CALL FOR PAPERS

Workshop

Forms of Continental Colonialism – The ‘other’ Colonialism

14 - 15 July 2016

Organizer: Dittmar Schorkowitz (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology)
Venue: Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/Saale, Germany

Emphasizing continental colonialism and its diverse forms challenges widely held assumptions based on the study of overseas colonialism, which have generically shaped our understanding of colonial patterns. The product of land-based expansion or economic underdevelopment and dependency within continental confines, continental colonialism, in its various guises, was and still is, on the one hand, comparable in terms of impact, duration, and legacies with overseas colonialism and empire-building by European powers.

On the other hand, continental colonialism displays distinctive characteristics that must be taken into account to arrive at a fuller understanding of colonialism and its consequences. Continental colonialism developed within empires varying greatly in size – the Russian, Chinese, and Ottoman empires, but also empires in miniature such as Georgia or Yugoslavia – in which some areas were well integrated, while others were turned into internally colonized spaces (e.g. the Caucasus, Inner and Central Asia, and the Balkans). In contrast to overseas colonialism and modern neo-colonialism, continental and internal colonialism exploit colonial subjects from within the state.

In recent years, (post-)colonial studies have been preoccupied with cultural path dependencies of overseas colonialism in the developed and the developing world and with modes of discursive representations, but there seems to be no analogous trend in anthropological research on continental colonialism. Moreover, overseas colonies have become rare since the adoption of UN Resolution 1514 in 1960, at least according to the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. Forms of continental, internal, neo- and crypto-colonialism are, however, still present in many parts of the world, despite recent decolonization triggered by the break-up of the Soviet Union. Scrutinizing these forms unveils hidden dependencies and the ‘other side’ of colonialism.

This workshop will build on earlier contributions to the study of internal colonialism (Hind 1984), understood in terms of structural inequalities installed by political agency or invented economically, e.g. in Russia (Gouldner 1978), China (Gladney 1998), and Europe (Hechter 1975). Other sources of inspiration include studies of internal colonialism based on prior overseas and settler colonialism, e.g. in North America and Canada (Churchill 2002, Hicks 2004), Hispanic America (Casanova 1965), India (Roy 2003, Dey 2010, 2014), and South Africa (Wolpe 1975) and the phenomenon of crypto-colonialism (Herzfeld 2009), i.e. neo-colonial conditions in countries such as Thailand and Greece that are nominally sovereign.
but economically dependent. Emphasis should fall on the subaltern conditions of the ‘other within’ – including both the ‘ethnic other’ and the ‘social other’ – in imperial formations that have fostered lasting strategies for managing ethnic and social diversity (Etkind 2012).

This workshop will bring together historically minded anthropologists/sociologists and historians to contribute to an anthropology of colonialism that is based on a fuller range of variations than hitherto. Looking into colonial agency and practices from historical and contemporary perspectives, and examining forms of resistance and resilience among the colonized, contributions are welcome that either focus on the shifting forms of colonialism or take the different initial positions and legacies of continental and overseas colonialism into account. This includes trajectories from indirect to direct rule, the homogenization of ethnic diversity (as opposed to marginalization or apartheid), the persistence of ‘colonial’ agencies, and contradictions between profit-making and geopolitical gains. While comparing these forms and analysing the different modes of hegemony and interdependencies, we attempt to question the concept of and to find new ways in re-conceptualizing colonialism (what to do with it?) while avoiding monothetic classifications.

We kindly invite papers addressing the topics introduced above, welcoming particularly:

- case studies on forms of continental, internal, and crypto colonialism;
- transnational comparative studies, highlighting similarities or differences between the same or different forms;
- and more theoretical papers reflecting on the legacies of overseas versus continental colonialism and the relevance of today’s (post-)colonial studies to the latter.

Please send your title and an abstract of ca. 250 words to schorkowitz@eth.mpg.de by 30 September 2015 at the latest. Travel and accommodation costs for invited speakers will be covered by the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology. As a publication on the basis of the workshop is envisaged, please be prepared to provide paper drafts for the conference.

References:


