

Kolloquium

zu laufenden
Forschungsarbeiten
Wintersemester 2021/22
Frankfurt am Main
Programm



FROBENIUS-INSTITUT
FÜR KULTURANTHROPOLOGISCHE
FORSCHUNG



**Frobenius
Gesellschaft**

Kolloquium
zu laufenden Forschungsarbeiten
Wintersemester 2021/22

Montags 16.15 Uhr – 17.45 Uhr
Seminarhaus, Raum SH 5.104
Campus Westend

Vorträge in Präsenz
oder Online

Goethe-Universität
Norbert-Wollheim-Platz 1
60323 Frankfurt am Main

Das Kolloquium zu laufenden Forschungsarbeiten findet in diesem Jahr in Präsenz oder als Online-Übertragung per Zoom statt.

Wir behalten uns je nach Stand der Regelungen zu Präsenzveranstaltungen entsprechende Änderungen vor, konsultieren Sie daher bitte immer die aktuellen Angaben auf unserer Homepage:

<https://www.frobenius-institut.de/aktuelles>

Teilnahme in Präsenz

Eine Anmeldung ist nicht erforderlich. Aufgrund der aktuellen Zugangsbestimmungen der Goethe-Universität sind wir jedoch verpflichtet, am Eingang des Vortragsraumes die Einhaltung der 3G-Regel zu überprüfen. Bitte halten Sie die entsprechenden Dokumente bereit.

Teilnahme online via Zoom

Bitte melden Sie sich für die Zoom-Teilnahme im Sekretariat des Frobenius-Instituts bei Frau Ulla Paul (u.paul@em.uni-frankfurt.de) an. Die Zugangsdaten werden Ihnen dann zugesendet.

Programm

Montags 16.15 Uhr – 17.45 Uhr
Seminarhaus, Raum SH 5.104
Campus Westend
oder Zoom

25. Okt 2021 **But is it art?**
Online Adam Kuper London School of Economics
and Political Science
1. Nov 2021 **The act of living:**
Online street life, marginality, and development
in urban Ethiopia
Marco Di Nunzio University of Birmingham
22. Nov 2021 **Sharing the shade?**
Präsenz on the somatic labour of neighbouring
after conflict in southern Kyrgyzstan
Madeleine Reeves University of Manchester
29. Nov 2021 **How do you decolonize yourself?**
Präsenz Kuratorisch-künstlerische Annäherungen
an das Archiv von Hans Himmelheber
Michaela Oberhofer Museum Rietberg, Zürich
6. Dez 2021 **Gardens otherwise and elsewhere:**
Online a historical and ethnographic study of
Georgian gardens
Ketevan Gurchiani Ilia Tbilisi State University
und Paul Manning Trent University
13. Dez 2021 **Jewish illegality:**
Online Ethiopian Jews in Israel between 1955–1975
Efrat Yedai Tel Aviv University

10. Jan 2022 **Boko Haram:**
Online pasts, and some possible futures
Scott MacEachern Duke Kunshan University
17. Jan 2022 **Frobenius unbound:**
Online black Atlantis and the poetics of
displacement in the Yoruba Diaspora
Andrew Apter University of California,
Los Angeles
24. Jan 2022 **Scented rose:**
Online observations on a plant and a commodity
Lale Yalcin Hekmann University of Pardubice,
Czech Republic, MPI, Halle
31. Jan 2022 **Social media and novel forms**
Präsenz of religious speeches in Kyrgyzstan
Gulniza Taalaibekova Frobenius-Institut,
Frankfurt am Main
7. Feb 2022 **Possessed by the**
Online post-socialist Zeitgeist:
ideological spirits, contested historicity,
and the problem of the „modern youth“
in Ethiopian Orthodox exorcism
Diego Maria Malara University of Glasgow
14. Feb 2022 **Wandjina's digital return:**
Präsenz Kollaborative Auswertung und digitale
Repatriierung der historischen Frobenius-
Expeditionen in Nordwest-Australien
Christina Henneke und Richard Kuba
Frobenius-Institut, Frankfurt am Main

But is it art?

Adam Kuper

London School of Economics
and Political Science



In the early twentieth century, post-impressionist painters embraced an aesthetic – even an ideology – of *primitivism*. A global market in “primitive art” developed after World War I. For the next hundred years the construct of primitive art would be contested between ethnographers, who knew about the societies that produced these arts and crafts, and the artists, curators, dealers and collectors who found their own uses for them. Three very prestigious galleries were dedicated to primitive art in the early twenty-first century. The Rockefeller Wing of the Metropolitan Museum was given a hugely expensive makeover. Both in Berlin and in Paris, venerable ethnographic collections were re-branded as art and housed in gigantic new museums. The people in charge of these museums might not be able to explain very clearly what kind of art they are exhibiting, but they are not inclined to consult ethnographers.

The act of living:

street life, marginality, and development
in urban Ethiopia

Born in Addis Ababa's inner city between the 1960s and 1970s, Haile and Ibrahim witnessed their country lifting itself from being a global symbol of famine and poverty to become the paradigmatic African success story by the mid-2010s. Amidst this transformation Haile and Ibrahim also experienced changes, not in their individual



Marco Di Nunzio
University of Birmingham

destinies, but in their relation with the fortunes of Ethiopia. Growing up during economic stagnation – the 1970s and 1980s – they had learned to recognize their poverty and marginality amidst widely shared experiences of scarcity and exclusion. But as their country prospered, and high-rise steel and glass buildings began popping up in Addis Ababa's wealthier neighborhoods, marginality persisted for Haile and Ibrahim's cohort, now with a sense of being out of tune with history. *The Act of Living* narrates the biographies of these two men. It follows how they grew up, entered the street economy of hustling and crime and then tried to find ways out through labor, migration, education, entrepreneurship and the city's informal economies. By documenting how these two life trajectories intertwine with other urban lives as well as the unfolding of Ethiopia's history, this book explores why development continues to fail the poor, how marginality is understood and acted upon in a time of promise and why poor people's claims for openness can constitute the grounds on which to imagine better and more just alternative futures.

Sharing the shade?

on the somatic labour of neighbouring
after conflict in southern Kyrgyzstan



Madeleine Reeves
University of Manchester

As anthropologists have long argued, the ‘neighbour’ is an ambiguous social relation, with proximity a source, potentially, of both intimacy and suspicion. Engaging with recent literature on touch (Ibanez-Tirado 2018) and voice (Harris 2020), I approach neighbouring as a multi-sensorial practice for the negotiation of the demands of co-presence. This paper draws on long-term ethnographic fieldwork in Kyrgyz- and Tajik-majority villages of the Isfara and Sumbula valleys to consider how the ‘neighbour’ (*koshuna* in Kyrgyz/ *hamsoya* in Tajik) is produced through particular forms of demand and negotiation borne of spatial and social proximity. Focusing on particular spaces of multi-sensory encounter – the home, the street, the market, and the *marshrutka* (minibus or share-taxi) – I consider both the everyday gendered labour of neighbouring and the transformation of such forms of sociality in the context of periodic inter-communal conflict through practices of avoidance, circumvention and deferral. In so doing, I seek to contribute to an emergent anthropological discussion about the visceral and sensorial dimensions of neighbouring as ‘agonistic intimacy’ (Singh 2011).

How do you decolonize yourself?

Kuratorisch-künstlerische Annäherungen
an das Archiv von Hans Himmelheber

Während einer Artist-in-Residency am Museum Rietberg Zürich stellt sich der kongolesische Künstler Sammy Baloji die Frage: „How do you decolonize yourself?“. Damit beschreibt er seine



Michaela Oberhofer
Museum Rietberg, Zürich

Künstlerforschung der Dekonstruktion kolonialer Archive, fordert aber zugleich das Museum und sein Publikum auf, die westliche Deutungshoheit der (Kunst)Geschichte kritisch zu reflektieren. Ausgangspunkt für die Befragung (post)kolonialer Verflechtungen ist das aus Objekten, Bildern und Texten bestehende Archiv von Hans Himmelheber, das im Zentrum eines vom Schweizerischen Nationalfonds finanzierten Forschungsprojektes steht. Der deutsche Kunstethnologe unternahm in der Kolonialzeit bis in die postkoloniale Phase zahlreiche Reisen nach Afrika und Alaska. Sein Kunst- und Künstleransatz ist bis heute für die Beschäftigung mit der materiellen Kultur Afrikas von Bedeutung. Zugleich ist Himmelheber jedoch für seine Tätigkeit als Sammler und Händler umstritten. Der Vortrag diskutiert die Verflechtungen und Widersprüche von akademischen, kuratorischen und künstlerischen Positionen, um (post)koloniale Archive neu zu konfigurieren und zu interpretieren. Dabei stellt sich die Frage, inwiefern eine Dekolonisierung der Wissensproduktion möglich ist.

Gardens otherwise and elsewhere:

a historical and ethnographic study of Georgian gardens



Ketevan Gurchiani
Ilia Tbilisi State University

Paul Manning
Trent University

The project *Gardens otherwise and elsewhere: a historical and ethnographic study of georgian gardens* aims to study a heterogeneous array of green objects with a correspondingly heterogeneous array of methods (historical, ethnographic, GIS modeling). By engaging with gardens „elsewhere and otherwise“, the project proposes a novel synthesis of a “more-than-human anthropology” with Latourian and Peircean material semiotics (cf. also Kohn 2013). Rather than seeing gardens as passive stuff for human meanings, we locate the garden’s (phyto)semiotics in their recalcitrant material “planty” agency. As an example of studies in the “Planty Agency” Ketevan Gurchiani will present her research on the Hidden Power of Trees. Her study analyzes the creative use of state regulations to counter the rapidly diminishing public spaces in Tbilisi, Georgia. The paper focuses on how the citizens of Tbilisi manipulate the laws governing the green spaces in the urban area and use gaps in different regulations for their ‘hidden transcript’ – to retake the public space by making it environmentally more valuable.

Jewish illegality:

Ethiopian Jews in Israel between 1955 – 1975



Efrat Yedai
Tel Aviv University

Research on Ethiopian Jewish immigration to Israel typically focuses on the post 1975 years: the “revelation” of Ethiopian Jews, the journey to the Sudan and the 1980s–1990s high-profile rescue operations. In contrast, this study will focus on the pre-1975 years as critical in understanding the racialization of Ethiopian Jews Israel’s polity and citizenship regime more broadly. I argue that ethnicity in the Israeli citizenship regime is not organized in keeping with ethno-religious principles, as is often presented in the literature, but rather around racial principles that relate whiteness to Jewish ethnicity, to the exclusion of black Jews. Thus, the case of Ethiopian Jews will be presented in this study as a unique case study of Jewish illegality, as a sort of „missing link“ for a deeper understanding of the Israeli-Jewish citizenship regime, and its relationships to Jewish immigrants who do not conform to the normative and racialized national character of membership.

Boko Haram:

pasts, and some possible futures



Scott MacEachern
Duke Kunshan University

The Boko Haram insurgency, with its later offshoots, has engulfed the southern Lake Chad Basin over the last decade, and generated untold suffering. Aspects of Boko Haram activities can be understood through the deep-time examination of border phenomena in this region, phenomena that stretch back into the period of predatory state formation in the early-/mid-second millennium AD. As in other parts of the world, these processes reverberate into the more recent past, and into the relationships between bandits, smugglers, soldiers, rebels and bureaucrats that have characterized this region in recent decades. In this presentation, I will discuss the historical environments that Boko Haram and related groups operate within, and the implications for predicting the future of this insurgency.

Frobenius unbound:

black Atlantis and the poetics of displacement
in the Yoruba Diaspora

Whatever one thinks of his controversial reputation as a provocative gadfly among early African ethnologists, Leo Frobenius learned a lot about Africa, not only during his prodigious documentary expeditions throughout the continent but also via his productive imagination (what Mudimbe calls his method of *Einfühlung*) in perceiving patterns,



Andrew Apter
University of California,
Los Angeles

affinities, and even hidden historicities within African cosmologies and their materialized forms. Although many of his ruminations can be dismissed as racist phantasms of the colonial imagination, even these may mirror the African myths he encountered in surprising and sometimes illuminating ways. In this presentation, I return to Frobenius's theory of Atlantis as the absent "origin" of Yoruba culture. At worst, this theory can be read as a contrived variation of the Hamitic hypothesis applied to a Yoruba civilization predicated on Phoenician origins. On a deeper structural level, however, it mirrors the fundamental poetics of displacement at the core of Yoruba kingship and ritual renewal. I argue that this sanctified ground of originary surrogation in Yoruba cosmology – a figural "Atlantis" that lies beyond recovery – not only shaped the changing political topology of Yorubaland in West Africa, but also informed the Yoruba diaspora and its historical trajectories in the Americas. Critically reformulated, Frobenius's problematic "road to Atlantis" charts a course for rethinking the Yoruba-Atlantic.

Scented rose:

observations on a plant and a commodity

Lale Yalcin Hekmann
University of Pardubice,
Czech Republic, MPI, Halle



Fragrant oil-bearing rose is a plant grown in certain geographical regions, suitable in terms of climate and topography. It is also a commodity and a central ingredient when processed as natural essence oil for cosmetic and perfume industry. Its cultivation therefore is dependent not only on economic conditions of markets and prices but also climatic and agricultural variations. Based on the ethnography of the *Rosa Damascena* in Isparta (Turkey), this talk will address the double nature of the fragrant rose and follow its transformation from being a plant to becoming an essence oil and commodity in the perfume industry. The transformation will be then examined using the anthropological theoretical discussions derived from the anthropology of senses and economic anthropology. The aim will be to establish links between economic anthropological models and the anthropology of smell.

Social media and novel forms of religious speeches in Kyrgyzstan

Gulniza Taalaibekova
Frobenius-Institut,
Frankfurt am Main



Are the performance of the Friday *khutba* (sermon) and its recording on social media the same? – is the question I tackle in my presentation. Specifically, I discuss liturgical rules of the Friday *khutba* that regulate various of its aspects and argue that these rules need to be observed for its performance to be felicitous, whereas they become irrelevant for its video- and audio-recordings on social media. Comparing consequent transformations of various aspects of the Friday *khutba* as it gets recorded, cut into shorter pieces and edited for social media, I contend that a novel form of speech in its own right emerges as the “constituting” aspects are newly reconfigured leading to its subsequent rigidity and repetition. Besides this, I also focus on other novel forms of speeches that are independent from the Friday *khutba*. Particularly, I will discuss how a local imam in Bishkek and women working for Mutakallim, a local religious organization, manipulate and reconfigure various aspects of a speech form to fit their own needs and circumstances.

Possessed by the post-socialist Zeitgeist:

ideological spirits, contested historicity,
and the problem of the „modern youth“
in Ethiopian Orthodox exorcism

In this talk, I explore the new forms of Ethiopian Orthodox mass exorcism that emerged in Addis Ababa following the end of Ethiopia's socialist experiment. In this ritual context, demons take on the role of witnesses to the evils of socialism and its problematic legacy. Rather than being



Diego Maria Malara
University of Glasgow

primarily concerned with the individual demoniac, public exorcism seems mostly preoccupied with the moral fibre of Ethiopian Orthodoxy, which is revealed to be irreparably scarred by socialist religious purges and the abjuration of the country's ancient Orthodox past. In contrast to the dominant literature on deliverance in African Christianity, in which breaking with the local religious past is presented as beneficial and necessary, Ethiopian Orthodox ritual discourse highlights a more complex relation with the country's history. Whilst exorcism also occasions a break, this is not with the religious past, but with the irreligious, socialist one. In attempting to circumvent the socialist era, exorcism reveals that only a profound re-alignment with pre-revolutionary Christian history can truly save the country and its inhabitants from the contemporary ills plaguing them. Reflecting on the forms of generational memory underpinning exorcism, I conclude by discussing the role of ritual forms in the reproduction of religious nationalism and the remaking of public history.

Wandjina's digital return:

Kollaborative Auswertung und digitale
Repatriierung der historischen
Frobenius-Expeditionen in Nordwest-Australien

Welche Bedeutung hat das ethnografisches Archiv heute? Wie kann sein Potenzial für indigene Gemeinschaften, Museen und die Öffentlichkeit gehoben werden? Mit diesen Fragen befasst sich das Projekt: „Die deutschen ethnografischen Expeditionen in den australischen Kimberley.



Christina Henneke
Richard Kuba
Frobenius-Institut,
Frankfurt am Main

Forschungsgeschichtliche Bedeutung, digitale Repatriierung und gemeinsame Interpretation des indigenen Kulturerbes“ am Frobenius-Institut. Es geht um zahlreiche größtenteils unveröffentlichte Feldnotizen sowie tausende Fotografien, und Zeichnungen aus den 1930er und 1950er Jahren – eine der frühesten ethnologischen Dokumentationen der *Wandjina Wunggurr*-Gemeinschaft im Kimberley. Das bislang unzugängliche Material wird z.T. übersetzt, auf kulturell sensible Weise digital zugänglich gemacht, gemeinsam erforscht und neu bewertet. Auch die *Wandjina*-Felsbilder, anthropomorphe Wesen der Schöpfungszeit, die vor über 80 Jahren originalgetreu abgemalt wurden, kehren nun digital zu den Traditional Owners zurück, die einige der Jahrtausende alten Originale kaum noch kennen. Der Vortrag gibt einen Ausblick auf die Potenziale wie auch die Spannungsfelder, die sich indigenen Gemeinschaften durch die Erschließung „kolonialen“ Archivmaterials eröffnen und zeigt auf, welche Verantwortungen und Chancen sich für das Bewahren, Präsentieren und Restituieren ergeben.

Werden Sie Mitglied

Die Frobenius-Gesellschaft, gegründet 1924, ist einer der ältesten ethnologischen Fördervereine im deutschsprachigen Raum.

Zielsetzung der Frobenius-Gesellschaft ist die Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Arbeiten des Frobenius-Instituts, von Forschungsprojekten und Publikationen sowie Veranstaltungen.

Als Mitglied der Frobenius-Gesellschaft profitieren Sie vom kostenlosen Bezug der Zeitschrift Paideuma und unserem Newsletter sowie Einladungen zu unseren Veranstaltungen.

Ermäßigter Jahresbeitrag für Studierende: 25 Euro
Regulärer Jahresbeitrag: 50 Euro

Bei Erteilung einer Einzugsermächtigung ermäßigt sich der Mitgliedsbeitrag auf 20 bzw. 40 Euro.

Formlose Aufnahmeanträge können per E-Mail an die Geschäftsstelle gesendet werden: frobenius@em.uni-frankfurt.de



FROBENIUS-INSTITUT
FÜR KULTURANTHROPOLOGISCHE
FORSCHUNG

Goethe-Universität
Norbert-Wollheim-Platz 1
60323 Frankfurt am Main

Telefon +49(0)69 798 33050
Fax +49(0)69 798 33101

frobenius@em.uni-frankfurt.de
www.frobenius-institut.de