presented her research on organic agriculture in Pakistan. Her analysis established that the transfer of knowledge about organic agriculture not only needed to be spread on a lateral, geographical scale, but also in a bi-directional movement along a vertical scale. She illustrated that for the successful spread of agricultural techniques it was not enough for them to be translated from scientific research into practical action, but that farmers and knowledge brokers also needed to scale up their involvement in those techniques. From a different angle, Marcus Nüsser (Heidelberg) talked about the tensions between local and global views on glaciers. He explained that in certain valleys glacier melt water was the sole source for irrigation and showed how indigenous people adapted to that challenge by building a unique infrastructure to secure irrigation over longer annual periods. He contrasted this local knowledge with the fairly recent worldwide polemic about the alleged disappearance of glaciers and showed that that panic was not only potentially unfounded, but that glaciers have become imbued with a political meaning that potentially shrouds the interest in practical knowledge. Ravi Baghel (Heidelberg) explored the political and military tensions around the Siachen glacier between India and Pakistan. He showed that the imprecise formulations of an original treaty were due to a lack of cartographic knowledge and thus allowed both countries to claim the Siachen glacier. He then retraced how the scale of the conflict changed from confusion to "cartographic aggression" when Pakistan took as fact a straight line that the US air force had added to a map as a guideline for their pilots. Although that "border line" did not appear on differently scaled maps at the time, Baghel argued that it has

come to weigh on both countries' diplomatic relations, force harsh living conditions on many soldiers and politicise the cartography of the Siachen glacier on a global scale.

In the last round of afternoon panels, Andrea Bréard (Heidelberg/Lille) presented a work in progress on mathematical modernity and explored Xià Luánxiáng's thoughts on conics. By closely reading Xià's work, she was able to discern that in a vain attempt to come up with a unified calculus for the four basic types of curves he worked along different epistemological lines. She demonstrated that Xià thought the Western system of mathematical knowledge inferior to his own, which he scaled to a cosmological rhetoric and developed within a structurally different organisation of knowledge. Joachim Kurtz (Heidelberg) returned to the writings of Kāng Yǒuwéi and explored the topic of epistemic ruptures. By turning to an unpublished draft for a *Comprehensive Book on Substantial Principles and Universal Laws*, he showed how already in the early 1890s Kāng was tormented by the decline of argumentative validity that the Confucian classics had once possessed and struggled hard to come to grips with metropolitan science. Kurtz draw a vivid picture of the bewildering results Kāng had come up with as he juxtaposed Euclid and the five cardinal relationships and analysed this along various scales, from Kāng's personal biography through inter-textual relations to national and international politics.

During the concluding round table, William Sax (Heidelberg) recalled the importance of letting go of the big narrative to scale down and check the manifold personal stories. Sophie Roche (Heidelberg) on the other hand called to mind that scaling is not just something we do, but that we are also inevitably subjected to. Duncan Paterson (Heidelberg) cautioned against a deflationary use of scales and warned against holding on to a polar view of micro and macro. The present observer feels that the conference was highly successful in displaying a wide range of productive applications of scales in both knowledge observation and knowledge generation. He agrees with most of the participants that we are still in dire need of all the micro studies we can get in order to overcome our attraction to untested macro narratives. However, there are a number of points that beg further investigation. First among these is the practical concern of what scale to choose in addressing specific problems. Second is the problem of correctly scaling one's own position in relation to the object of study. Last but not least, there is the question particularly specific to the Cluster of Excellence, namely of just what the relationship between scales and transculturality actually is.

Georges Jacoby

The Art of Hubbing: The Role of Small Islands in Indian Ocean Connectivity

Halle, 15–17 October 2015

The conference "The Art of Hubbing: The Role of Small Islands in Indian Ocean Connectivity" was held at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle/Saale, Germany from 15 – 17 October 2015. It is already the second conference on the Indian Ocean World organised by Burkhard Schnepel and his Max Planck Fellow Group "Connectivity in Motion: Port Cities of the Indian Ocean". The conference focused on small islands and their heuristic potential in the anthropology and historiography of the Indian Ocean. It organised in an international interdisciplinary framework bringing together scholars from African, South Asian, South East Asian and East Asian Studies as well as anthropology, history, political science and sociology. This broad mix of regional and disciplinary expertise stimulated vibrant discussions among the participants who all shared an interest in Island and/or Indian Ocean Studies.

The conference commenced with a thematic introduction by the organiser Burkhard Schnepel. The core idea which the conference sought to address was that small islands have been, are and continue to be "hubs", i.e. contact and exchange zones, negotiation spaces and socio-cultural laboratories, crucial in Indian Ocean connectivity. Schnepel argued that "hubbing" may be seen as a process of strategic accumulation and concentration of connections. He elaborated on this theme by emphasising three vital issues around which the event revolved: First, the exploration of the various ways in which islands, insularity and islandness matter in establishing, maintaining and interrupting maritime and terrestrial connections in the Indian Ocean World. Second, the empirical investigation of particular island sites and how they emerge and sustain and/or collapse and vanish as nodal points (in various respects) in Indian Ocean networks in the course of history. And third, the study of small islands as conflations of geography, history, society and imaginaries, which enables us to investigate broader issues, such as diasporic living, creolisation, post-/colonialism, socio-cultural exchanges of various sorts and globalisation.

Picking up on the core theme of insularity, smallness and "hubbing", André Gingrich (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna) argued in his keynote address "Smallness and Insular Hubs: Some Working Hypotheses from Historical Anthropology" for a notion of relative smallness by distinguishing three types: first, a "binary" sort of island smallness that rests on the relation to a large mainland neighbour; second, a "buffer" position between larger

landmasses in which small islands might be situated, and third, a "cluster" variant that lumps together small islands in close proximity. Drawing on historic examples, he made the point that each type of relative smallness makes specific hub functions more or less likely.

All 14 presentations that followed in the subsequent two days discussed issues of insularity, "hubbing" and connectivity by examining cases covering almost the entire Indian Ocean rim over a period of nearly two millennia. To be able to synthesise the contributions most comprehensively I will divide them in two groups: on the one hand, those presentations that focus on island hubs to explore the workings of connectivity, and on the other, those papers that centre on connectivity to investigate to roles of islands.

The first kind of presentation includes Keebet von Benda-Beckmann's (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle) "Ambon – A Spicy Hub". In her paper she investigated how the colonial struggle between Portuguese, Dutch and Indonesian (and other) powers for control of the spice trade, in particular cloves and nutmeg, has shaped contemporary society in the harbour city of Ambon. Von Benda-Beckmann then related the long history of connections with Europe, the Arab world and South Asia to contemporary tensions, eventually arguing that despite Ambon's long multi-cultural legacy segregation along religious lines now appears to be more rigorous than ever before.

Jürgen G. Nagel (Fernuniversität Hagen) also presented a case study from the Indonesian-Malayan region and also focused on the interplay of religious and economic facets. His paper "Commodities and Creeds: Changing Connectivity of Makassar (South Sulawesi), 16th to 20th Century" investigates the fluctuation of connections of a port city in a long-term perspective. Besides problematising and filling some gaps in Makassar historiography the main contribution of Nagel's paper was to show how the port city's commercial hub function intersected with its religious hub function. He concluded that Makassar's long history reflects well the various expansions and contractions of religious, political and commercial connections to closer and more distant localities and thereby offers insights into the mechanics of "hubbing".

In his paper "Port Louis (Mauritius) and the Making of a 'Hub-Society'" Burkhard Schnepel (Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg) argued that from the time it was first inhabited in the 17th century the island of Mauritius has always functioned as a hub. He maps out how Mauritians have over the last few hundred years strategically positioned themselves at junctions of trans-regional networks. Schnepel argues that Mauritians have perfected the "art of hubbing" to that extend that the island is now not merely a maritime hub for commodity trading (like sugar, seafood or petrol products), but is also a hub for knowledge and information flows as well as

financial transactions. Probably the biggest merit of Schnepel's anthropological discussion was to demonstrate a society's agency and creativity in establishing itself as a hub at multiple levels.

Historian Tansen Sen (City University of New York) took a different approach, investigating not an inside, but a particular outside view on the island of Ceylon. In his contribution "Small? Big? Island? The Perceptions of Sri Lanka in Chinese Sources" Sen presents his findings on how Chinese travellers portrayed the island between the 5th and 15th centuries. Sen's historiography revealed that from the 5th century onwards the Chinese had established quite sophisticated geographical depictions of the island and were well aware of Sri Lanka's commercial hub function. Many sources from Chinese merchants, diplomats, scribes and monks also mention Sri Lanka as an important centre of Buddhism, which is further evidence that historical contemporaries appear to have given prominence to commercial and religious aspects in depicting a distant land.

Ian Walker (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle) presented a paper, entitled "Zanzibar. A Hub in Comorian Diasporic Networks in the Western Indian Ocean", in which he explored relationships among individual Comorians across multiple localities spread along the African coast. His analysis focused on a prominent Comorian who resided in Zanzibar in the early 20th century. By means of loan and debt records Walker traced a network of relationships that enabled him to demonstrate how Zanzibar's cosmopolitan centrality helped maintain ties within the scattered Comorian diaspora.

Zanzibar is also the location of Kjersti Larsen's (University of Oslo) paper, called "Multifaceted Identities, Multiple Dwellings: Connectivity and Flexible Household-configurations in Zanzibar Town". Larsen's rich ethnography of Zanzibari households highlighted the complex intertwining of regional mobility, social organisation and identity politics. She argued that ideological and structural flexibility inherent in multi-ethnic and multi-religious households in Zanzibar Town equips residents for manoeuvring in different social and cultural spaces. This, she continued, not only enables easier integration of religious and identitary plurality, but also forms a facilitating precondition for spatial mobility and hence connectivity.

With "Bali and Indian-Indonesian Connectivity: Why a Small Island Has Mattered" Martin Ramstedt (Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg) presented a paper in which he investigated the politics of imaginaries of "Bali" in 20th century Indonesia. Assumptions, projections and romanticisations of "Bali" as an enclave of ancient Indian roots, he argued, serve Indian Hindu intellectuals and Javanese nationalists alike to glorify Indonesia's Indian past and to counter present day Islamisation tendencies. Ramstedt empha-

sised that the strategic appropriation of historic Indo-Indonesian connectivity forms an integral part of 20th century cultural politics that constructs Bali as a significant other within Indonesia.

Ajay Gandhi (Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Göttingen) presented a comparison of two Indian Ocean port cities in his paper "Specks that Speak Loudly: The View from Mumbai and Ilha de Moçambique". His comparison of the two places teased out varying degrees of integration with state and imperial authority and explored their entrepôt functions for religious, linguistic, but also criminal circulations.

Vijaya Teelock's (University of Mauritius) paper "The Emergence of 'Local Cosmopolitans': Migration and Settlement in Early 18th up to Mid-19th Century Port Louis" was a detailed historiographic analysis of urban stratification. By tracing the evolvement and decline of spatial distributions of particular segments of Mauritian society Teelock showed how the city of Port Louis emerged as the social, cultural and political hub not only for Mauritius itself, but also for its neighbouring islands.

Steffen F. Johannessen (Norwegian Business School, Oslo) showed how the notion of the "hub" can usefully be applied to analyse connectivity in the Chagos Archipelago. In his paper "From Coconut Trade to 'War on Terror': Connectivity and Disconnections in the Indian Ocean" Johannessen demonstrated how the control over access to the islands has dramatically shaped recent Indian Ocean history. The installation of a UK-US airbase in 1973 transformed the archipelago into a military hub through which military personnel, terrorist suspects, explosives and many kinds of fatal equipment circulate between the Middle East, other Indian Ocean localities, and the United States of America.

Johannessen's paper is an exemplar for all the above papers that focused on how connectivity features in island hubs. The following set of presentations centre on how island hubs feature in connectivity – so they rather explore the properties of the connections than the qualities of the knots.

Beatrice Nicolini (Catholic University of Milan) discussed a journey of the first Omani ship to visit America in her paper "Global Indian Ocean Ports: Sailing from Arabia, to Zanzibar, and to New York". This mid-19th century expedition presented the first ever mission of an African or Arabian state to the United States of America. She argued that the mercantile motivation of the journey was closely linked to political aims, because agreements on economic exchange were the main driving force for the travellers.

Edward A. Alpers (University of California, Los Angeles) in his contribution "Islands Connect: People, Things and Ideas among the Small Islands of the Western Indian Ocean" investigated the various linkages between islands along the coast of East Africa. For his analysis he favoured

the notion of the rhizome over that of the network to emphasise the lively, multidirectional and transregional aspects of connections among these places. He argued that the rhizome metaphor provides another way to think about what the conference addressed as "hubs".

In "Displaced Passengers: States, Movements and Disappearances in the Indian Ocean" Godfrey Baldacchino (University of Malta) explored two cases of relocation within the Indian Ocean to scrutinise how this pressures states and attracts tourists. Baldacchino presented the cases of the evicted islanders of Chagos and the vanished Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 to argue that various modi of mobility and immobility should be included in the study of Indian Ocean connectivity.

Gwyn Campbell (McGill University, Montreal) investigated Kilwa as an intermediary between Africa and the Indian Ocean World from its beginnings to the 19th century in his paper "Kilwa Island and the Western Indian Ocean World". He emphasised the importance of considering Indian Ocean connectivity beyond the fringes of the geographical margins of its waters. It follows from this that an exploration of connections in the Indian World must acknowledge maritime as well as terrestrial movements.

Overall, the papers picked up and contributed to the conference theme either by centring on a particular island hub or by highlighting connections. The interdisciplinary mix of conference participants provided an interesting setting for enriching discussions and helped to promote the macro-region of the Indian Ocean World as a trans-regional multidisciplinary research arena. The conference illustrates that Indian Ocean Studies offer interesting heuristics not only to challenge, but also to transcend common regional and conceptual departmentalisations in academia.

Boris Wille

Teacher Education in Afghanistan
Challenges and Prospects

Freiburg, 16–17 October 2015

Afghanistan has been in newspaper and TV headlines for years. The public's attention is drawn to Afghanistan when topics such as war, violence, terrorism and, most recently, refugees in Europe are discussed. When education and schools in Afghanistan are picked out as central themes, the reports are equally negative due to the attacks on the Afghan educational system.

On 16 and 17 October 2015, a conference took place at the University of Education in Freiburg. It approached the topic education and schools in Afghanistan from a different perspective. The main goal of the conference "Teacher Education in Afghanistan. Challenges and Prospects" was to discuss this topic, despite extremely challenging conditions, with guests from Afghanistan.The conference was organized by the University of Education, Freiburg, the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland and the Arnold Bergstraesser Institute for Socio-cultural Research at the University of Freiburg. The Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) provided significant financial support for the conference. Further partners were the Schweizerische Direktion für Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit (DEZA), the University of Basel, the Galtung Institute for Peace Theory and Peace Practice and the Deutsch-Afghanische Initiative e.V. (DAI) in Freiburg. With up to 180 participants, the conference was better attended than expected for such a special topic.

During the conference, teacher education was discussed in a rather general context of education (for everybody) as well as peace and development. The first day concentrated on an exemplary and at times controversial presentation of the situation of schools and teacher education in Afghanistan. Craig Naumann, who held the first keynote, published his dissertation "Books, Bullets and Burqas. Educational Development, Society and the State of Afghanistan" in 2012. Naumann also worked for the Afghan government as well as various NGOs in Afghanistan until 2009. In his contribution, he first criticized official data still used as the basis for UNESCO policy documents and Oxfam papers to this day. In his analysis of the overall educational situation in Afghanistan Naumann pointed out that we need to use the notion of a continuous improvement of school enrolment rates of boys and girls with care, although this perception is widespread in political discussions. He criticized that the so-called ghost students, i.e. students who dropped out of school a long time ago, remain in statistical data.

This is not considered in those political discussions. He argues that in the meantime we can also read of whole ghost schools.

Susan Wardak, senior advisor of the Afghan Ministry of Education, is also responsible for the Teacher Training Colleges (TTC's) throughout the country. She presented a very positive and promising view of the development of Afghan schools, school enrolment rates and teacher education, even in the southern provinces of Afghanistan, which are considered dangerous. Supported by the GIZ among others, the Afghan Ministry of Education initiated large-scale programmes to strengthen girls' education. According to Wardak, even in rural areas the acceptance of girls' education has considerably increased, because inhabitants of small villages have begun to realize the value of schooling and higher education for their personal future prospects. Afterwards, Asadullah Jawid portrayed the Gawharshad Institute of Higher Education in Kabul, which had been founded by Sima Samar. It is a private university which is not directly connected to teacher education (it offers B.A. and M.A. degree programmes in economics, civil engineering and political science). However, it is interesting in a general context of education, peace and development, since all Gawharshad University students are required to take two courses in peace education. Amannullah Hamidzai, president of the Kabul Education University of Rabbani (known as Kabul Education University until 2012) outlined the structures of his university, which covers high school teacher education. According to the current enrolment data, one third of the 8,300 enrolled students are female.

In the second session, the focus shifted to the Afghan province of Herat. The session started with a presentation by Mohammad Joma Hanif, who introduced the Faculty of Education of Herat University. What makes this faculty remarkable is that more than half of the students as well as 44 per cent of the instructors are female. Heidi Kässer continued the series of presentations about Herat with a report on her project, which she conducts with students in and around the city. Since 2008, the DAI in Freiburg has been promoting mainly female students from poor backgrounds under her tutelage. She was and is in direct contact with 30 students and quoted from students' letters in order to illustrate their situation before and after their studies. In addition, using statistical data for Herat University, she showed that the number of female as well as male graduates has increased. However, the percentage of unemployed former students has also risen continuously. As Naumann had already emphasized in the morning, Kässer, too, pointed out the need to establish a job-related school system, in Afghanistan. This is necessary in order to open up new perspectives for graduates who cannot enrol at universities.

On Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, a total of ten workshop sessions offered a relatively broad spectrum from the promotion of life-skills to deeper insights into the work of the Afghan Ministry of Education to the analysis of the Taliban movement and even a project with nomads in Afghanistan. A core theme of many workshops was peace and human rights education as well as political education.

The human rights activist and Right Livelihood Awardee Sima Samar gave a lecture on the situation in Afghanistan regarding human rights and education on Friday evening. She raised concerns over various difficulties in Afghan education: from the qualification of teachers to the increasing closure of schools in areas threatened by the Taliban to corruption and even the lack of school buildings. Sima Samar strongly suggested giving education the same priority as security. She argued that the need to maintain education and educational institutions is similar to the need to maintain law and order. If education took a subordinate role to security interests, this would cause further harm to the country.

On Saturday after the workshop sessions, the conference continued with two further keynotes that placed education, development and peace in a general context again. Jochen Hippler, Afghanistan expert and advisor of the Federal German Foreign Office, pointed out that there is no general primary correlation between education and peace. Instead, other factors such as well-functioning labor markets act as central bonding agents. He stressed that from the Afghan population's perspective it would not always be evident whether the Taliban rebels or corrupt parts of the government were the lesser of two evils. Narkow Grant-Hayford, who represented the Galtung Institute, emphasized on the other hand that dialogue with all conflicting parties was the only chance to establish more peaceful conditions. He argued that especially the intervening Western powers were supposed to agree on setting up supporting conditions to promote a process of dialogue as the precondition for the chance to pursue overall conflict transformation. He made a strong argument for the introduction of peace education at all system levels. In doing so, Narkow Grant-Hayford directly supported Susan Wardak, who already integrated modules on peace education in teacher education, and Sima Samar and Asadulla Jawid, who have already introduced peace education as mandatory courses for all university students.

The synopsis of the conference revealed both progress in teacher education in Afghanistan and various unsolved problems. It was clear that teacher education in Afghanistan cannot be seen as a continuous success story, despite tremendous efforts on the part of the Afghan government and a vast number of NGOs and private initiatives. The difficulties are too evident regarding the quality of learning opportunities, the drop-outs, and the

increasingly problematic security situation. Nevertheless, education in Afghanistan does not stand still. This conclusion is based on enrolment and student rates, and still holds even if we halve the official figures. There was a surprising level of agreement among the conference participants concerning the appreciation and establishment of peace and human rights education in the context of university education in Afghanistan. One of the goals of this conference was to investigate to what extent co-operations are feasible and possible between the conference organizers and stakeholders of the educational landscape in Afghanistan. All participants are certain that these co-operations will occur; at least in this respect the conference was a complete success. There is hope that through these and similar co-operations as well as through the establishment of peace education programs the trend towards improvement will continue in Afghanistan. However, almost all participants, including organizers, lecturers, workshop leaders and attendees, agreed that efforts to promote stability and peace education in Afghanistan will not have any impact if the rise of militaristic tendencies in Western societies is not curbed at the same time.

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