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FRIAS Junior Researcher Conference

Translocal Spatial Practices, Urban Transformations: Migration and Mobile Urbanism in South and South-East Asia

Date: 14-16 January 2015

Venue: FRIAS, University of Freiburg

Organized by Kirsten Hackenbroch (University of Freiburg), Tabea Bork-Hüffer (National University of Singapore) and Stefan Rother (University of Freiburg)

Website: www.frias.uni-freiburg.de/southeastasia

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Cooperation partners

The workshop is convened in cooperation with FREINEM (Freiburger Netzwerk für Migrationsforschung), with the Freiburg Center for Transcultural Asian Studies (CETRAS) and with the FRIAS research priority area "Dynamic alignments and dealignments in global Southeast Asia".

Thank you

We would like to thank FRIAS for supporting this Young Research Conference financially and organizationally. Specifically we would like to express our appreciation to Anna Blattner (conference coordinator at FRIAS), Friederike Heitmann (student assistant in Human Geography) and the student assistants at FRIAS.

Workshop Outline

Translocal Spatial Practices, Urban Transformations: Migration and Mobile Urbanism in South and South-East Asia

International migration and the experience of translocality have a considerable influence on spatial practices and spatial transformations in (urban) localities around the globe. Three observations emerge at the juncture of these topics: First, cities and urban spaces are undergoing transformations, not only triggered by local dynamics but equally so by global ones. International migration as a global process contributes to the emergence of diverse and fragmented urban spaces and the emergence of new spatial practices on multiple scales. Second, along with the recognition that urban theory for too long has prioritized 'Western models' and neglected the contribution of other cities around the globe came a reorientation of cities in the Global South towards models that are less 'distant'. Third, in recent years, translocality has become an important conceptual approach for investigating the interaction and interconnectedness between places, institutions, actors and concepts across (multiple forms of) borders.

Our understanding of translocality as a research perspective moves beyond analysing mobility and flows of actors, goods, ideas and symbols and additionally emphasises "situatedness during mobility". As such translocality offers much for the investigation of the production of space in specific localities as it implies the transgression of a fixed understanding of place. This stands in marked contrast to the notion that increasing migration leads to the "deterritorialization" of nation-states – "place matters" in the transnational social and political spaces created by migrants. Translocality thus promises to enrich research perspectives on new fields of social, cultural and political action emerging from international migration and the associated mobilities.

Based on these observations, the aim of the interdisciplinary workshop is to explore the nexus of international migration, spatial practices and urban transformations. Furthermore, we seek to explore what translocality as a research approach offers for embedding global mobilities into the analysis of local spatial practices and urban transformations.

The following leading questions will guide us through the workshop:

- How does international migration impact on fields of action and spatial practices of mobile actors?
- How do the experiences of international migrants and related changes in their practices influence the transformation of (urban) space and multi-scalar socio-spatial structures and processes in the cities?
- How does this transform social and political spaces and institutional landscapes in particular? What is the political dimension of these dynamic alignments and dealignments on the local level, where globally entangled spaces are negotiated in local governance arrangements?
- What does the concept of translocality as an approach offer for embedding global mobilities into the analysis of local spatial practices and urban transformations?

Workshop Programme

Wednesday, 14 January 2015

- 16:30-17:00 Registration of participants
- 17:00-19:00 **Key Note Lectures**
- Assist. Prof. Dr. Elaine Ho, National University of Singapore: Translocal connections of Sino-Myanmar mobilities and attendant urban transformations
 - Dr. Ayona Datta, University of Leeds: Translocal cities: Utopian visions of migration and urbanization in India
- 19:00 Welcome Reception

Thursday, 15 January 2015

- 09:00 – 09:15 **Welcome** at FRIAS and introduction to the workshop programme
- 09:15 – 10:00 Getting to know each other (Academic speed dating)
- 10:00 – 10:40 **Paper Session I: Setting a frame for conceptualizing “Translocal spatial practices and urban transformations”**
Paper Pitches (10 minutes each):
Moderation: Stefan Rother (University of Freiburg)
- 10:05 – 10:15
Clemens Greiner (University of Cologne): The places of translocality – concepts, questions, and research perspectives
- 10:15 – 10:25
Julia Verne (Goethe University Frankfurt): A sense of translocality: transcending topography
- 10:25 – 10:35
Tabea Bork-Hüffer (National University of Singapore): Transient urban spaces: Migrants’ agency, translocality and the transformation of urban spaces
- 10:40 – 11:15 Coffee Break
- 11:15 – 12:45 **Workshop I: Setting the frame**
Working groups and plenary discussion
- 12:45 – 13:45 Lunch Break
- 13:45 – 15:15 **Paper Session II: Transformative moments of mobility**
Paper presentations (12 to max. 15 minutes each)
Moderation and discussant: Heike Drotbohm (University of Freiburg)
- 13:50 – 14:05
Peter Kesselburg (University of Freiburg): Paradiplomatic trade relationships between southern Chinese, northern Laotian and northern Vietnamese province-level and county-level governments in the Reform era
- 14:05 – 14:20
Tim Kaiser (University of Gießen): Transnational or translocal urban space? Urban planning and development in Vinh City, Vietnam
- 14:20 – 14:35
Sean Wang (Syracuse University): The myth of ‘anchor babies’: Mapping Chinese birth tourism’s transnational circuits
- 14:35 – 15:15
Discussant’s comment and plenary discussion

- 15:15 – 15:45 FRIAS Tea Break
- 15:45 – 17:15 **Paper Session III: Mobility networks and places**
 Paper presentations (12 to max. 15 minutes each)
 Moderation and discussant: Tim Freytag (University of Freiburg)
 15:50 – 16:05
 Susan Thieme (FU Berlin): The “educational bazaar” in Kathmandu, Nepal: Spatial dimensions of the professionalization and internationalisation of services for students who want to study abroad
 16:05 – 16:20
 Andreas Benz (FU Berlin): Studies in place – placing the students: Education migrants’ shifting socio-spatial positionalities in Gilgit, Pakistan
 16:20 – 16:35
 Stefan Rother (University of Freiburg): Parks and Demonstrations: Urban spaces as sites of transnational and global migrant activism in Hong Kong
 16:35 – 17:15
 Discussant’s comment and plenary discussion
- 19:00 Workshop Dinner at Gasthaus Paradies

Friday, 16 January 2015

- 09:00 – 09:15 **Summary of first day**
- 09:15 – 10:45 **Paper Session IV: Practices and spaces**
 Paper presentations (12 to max. 15 minutes each)
 Moderation and discussant: Susan Thieme (FU Berlin)
 09:20 – 09:35
 Patrick Sakdapolrak, Benjamin Etzold (University of Bonn): Translocal social practices – Remarks on the relation between embeddedness, mobility and the production of space
 09:35 – 09:50
 S. Atif Bilal Aslam (TU Dortmund): Translocal spatial practices of Pakistani immigrants: Implications for urban transformations in Pakistan
 09:50 – 10:05
 Hew Wai Weng (Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin): Chinese-style mosques and halal restaurants: Translocal spatial practices, mobile identities and immobile sites of Hui Muslims in urban Malaysia
 10:05 – 10:45
 Discussant’s comment and plenary discussion
- 10:45 – 11:15 Coffee Break

- 11:15 – 12:45 **Paper Session V: Mobilities and spaces**
Paper presentations (12 to max. 15 minutes each)
Moderation and discussant: Anna Lipphardt (University of Freiburg)
11:20 – 11:35
Anna-Lisa Müller (University of Bremen): “The violoncello was with me wherever I went.” On the role of objects and spaces for international migrants
11:35 – 11:50
Kirsten Hackenbroch (University of Freiburg): The mosaic of the global metropolis: Student mobilities and the making of planning cultures
11:50 – 12:05
Francesca Giangrande (University of Rome): Transnational migrants and urban studies. The exchange between Tatum and Milan
12:05 – 12:45
Discussant’s comment and plenary discussion
- 12:45 – 13:45 Lunch Break
- 13:45 – 16:00 **Workshop II: From the framework to empirical studies – which perspectives does translocality offer?**
(integrated coffee break)
Working groups and plenary discussion
- 16:00 – 16:30 **Conclusion from the workshops:** Exchange and discussion of workshop results
- 16:30 – 17:00 **Final discussion** and closing of the Workshop (Planning of further activities)

Preparations

Presentation guidelines

You are welcome to use the presentation equipment (projector, laptop) provided by FRIAS. Please make sure that your presentations are uploaded prior to your session. Contact the student assistants for support.

Paper pitches

Paper pitches are 10 minutes (maximum). The aim of Session I is to set a frame for the further discussions during the workshop by providing brief and to the point insights on the main themes. The pitches are discussed in further detail especially during the interactive workshops (I and II).

Session papers

Paper presentations (Sessions II to Session V) are 12 to 15 minutes (maximum). The three papers of a session are supplemented by a discussant's commentary leading toward the plenary discussion.

Key readings

As a preparation for the two interactive workshops (Workshop I and Workshop II, see workshop programme) we have selected six key readings for you to prepare for the discussions. All papers are accessible here: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/pe688igwrc8bsgd/AAAvoX27JGrenVbpOOQnlRrra?dl=0>

Bork-Hüffer, T.; Etzold, B.; Gransow, B.; Tomba, L.; Sterly, H.; Suda, K.; Kraas, F.; Flock, R. (2014): "Agency and the Making of Transient Urban Spaces: Examples of Migrants in the City in the Pearl River Delta, China and Dhaka, Bangladesh", in: *Population, Space and Place*.

Brickell, K.; Datta, A. (eds.) (2011): Introduction: Translocal geographies. In: Brickell, K.; Datta, A. (eds.): *Translocal Geographies: Spaces, Places, Connections*. Farnham, Burlington: Ashgate, 3-20.

Glick Schiller, N. (2014): Transnationality: Transnationality and the City. In: Nonini, D.M. (ed.): *A Companion to Urban Anthropology*. John Wiley & Sons, 291-305.

Greiner, C.; Sakdapolrak, P. (2013): "Translocality: concepts, applications and emerging research perspectives", in: *Geography Compass*, 7, 5, 373-384.

McCann, E.; Ward, K. (2011): Urban assemblages. Territories, relations, practices and power. In: McCann, E.; Ward, K. (eds.): *Mobile urbanism: Cities and policymaking in the global age*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, xiii-xxxv.

Sheller, M.; Urry, J. (2006): "The new mobilities paradigm", in: *Environment and Planning A*, 38, 207-226.

Key Note Speakers

Elaine Lynn-Ee Ho

Dr Elaine Lynn-Ee Ho is Assistant Professor at the Department of Geography, National University of Singapore (NUS). She is a geographer with interdisciplinary interests in the way that citizenship, as a concept and in practice, is undergoing change as a result of transnational migration. She completed her PhD at University College London, after which she was awarded postdoctoral fellowships at Royal Holloway, University of London and also the University of British Columbia. Prior to joining NUS, she worked at the University of Leeds. Her research focuses on the citizenship dissonances arising from managed migration policies, return migration and forced migration. Whilst much of this research is on Mainland China, she has also studied migration trends in Singapore and Canada. Her current research addresses African migration to China and also borderworld migrations between Myanmar and China. Prominent themes in her research agenda include diaspora engagement, ethnically privileged migration and emotional geographies.

Translocal Connections of Sino-Myanmar Mobilities and Attendant Urban Transformations

Research on translocalism has flourished during the past few years, underlining the sustained significance of locality, or the situatedness of transnationalism, amidst the hype of globalisation and de-territorialisation. Translocalism refers to the ways in which places are reconfigured through the transnational mobility of its inhabitants and their connections to other places. In other words, central to translocalism are geographical processes concerning place, scale and flows. Studies of translocalism have focused on migration and increasingly on urbanism and development as well. Building on this scholarship, this paper draws attention to urban transformations in Myanmar that are precipitated by past and present Chinese migrations as well as new inflows of capital and trade via China.

An accretion of successive migration flows (cross-border, international and internal) has led to the spontaneous sedimentation of Chinese cultural imprints on diverse urban landscapes in Myanmar, most notably in Mandalay. But in recent years, the Chinese presence in Myanmar is manifesting in institutionalised forms through Mainland China's investments, trade and other forms of extraterritorial influence. In this paper, illustrations will be provided not only from Mandalay but also comparatively smaller urban centres elsewhere in Myanmar, such as Lashio (capital of Shan state) and Laiza (bordering Yunnan province in China). Through each of these urban sites, a different spectre of China's influence in Myanmar will be drawn out for analysis, as well as the translocal connections forming 'development corridors'. Such (post)development is nonetheless framed by competing political and politicised agendas that this paper will discuss.

By studying the urban manifestation of translocal connections attesting to China's influence in Myanmar, this paper demonstrates how urban transformations and development in the Global South are interfacing with practices and conceptualisations informed by yet also different from Western urban modernity.

Ayona Datta is a feminist geographer, whose research and writing broadly focuses on gendered and intimate citizenships and the politics of urbanization. She uses interdisciplinary approaches from sociology, anthropology, feminist and critical geography combining a number of qualitative and visual research methodologies to pursue her research questions. She is the author of 'The Illegal City: Space, law and gender in a Delhi squatter settlement' (2012, Ashgate), and co-editor of 'Translocal Geographies: Spaces, Places, Connections' (2011, Ashgate), 'Fast Cities and New Urban Utopias of the Global South' (forthcoming, Routledge) and 'Ecological Citizenship in the Global South' (forthcoming, Zed Books).

Translocal cities: Utopian visions of migration and urbanization in India

In 2010, it was predicted by McKinsey Global Institute (2010) that India's urban population will rise by 8% in the next 20 years or so with over 590 million people living in Indian cities. McKinsey suggested that India develop a portfolio of 20-30 global cities in the next few decades to accommodate this growth. In accordance, the Indian state has indulged in its most ambitious urban planning experiment till date – to build 100 smart cities in India. In this context and in classic migration terms, these are 'arrival cities' – legitimised by their claims to absorb the seemingly huge influx of rural-urban migrants in the coming decades. These are also translocal cities in that they are assembled using the expertise of global IT companies to label and package its 'smart' products, a rule of law manipulated and legitimised by the state to make land available for building these cities, and the provincial politics, histories and identities of the region and its people where these cities are located.

In this lecture, I will discuss how the rise of smart cities in India produces new articulations of translocal cities. I use 'translocality' here as a process that 'situates' diverse global spaces and practices of becoming 'smart' within a context of utopian urban planning in India, in ways that entire new cities are put together through a rhetoric of crisis around migration and urbanization. A translocal city then highlights the transactions between locality and mobility – in this case presenting the smart city as a globally product that circulates through specific logics of transnational capital and yet embeds though local politics and practices. In taking this approach, I will break away from the nation as the primary driver of translocal experiences of migration to argue for a more situated understanding of migration and urbanization in India through new embodied experiences of digital citizenships emerging from everyday life encounters within smart homes, smart transport, smart infrastructure and smart governance.

Workshop Speakers

S. Atif Bilal Aslam

Atif Bilal Aslam is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the Faculty of Spatial Planning, Technical University Dortmund, Germany. His main area of research revolves around international migration and urban development. His other main scientific interests are sustainability, economic crisis, translocal practices, local governance and development planning. He also holds a faculty position of Assistant Professor (on study leave) since 2011 at the Department of City and Regional Planning (DCRP), University of Engineering and Technology (UET) in Lahore, Pakistan. He graduated from the same university with M.Sc. (2006) and B.Sc. (2002) degrees in City and Regional Planning. Recently, he presented a paper on the topic of 'urban development' at an international conference held at Lahore-Pakistan. In Pakistan he has also served federal and provincial government departments, an international donor agency's funded projects, a research institute, international and local private companies, nongovernment organisations and land developers in capacity of both regular employee and development planning consultant.

Translocal Spatial Practices of Pakistani Immigrants: Implications for Urban Transformations in Pakistan

Though previous research on migration and its developmental impacts has mainly been carried out through area studies at the local level, there is still an insufficient level of insight in understanding the implications of translocal spatial practices of immigrants for urban transformations. Encouraged by this era of a globalised world, international migration is continuously increasing and is thus generating a complex of interconnected, multi-scaled spaces of varying influence spheres. This necessitates the investigation of much assumed local phenomena in a broader context. Global forces are playing more powerfully than local forces in bringing about transformations in urban places. The broader context of globalisation also includes the processes partly formed by translocal networks of immigrants. Such translocal immigrant's networks and connections still need to be conceptualised to better analyse their implications for various multi-scaled spaces.

Given this backdrop, this study explores the translocal spatial practices of Pakistani immigrants and their implications for urban transformations in Pakistan. As locality is produced through social and cultural connections rather than through bounded places, the study focuses on the translocal socio-economic connections of Pakistani immigrants residing in Germany and the practices carried out by them within urban places of Pakistan. By applying a mixed method research approach, the study investigates those translocal spatial practices which were performed during the global economic crisis period and a year after.

The study finds that other than remittances under altruism most translocal spatial practices in terms of both frequency and capital flow, were performed in the local housing markets of Pakistan. Specifically, these practices were mainly carried out either to improve living conditions or for vertical extension of family homes in urban places, thereby initiating a transformation process. Ironically, it was found that most of these practices in the local housing markets bypassed planning bylaws and did not seek approval from concerned development control authorities. The main driving force found behind these practices was the self-interest of the immigrants.

Andreas Benz studied Geography, Islamic Studies and Political Science at Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany, and Freie Universität Berlin, Germany, from 1998 to 2005. He held a lecturer position at the Centre for Development Studies (ZELF), Freie Universität Berlin from 2005 to 2010. He did a Ph.D. in Human Geography in 2011 at the Centre for Development Studies (ZELF) on the role of education in rural development processes and the changing livelihoods in Gilgit-Baltistan, Northern Pakistan. Since 2011 he is research associate at the Centre for Development Studies (ZELF) in the BMBF-funded competence network 'Crossroads Asia: Conflict, Migration, Development' and is responsible for the project component 'Networks of Knowledge: Structures, Flows and Processes in Migration Networks from the Karakoram-Himalaya Region'. His research focuses on education and migration in the context of rural development and socio-economic change with a particular interest in the role of social networks and translocal processes.

Studies in place - placing the students: Education migrants' shifting socio-spatial positionalities in Gilgit, Pakistan

In this paper, I will explore the different lifeworlds and socio-spatial environments in which male and female student migrants are situated after moving from their rural high-mountain valleys for higher education to Gilgit, the major city and educational centre of the Gilgit-Baltistan region in northern Pakistan. Selected places within the city, which function as key arenas of the student migrants' everyday lives and interactions will be introduced and presented. It will be shown how the migrants' socio-spatial positionality is modified and re-negotiated in these urban places, and the ways in which in turn these places are reshaped through the migrant's (inter) actions will be described.

The paper applies a relational reading of the local as a "meeting place" (Massey 1991) where different people, social relations, interactions, commodities, objects, identities, norms and ideas come together and intersect. A particular, unique place is created and constantly modified right at the 'crossroads' of various overlapping, intertwining and fluctuating translocal flows and connections. 'Place' and 'the local', I argue, remain of central importance particularly in translocal contexts. The local constitutes an important arena of interaction in which the actors' socio-spatial positionality is contested, re-negotiated and transformed.

In this paper, I will apply these conceptual considerations on the empirical case of Wakhi Ismaili student migration from the Gojal region in Gilgit-Baltistan to Gilgit. The move from a rural, sparsely populated, ethno-linguistically and denominationally quite homogeneous social environment into the crowded, complex and heterogeneous city context of Gilgit is perceived by many migrants and their families as a shift from a 'safe' into a rather 'unsafe' environment, which, in their views, demands several precautionary and protective measures. These might comprise spatial and social seclusion, segregation, distinction and the reassurance of one's own identity and values. Such acts are part of the various processes of re-negotiation of socio-cultural boundaries in this context. These 'boundary works' are not foot-loose practices but 'take place' – in the truest sense of the word – in specific localities as arenas of interaction, bringing together particular actors while excluding others, and setting specific norms, opportunities and limits for actions in these places. This will be exemplified in the proposed contribution for the 'hostel place', represented by male and female student hostels in Gilgit, as well as for the 'campus place' exemplified by the university campus of the Karakorum International University. Girls' hostels – with their detailed and strict rules and obligatory daily routines – contrast sharply with the 'laissez-faire' mentality and extensive freedoms in many boys' hostels, forming different gendered lifeworlds. The strict seclusion from the outside world of girls and young women living in Ismaili female hostels sharply contrasts with the campus space as an arena of meeting and interacting with other students across social, ethno-linguistic, denominational, gender and regional boundaries. It is particularly here, where socio-cultural boundaries are contested, modified, confirmed or transgressed, also harbouring considerable potential for conflicts. The descriptions of the hostel and campus places are based on emic perspectives, drawing from guided and narrative interviews with male and female student migrants, in which they provide their views of and experiences in the different locales of their migrant life Gilgit.

References

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Tabea Bork-Hüffer is Alexander-von-Humboldt Foundation Fellow at the Migration Cluster, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore (NUS). She has studied geography, sociology and social anthropology at the Universities of Bonn, Belfast and Cologne and received the national award of the Association of Geographers at German Universities (VGdH) for her PhD thesis ("Migrants' Health Seeking Actions in Guangzhou China", Steiner Publishers 2012). Her research interests and publications center around the changing geographies of internal and international migration, migrant health and health governance, and the role of new media in migrants' place perception with a regional focus on China, Southeast Asia (Singapore and Malaysia) and Germany. Among others her work has been accepted for publication in journals such as *Population, Space and Place*, *Erdkunde*, *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie*, *Geographische Zeitschrift*, and *International Journal of China Studies*. Before coming to NUS she was Scientific Coordinator of the German Research Foundations' Priority Program "Megacities - Megachallenge: Informal Dynamics of Global Change", which comprises 10 projects and 70 researchers in China, Bangladesh, and Germany.

Transient urban spaces: Migrants' agency, translocality and the transformation of urban spaces

(Tabea Bork-Hüffer, Benjamin Etzold, Bettina Gransow, Luigi Tomba, Harald Sterly, Kimiko Suda, Frauke Kraas & Ryanne Flock)

Internal migration within and international migration to, within and out of Asia have been on the rise throughout the past decades. As types and pathways of migration, migrants' socio-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds as well as their transnational and translocal trajectories become increasingly diverse, a majority of them move to cities. Diverging power geometries and relations are constantly negotiated and (re)produced in the socio-spatial dialectic of a city. Through their individual and collective agency, assets and knowledge, mobile subjects have become important agents in the (re)production of spaces in cities, while the socio-political and physical conditions of spaces frame their livelihoods, opportunities and agency. Research on migrants' agency has intensified recently, but the specific modes through which agency operates in the socio-spatial dialectic still need to be conceptualised. We develop a framework that outlines different modes through which agents and space interact. The framework is exemplified through papers on case studies from Dhaka and the Pearl River Delta (PRD). Dhaka and the PRD have been characterised by accelerated growth throughout the past decades, particularly due to the influx of rural-to-urban as well as international migrants. We conclude that through their diverse, multi-sited and translocal relations and activities stretching beyond the receiving cities in a context of constant transformation, migrants' practices contribute to the emergence of a specific type of urban spaces that we delineate as transient urban spaces.

Francesca Giangrande holds a MSc in Urban Planning and Policy Design from Politecnico of Milan. In her Master thesis “Egptaly. Territorial survey on Egypt–Italy migration” she focused on transnational migration. Currently Francesca is a PhD student in Engineering-based Architecture and Urban Planning at “Sapienza” University of Rome. Her PhD research focuses on migration, co-development and urban policies to further investigate the relationship between mobile lifestyles, belonging and attachment to places. She aims at integrating issues of translocal practices and of the interaction between cultures into urban studies and spatial planning. Francesca furthermore is interested in participatory planning methodologies and participatory design. Besides her PhD, she recently completed a post-graduate programme “COOPERA(C)TION-Knowledge and Skills for Sustainable Cities in the Global South” at the Politecnico of Milan.

Transnational migrants and urban studies – The exchange between Tatum and Milan.

Today the society is described by scholars as more and more “glocal” (Robertson 1992; Bauman 2005), and the variety of the phenomena of mobility is increasing. The decision to start a research about the complex relationship between migration, co-development and urban issues, was led by my belief that “serious effort must thus be devoted to an adequate conceptualization and description of the translocal linkages, and the interconnections between these and the localized social traffic” (Vertovec 2001). The urban disciplines and public policies in Italy for a long time were not interested and have not faced the migration phenomena. One of the ways to address this issue is to recognise the role of the transnational migration (Basch et al. 1992) and all the factors that trigger development processes in the diasporic territories. Different “sending” and “receiving” countries offer dissimilar and diverse political, economic and social opportunities / constraints to migrants, and it is “what transmitters do with them that will (and should) occupy the field of transnational urban studies in the decades ahead” (Smith 2000).

This paper covers the first outcomes of the multi-sited PhD research I am currently pursuing. It was inspired by the outcomes of my Master thesis conducted jointly with a colleague and entitled “Egptaly: Territorial survey on migration between Egypt and Italy”. Here we analysed migrants’ circulation between Tatum, Egypt and Milan, Italy. Because of the amount of remittances, Tatumian migrants are increasing the capital available in the village of origin with a tendency to accelerating the housing boom, also encouraged by local policies. The phenomenon of house building migrants includes them in what many scholars defined “the new African middle class” (Ravallion 2010; Leke et al. 2010).

Tatum, with its rapid urban growth, is the ideal observation field that allows me to look at types of “new middle-class migrants of success”, who due to remittances and transnational linkages have a relevant domestic impact. In this perspective, houses can be understood as a main site for the everyday reproduction of middle class distinction: “This means that [...] we need to go ‘over the threshold’ and into the house itself to consider the everyday ways in which middle class domestic spaces and lifestyles are made in a particular time and place” (Mercer 2014). My contribution to the workshop will focus on the relationship between domestic architecture, migration and structural factors in rural areas of Egypt. From my experience, I will try also to trace the social networks and investments in the countries of origin and host of this diasporic community which moves in the territory of circulation (Tarrus 1993) between Egypt and Italy, to reflect on the difficulty of urban policies and spatial planning to cope with an increasingly non-sedentary population.

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Clemens Greiner is currently the scientific managing director of the Global South Studies Center (GSSC), a Center of Excellence at the University of Cologne (UoC). Before he joined the GSSC, he was a post-doctoral researcher at the Department of Cultural and Social Anthropology at UoC. He was trained in Social and Cultural Anthropology and Geography at the University of Hamburg, where he received his PhD in Anthropology with a multi-sited ethnography on ruralurban migration in Namibia. In his current research, he focuses on agrarian change, the political ecology of resource conflicts, migration and translocality, and the transformation of pastoralism. His regional specialisation is on Eastern and Southern Africa, where he has conducted extensive fieldwork (Namibia, 2005-06 and Kenya, 2010-11).

The places of translocality – concepts, questions, and research perspectives

The notion of translocality enjoys a growing popularity. The term is invoked in a wide range of disciplines to describe a broad range of phenomena related to mobility, migration, circulation and spatial interconnectedness. While the term lacks a common theoretical understanding, most scholars agree with a general skepticism toward an overemphasis on notions of deterritorialization, unboundedness and fluidity of social spaces, as described by earlier approaches of transnationalism. Instead, the literature on translocality usually acknowledges that migrants and their networks remain anchored in specific localities. Places or locales thus feature as central elements in conceptualisations of translocality, as they constitute historically specific nodes where particular flows converge.

In my presentation, I will first suggest a conceptual approach to a place-sensitive understanding of translocality. I will elaborate, in a second step, some of the open questions related to this concept, and conclude with pinpointing some potentially fruitful perspectives for research (related, e.g. to Social-Ecological Systems approaches and Political Ecology).

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The mosaic of the global metropolis: Student mobilities and the making of planning cultures

International educational migration has led to different perspectives on urbanity and planning culture travelling fast around the globe. Especially Master and PhD students of the Global South seek education abroad – in Europe and North America, but increasingly also in the Middle East, South-East and East Asia, especially in the case of South Asian education seekers. Studying abroad goes along with a critical engagement with the conditions at the place of study and with the conditions at the place of origin – and possibly other places of individual mobility trajectories. During this experience and upon return of the migrants what is conceptualised as ‘urban’ at the place of origin also changes, and brings with it changes in discourses on planning practices and planning cultures.

In the past years research on “the art of being global” (Roy, Ong 2011) and on “mobile urbanism” (McCann, Ward 2011) sought to put increasing mobilities of people, goods and ideas at the centre of understanding the recent transformation dynamics of cities. Student mobilities and how international experiences shape their urban imaginations have as of yet not been at the centre of research, nor have the effects of returnees’ entering of local job markets on urban development and planning culture. The aim of this paper is thus to discuss what current academic discourses of mobile (and assemblage) urbanism (McCann, Ward 2011) and the conceptualization of translocality (Brickell, Datta 2011; Greiner, Sakdapolrak 2013) offer for understanding how student mobilities impact on planning cultures, and potentially on local urban transformations and spatial practices.

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Transnational or translocal urban space? Urban planning and development in Vinh City, Vietnam

While urban studies in general suffer from “metro-centrism”, this is especially true for the study of urban centers in Southeast Asia, and in Vietnam in particular. At the same time, the impact of global flows has so far mainly been analyzed with regards to large metropolises that are regarded as central nodes in these flows. However, the medium sized urban center Vinh City in North Central Vietnam has been impacted by global developments such as colonialism, Cold War politics, and, most recently, the spread of market economics as well as new approaches to urban development to formerly socialist countries. Focusing on housing policies, this paper takes the city’s contemporary urban landscape as a starting point into an investigation of these influences, corresponding flows of ideas and people, as well as their local application.

Having been totally destroyed by US bombing during the American War in Vietnam, the city was to be reconstructed as a Socialist City in cooperation with the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the 1970s. This involved the creation of a Socialist Housing Complex as a model for housing policies and construction techniques to be applied throughout the city. Cooperation between the Vietnamese and the Germans included locally based joint planning as well as provision of machinery and materials by the GDR.

By the 1990s, however, the Socialist City had been dropped as the guideline of urban development in Vinh City, in line with general political and economic reforms in Vietnam since the 1980s. This involved the reinterpretation of the Socialist Housing Complex from a showpiece of international solidarity and socialist development to a site of urban crisis in need of redevelopment. At the same time, transnational and translocal actors promoting participatory urban development started to target the city, trying to influence the city administration’s housing policies. Just as the Socialist Housing Complex was adapted to local conditions, participatory approaches are nowadays adapted to local policies and urban conditions in Vinh City.

The paper traces global models promoted by various actors during the planning process as well as the application of these in the local setting of Vinh City. It thereby argues that global flows and the national contexts of the respective actors can be regarded as transnational influences, but that transnationality is not able to analytically capture all connections between actors as well as the city’s local conditions and its medium size. However, these play an important role in the creation of translocal urban spaces in Vinh City.

Peter Kesselburg achieved his M.A. in Sinology, Islamic Sciences and Political Sciences in July 2012 after his studies at the Universities of Freiburg and at the Mandarin Training Center of the Taiwan Normal University at Taipei. Since August 2013, he is a doctoral student at the Institute of Chinese Studies at Freiburg University and he holds a Phd scholarship granted by the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation since August 2014. He is an alumni of the Exchange Program for Regional Intergration in East Asia and Europe (EPRIE) 2014. His main research interests concern subnational diplomatic cooperation forms ("Paradiplomacy") between contemporary China and her neighboring SEA countries, development of the Cross-Strait relations and transnational regionalism in Asia in general.

Paradiplomatic trade relationships between southern Chinese, northern Laotian and northern Vietnamese province-level and county-level governments in the Reform era

The research project is motivated by the translocal notion of "concepts of nation" and deals with the paradiplomatic relationships between county-level and province-level governments in the target region in Southern China (Yunnan and Guangxi provinces), Northern Laos (Luang Namtha and Phongsaly provinces) and Northern Vietnam (Dien Bien, Lao Cai, Lai Chau and Lang Son provinces) in the Reform era since the 1980s. Translocality is the key factor for trade and political relationships in the Greater Mekong region as well as cross-border labor migration (Diana 2007; Wah 2005; Schoenberger/Turner 2008). The growing economic integration between the regional and subnational actors underlines the importance of this research project due to the opportunity to bypass the "national narrative" of identity formation and citizenship within the framework of ASEAN+1.

The main subnational actors on the county-level and provincial level share a common interest in enhancing the translocal cooperation with their respective counterparts mainly for economical reasons due to the developmental state of the local economies. Cities like Pingxiangshi (Guangxi province) and counties like Menglaxian (Yunnan province) have become local hubs of economical development and attract more and more Laotian and Vietnamese foreign workers and professionals for working purposes in those transnational regional areas. Their experiences of economic interaction and integration considerably contribute to the transformation of spatial practices and pose new challenges to the nationally constructed regional institutional landscapes concerning translocal identity and nationally administered border control. This narrative encompasses historic transnational action spaces like the Thai Federation (Sip hok chau Thai/Khu tự trị Thái) led by the Chinese-rooted Đèo-Family until 1954.

The concepts of Paradiplomacy and Transnational Regionalism are applied in order to analyze the quality of the performance of subnational actors within a transregional action space in the Greater Mekong region. The concept of Paradiplomacy is interlinked with the Transnational Regionalism because of the intentional bypassing of the national state actors' unit in favor of the subnational actors' unit in order to strengthen translocal identities and behavioral patterns. Field research based on five before-hand selected samples is envisaged as well as using methods of quantitative and qualitative interview research. Additionally, several different types of media like academic articles, advertisement brochures, newspaper articles and television ads are evaluated.

Clear results are not available to this date due to the lack of field research. However, it became clear, that the paradiplomatic interaction of local authorities cannot be separated from national historical identities and narratives, but local transnational regional historical narratives enable the local actors to soften their stances towards each other and to keep necessary trade gates open for further economical and political exchanges on subnational levels.

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Anna-Lisa Müller is a senior researcher in the Department of Geography at the University of Bremen. Her main research interest in urban studies was also the focal point of her dissertation at the University of Bielefeld, in which she analysed urban processes of transformation in the European port cities Dublin and Göteborg. Prior to her post at the University of Bremen, she had been a Research Assistant at the HafenCity University Hamburg (2012-2013) and at the University of Konstanz (2007-2010). Her research interests include urban transformations, the interrelation of materiality and society, and international transmigration.

“The violoncello was with me wherever I went.”¹ On the role of Objects and Spaces for International Migrants

This paper focusses on the role of objects and spaces for international migrants both during the process of migration and in the places between which they migrate. The research presented takes social and spatial transformations in contemporary societies, both in the “Global North” and the “Global South”, as starting point. Assuming that these transformations can best be captured with the term glocalization as developed by, among others, Ronald Robertson (1995), I emphasize the simultaneity of a global and a local dimension of international migration: by transcending national, cultural, and societal borders, international migrants are part of the global flow of goods and people (Sassen 1988). By settling in a specific place, for example in a city, international migrants become part of the locally anchored residents of this city. Here, they use specific practices to create senses of belonging and to make local situatedness possible. At first sight, these local processes of creating situatedness run contrary to the observation that international migrants' lives are characterized by mobility. But taking a closer look at the localities and at the practices, local situatedness and global – in the sense of translocal – mobility are two sides of the same coin of international migration. To analytically capture this interconnectedness of mobility between places and situatedness in places, I use the concept of translocality as proposed by, among others, the workshop organizers. My research asks in particular how specific spaces are constituted by international migrants in certain (urban) localities and how the localities themselves influence the spatial practices used by the migrants. Here, I combine insights from the sociology of space as proposed by Martina Löw (2001) with selected theories of glocalization (Featherstone et al. 1995; Robertson 1995; Bauman 1996) and translocality (Oakes & Schein 2006; Brickell & Datta 2011). This theoretical framework helps to capture both the role of the urban environment's “material furnishings”, for example its architecture and infrastructure, for the constitution of spaces in certain localities as well as the general role of objects for “situatedness during mobility”.

Based on this theoretical framework and on empirical data deriving from qualitative interviews with international migrants, my paper aims at highlighting two findings: (1) Everyday objects – like a violoncello or a bicycle – play a significant role for migrants to create senses of belonging in the places between which they migrate. These objects are constitutive for the migrants' attachment to a place and for their “situatedness during mobility”. (2) Places play a significant role in the process of migration as they significantly influence the migrants' spatial and social practices. Nonetheless, their impact varies in degree depending on the individual experiences of the migrant and his/her reasons for migrating. Additionally, once local spatial practices are incorporated, they “go” with the migrant to the new destination as soon as s/he migrates. Thus, local spatial practices are transformed to translocal spatial practices, being challenged, affirmed or transformed during each stage of migration. This then has considerable effects on urban environments as local contexts of these practices.

¹ Quote from an interview with a woman whose migration biography includes cities in Japan, Germany, Mexico, and Argentina.

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Dr. Stefan Rother is a researcher and lecturer at the Department of Political Science, University of Freiburg, Germany. He is currently a research fellow at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies (FRIAS). His research focus is on international migration, global governance, social movements, regional integration and non-/post-Western theories of international relations. Until spring 2014, Dr. Rother was editorial manager of the *International Quarterly for Asian Studies*.

Rother has successfully completed his doctorate in summer 2012 with the thesis "Diffusion in transnational political spaces: Political activism of Philippine labor migrants in Hong Kong". He has conducted extensive fieldwork in Southeast Asia as well as participant observation at global governance fora and civil society parallel and counter-events at the UN, ILO, ASEAN, World Social Forum and WTO-level. Stefan Rother has recently published articles in *Third World Quarterly*, *Cooperation and Conflict*, *European Journal of East Asian Studies*, *International Migration*, *Migration Studies*, the *German Journal for Political science (ZPol)* and several edited volumes. Rother is co-editor of the series "Studien zur Migrations- und Integrationspolitik" at SpringerVS.

He is a board member of the German Association for Asian Studies (DGA) and speaker of the working group on migration in the German political science association (AK Migrationspolitik in der DVPW). Stefan Rother is also a trained journalist and has more than 20 years of experience as editor and freelance writer for several daily and weekly newspapers.

Parks and demonstrations: Urban spaces as sites of transnational and global migrant activism in Hong Kong

In the past decades, Hong Kong has become a "hot spot" for migrant organizing. More than 250,000 migrant domestic workers from various nationalities are based in Hong Kong with the majority of them coming from the Philippines and Indonesia. Their activism transcends borders in several regards: migrants might protest against political developments and migration policies in their countries of origin, they might cooperate with migrants from different countries to target policies of the Hong Kong administration, or even join forces to address policies in their home countries as well as on the regional and global level. These issues include deployment fees, minimum wage, protection of migrants' rights or global conventions such as the ILO convention on decent work for domestic workers.

They thus create transnational political spaces, in which place/locality plays a significant role. Since the "global city" Hong Kong grants several liberties to migrant domestic workers, freedom of assembly being one of them, places like "Statue Square" in Hong Kong Central or Victoria Park in Causeway Bay provide a frequently used space for political expression. This public and political space stands in marked contrast to the vulnerable space in which migrant domestic workers who have to reside with their employers are situated in for the most part of their weeks.

The concept of transnational political spaces also highlights the positional characteristics of the actors involved. In these spaces, actors may move between actual places, but even if stationary, their political actions in one of these places may open up a political space that reaches across the borders of nation-states. These transnational political spaces are multi-sited or, as Pries (2008) calls it in his conceptualization, pluri-local. The term refers to the various geographical places that are part of the transnational social ones; for transnational political spaces I would add, that actions undertaken by migrant activists in one of these places have also relevance or consequences for the other places in these spaces as well and can thus be considered translocal political actions.

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Patrick Sakdapolrak's research is primarily concerned with the question of how vulnerable groups live with risk. He is particularly interested in how people cope with and adapt to environmental and social stresses. The role of migration and translocal strategies within this context features centrally in his research (e.g. Sakdapolrak 2008, Sakdapolrak et al. 2013). He worked on the conceptual development of social vulnerability (Sakdapolrak 2010), livelihoods (Sakdapolrak 2013) and social resilience (Keck & Sakdapolrak 2013) approaches, as well as migration (Etzold & Sakdapolrak 2012) and translocality (Greiner & Sakdapolrak 2013a, b). He worked empirically in Thailand, India as well as Kenya.

Patrick took his Diplom in geography with minors in sociology and social anthropology at the University of Heidelberg. At the University of Wollongong in Australia, he obtained a Master's degree in Social Change and Development. For his Ph.D. thesis on health vulnerability among poor urban groups in India, carried out in the Department of Geography in Bonn, he was awarded a special prize for excellent practice-relevant research in the field of development studies (the KfW-Förderpreis). In 2013 he had a temporary professorship for social geography and sustainability research at the LMU in Munich. Since October 2013 Patrick is leading a Research Group on Migration and Environment in Bonn.

Translocal social practices – Remarks on the relation between embeddedness, mobility and the production of space

(Patrick Sakdapolrak & Benjamin Etzold, University of Bonn)

Migration is connecting people, transforming places, and facilitating flows of knowledge and resources, and thus creating networked and interconnected translocal spaces. Processes of migration are not only changing the places of origin of migrants but also the places of destinations as well as transit places in-between in terms of livelihoods, everyday routines, cultural identities, social interactions of migrants and non-migrants. In order to grasp the evolvment and development of translocal spaces and the meaning of translocality in everyday lifes, several scholars have drawn on practice theories, particularly on the work of Pierre Bourdieu (e.g. Levitt & Glick-Schiller 2004; Thieme 2008; Brickell & Datta 2011; Greiner & Sakdapolrak 2013). Bourdieu's theoretical lense on translocality enables a) the understanding of the simultaneous multi-scalar and multi-locale embeddedness of mobile and im-mobile actors at different places; b) the analysis of relations, transactions and translations within and between different translocal fields; c) the comprehension of the meaning and logics of translocal social practices. In our presentation, we will elaborate the notion of translocal social practices and outline the implication for empirical research.

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Since January 1st 2015 Susan Thieme holds a professorship in Human Geography at the Free University of Berlin. Her main topics of interest are questions of power, representations & inequalities at the intersections of labour, education and migration. She worked on those topics in South and Central Asia as well as Switzerland.

Before moving to Berlin she led a research group on „migration and (im)mobilities“ at the University of Zurich and did her PhD and Habilitation in Zurich. In her PhD she looked at the role of social networks in the migration process between Nepal and India. Her Habilitation was on conceptual, empirical and methodological perspectives on the multilocality of livelihoods in Kyrgyzstan. She was also visiting fellow at the University of Sussex (UK), the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) De Hague and the American University Central Asia in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Susan Thieme has a particular interest in transdisciplinary work and knowledge exchange beyond scientific communities, e.g. she did a documentary on irregular labour migration in Kyrgyzstan and has been regularly involved in policy advice for the Swiss government.

The “educational bazaar” in Kathmandu, Nepal: Spatial dimensions of the professionalization and internationalisation of services for students who want to study abroad

Over the last years a whole city quarter of Nepal’s capital Kathmandu has been developing into the so called “educational bazaar”, where educational consultants offer their services to students who wish to go to study abroad. Similarly to a worldwide trend also students in Nepal increasingly study abroad. Intermediaries, known as “educational consultancies”, play an active role in the recruitment of students. Given the increase of student mobility and related services relatively little is known about the critical role and spatial practices of those intermediaries.

Rather than focusing on student’s experiences themselves the paper therefore sheds light on the educational consultants as intermediaries and asks: How do they present themselves and network in urban Kathmandu to attract potential students as their customers? What are their services offered and how do those agencies mediate locally and translocally between students, guardians as well as educational institutions outside of Nepal? How do agents explain their value, and how do they professionalize? How can their work be interpreted in the context of an increasing internationalisation and commercialisation of Higher Education? The paper is based on empirical research in Nepal in 2012 and 2013 consisting of in depth interviews with educational consultants and representatives of the biggest professional network of educational consultants in Nepal (ECAN). It draws on three current academic debates: 1. Student mobility and internationalisation of Higher Education, 2. Role and spatial practices of intermediaries in the context of debates on migration infrastructure, 3. Professionalization and legitimization of international services.

Results show, that especially for first-time students those agencies are important gatekeepers to be able to study abroad. Those agencies facilitate the whole information, application and admission procedure, do provide assistance for preparatory examinations but also mediate between “dreams and realities” of potential students and their parents who have to finance their years abroad and find it often challenging to fully understand and access the highly competitive and formalised system of international Higher Education. Recent restrictions in education and migration policies in countries such as the UK have made the services of those educational consultants even more demanded. However cases of fraud, high service fees and inappropriate placement of students led to serious critique on the role of intermediaries. Those cases initiated efforts among a number of educational consultants in Nepal to improve their image and quality control through formalization, professionalization and collaboration in order to stand out among the large number of educational consultants in the “educational bazaar”. On one hand this has been done through e.g. better local networking and an establishment of a professional association, more presence in public spaces through new advertisement strategies as well as the organisation of educational fairs at central places in Kathmandu. On the other hand, on a translocal scale, consultants work to improve their international networks with universities abroad through frequent visits and better communication and exchange with university administrations abroad as well as Nepali students who are currently abroad or Alumnis. The findings of the paper challenge the image that agents always increase costs, distort markets and exploit (potential) migrants. Rather

agents are brought into state regulations through relationships with educational industry seeking to continue the flow of students. Agents do not simply follow demands of the market and their clients (students, parents and universities) but also try to legitimize and show their value of services. Not only spatially increasingly present they perceive themselves as important intermediaries between increasingly formalized, complex rules and regulations and market dynamics in international student mobility and the social lives and aspirations of students and their families.

Julia Verne (nee Pfaff) is currently working as a research assistant/lecturer at the Department of Human Geography at Goethe University Frankfurt. After having completed her degrees in Bayreuth and Royal Holloway, University of London, she did her PhD on 'Living Translocality: Culture and Economy in contemporary Swahili Trading Connections', which she submitted in 2010. The academic year 2010/2011 she spent as a post-doc Research Scholar at the University of California Los Angeles. In October 2011 she joined the Department of Human Geography at Goethe University Frankfurt where she is also involved in a larger collaborative research project on African-Asian connections (www.afraso.org) with herself focusing on scientific as well as literary imaginaries of the Indian Ocean as a maritime space. So far, she has done extensive ethnographic research in East Africa, the Comoros, and La Reunion, on the Arabian Peninsula (esp. Dubai and Muscat) in London and Sydney. Theoretically her main interest is in everyday experiences and practices of mobility, the mobility of objects/technologies and ideas, and related conceptualisations of space, while her work is generally situated within the fields of cultural geography, cultural economic geography and the history of geographic thought.

A sense of translocality: transcending topography

For almost two decades, translocality has remained to be one of the buzzwords in scholarship on mobilities and migration, with its amorphous character allowing for a variety of theoretical connotations and, thus, hard to pin down to a single meaning. Reflecting on what "translocality" might still have to offer as a theoretical perspective to current geographical research on mobilities, this presentation will attempt to tease out possible particularities of the concept, especially in relation to multilocal and transnational research perspectives. By drawing on relational, emotional as well as aesthetic conceptualisations of space, I will try to develop a particular sense of translocality that emphasises the transcendence of topographic space while at the same time grounding it in very specific local, historical experiences.

Hew Wai Weng is Research Fellow at the Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin and working on a research project entitled a 'Sites of Inclusion and Exclusion: New Muslims Places in Urban Malaysia and Indonesia'. He graduated from the Australian National University, where he submitted his PhD thesis, 'Negotiating Ethnicity and Religiosity: Chinese Muslim Identities in Post-New Order Indonesia'. He was also a postdoctoral fellow at the International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden.

Chinese-style Mosques and Halal Restaurants: Translocal Spatial Practices , Mobile Identities and Immobile Sites of Hui Muslims in Urban Malaysia

The influx of foreign students and workers have marked their presence in contemporary urban Malaysia through various processes of place-making. This paper examines how and under what conditions, migrants and their translocal spatial practices might have transformed urban landscapes, fostered social interactions and consolidated identity formation in Kuala Lumpur, the capital city of Malaysia. It focuses specifically on Hui migrants and their place-making through Chinese-style mosques and Chinese halal restaurants.

Hui Muslims have a long existence in Southeast Asia, yet the recent increase and visibility of their presence in Malaysia started since 1990s. Many Hui Muslims, primarily from the Northwestern parts in China, arrive in Malaysia to further study, and some of them also come as businessmen or religious scholars. Many Hui migrants live in a neighborhood close to the International Islamic University of Malaysia, run shops selling Islamic clothes which are imported from mainland China, operate a website on Islam in Mandarin, open restaurants serving Hui halal cuisine and participate in the activities of Chinese-style mosques – all these spatial practices have contributed to the diversity of urban and social landscapes in Kuala Lumpur.

As ethnicity and religiosity are highly interwoven in Malaysia (all Malays are constitutionally Muslim, and most Chinese are non-Muslims), the presence of Hui Muslims' places is not only challenging the equation between Malays and Muslims, but also providing sites of interaction (between Muslims and non-Muslims, between Chinese and non-Chinese, between citizens and non-citizens). Working together with local minority Chinese Muslims (mostly Han converts), Hui Muslims have also contributed to the spatial formation of Chinese Muslim cultural identities. By examining the constructions and activities of Chinese-style mosques and halal restaurants, this paper explores how the negotiation between Islamic religiosity and Chinese ethnicity, the intersection between translocal flows and local dynamics, as well as the mediation between mobile practices and immobile buildings influence social transformations in urban Malaysia.

Sean H. Wang is a doctoral candidate in geography and a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow at Syracuse University (USA). His research focuses on the intersections between transnational migrations, family and child welfare. His doctoral dissertation examines the emergence of Chinese birth tourism, and his master's thesis documents the incorporation of LGBTQ parents into the public child welfare system. Sean has an MA from Syracuse University and a BA from the University of Washington, both in geography.

The myth of 'anchor babies': Mapping Chinese birth tourism's transnational circuits

Global migrations of ethnic Chinese have increasingly been the object of academic investigation since the 1990s, given China's rise as a major political and economic power. Within this work, flexible citizenship (Ong 1999) has emerged as a key analytic lens to understand the diverse pathways that global migrations – especially by Asian migrants – take. Yet this literature on flexible citizenship and transnational families has been critiqued for overly privileging the perspective from receiving countries (Ho 2011; 2008) and for overemphasizing the role of economic strategizing in migratory decisions (Blunt 2007; Huang & Yeoh 2005). In response, Lin (2012) has proposed the concept of 'Chinese transnationalisms' to augment transnational flexible citizenship, suggesting that scholars should seek to capture a wider range of Chinese migrants beyond the two archetypes of poor working migrants and wealthy flexible citizens.

My presentation addresses Chinese transnationalisms' critiques through an exploratory mapping of Chinese birth tourism's transnational circuits. Usually considered a form of medical tourism, "birth tourism" (or "maternity tourism") describes the practice where pregnant women cross international borders to receive maternity care and give birth (Connell 2013). Although motivations behind birth tourism vary, many opponents point to the lure of citizenship or legal status for either expectant mothers or their children as a significant pull factor. Dubbed "citizenship tourism," these cases occur globally. One ethnic group that is often represented as the key demographic in birth/citizenship tourism is the Chinese. Along North America's Pacific Rim, where there is a large ethnic Chinese presence, birth tourism (or stories of it) has steadily grown since at least the 1970s from urban legend and informal practice among kinship networks to an organized shadow industry without government regulation (Chang 2013). According to one Chinese news report, maternity hotel operators even have a trade association – "All-America Mother and Infant Association" – based in the Chinese coastal city of Guangzhou (姚瑶 2013). Although many media reports from receiving countries of Chinese birth tourists allude to various socioeconomic, political, and cultural factors in China driving birth tourism, few can point to concrete evidence of these supposed contexts that drive the Chinese to give birth abroad.

This presentation will draw from my doctoral dissertation research that maps the transnational networks that sustain the Chinese birth tourism industry between China and southern California. Through an ethnography of "middling transnationalism" (Smith 2005), this paper explores the reasons why China's burgeoning middle-class, armed with their newfound wealth, still almost overwhelmingly desire a move abroad and produce what many media reports call the beginning of another wave of Chinese emigration. The emergence of Chinese birth tourism as an organized shadow industry at this point in time, thus, deserves scrutiny, since it might present a more affordable alternative to achieve foreign citizenship (as opposed to, say, investment-based routes).

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Discussants

Heike Drotbohm

Heike Drotbohm studied Social and Cultural Anthropology and specialized on creole and transnational societies along the Atlantic rim. She carried out her doctoral research in Montreal, Canada, on the adaption of Haitian spiritual practices in a diasporic context and did a subsequent research in Cape Verde, where she examined the ways how intimacy and proximity are lived in transnational Cape Verdean families. Here, the impact of state deportation received lots of attention. After her habilitation at University of Freiburg she spent one year at the International Research Centre "Work and the Life Course in a Global Perspective" at HU Berlin, held several Guest Professorships both at University of Freiburg and University of Konstanz and currently prepares a new research project on humanitarian aid, negotiations of care and eligibility in the context of 'new' types of immigration to Brazil.

Tim Freytag

Tim Freytag is professor for human geography and currently dean of the Faculty for Natural Resources and Environment, University of Freiburg. His research foci and teaching interests include tourism and mobility research, social and cultural geography, geography of education, urban studies and metropolitan research.

Tim Freytag studied geography, history, French and Spanish at the universities of Heidelberg (Germany), Granada (Spain) and Geneva (Switzerland). He completed his PhD at Heidelberg University in 2003. Tim Freytag joined the University of Freiburg in 2010. Prior to this he was a research associate and lecturer at Heidelberg University and, since 2009, professor for cultural geography at the University of Kiel, Germany. Based on research grants and funded projects Tim Freytag has gained experience in international and interdisciplinary research cooperation.

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Anna Lipphardt teaches Cultural Anthropology at Freiburg University, where she also directs the Research Group Cultures of Mobility in Europe (COME). Her research areas include migration and mobility studies, anthropology of the arts, spatial theory and urban anthropology, and East European Jewish history and culture. Relevant publications include: "Auf den Spuren des Neuen Nomaden. Zur Karriere einer Figur in Kulturtheorie, Tourismusforschung und Backpacker-Szene", in: *Voyage. Jahrbuch für Reise- und Tourismusforschung* 2014, 202-217; "Artists on the Move. Theoretical Perspectives, Empirical Implications", in: IGBK, ed. *Artists in Transit. How to Become an Artist in Residence*, Berlin 2012, p. 109-122; ed. (together with J. Brauch and A. Nocke), *Jewish Topographies – Visions of Space, Traditions of Place*, Ashgate: Aldershot 2008.

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