



Wednesday Seminars

WINTERSEMESTER 2017/18

Dominik Schieder

(Multi-)ethnic sociality in context:

Fiji Islander migrant organisations in Japan and the United Kingdom

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Dominik Schieder (Ph.D. Bayreuth University) is a research associate (Wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter) in the Department of Social Sciences at Siegen University. He has previously taught and lectured at Goethe University, Frankfurt, and Birkbeck, University of

London. Dominik has held postdoctoral positions at Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo, and the Frobenius Institute, Frankfurt. He has also been a visiting (research) fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His research interests include Fiji and the Fiji Islander diaspora, transnational migration and mobility, sociality and organisational change, (multi-)ethnicity, elites and sport. He currently acts as the deputy speaker of the German Anthropological Association's Oceania working group.

...kommende Termine

Das Programm des Sommersemesters 2018 wird Ende Februar 2018 bekanntgegeben.

In this paper I investigate the potentials and limitations of multi-ethnic Fiji Islander sociality in two diasporic settings: Japan and the United Kingdom. To this day, one striking feature of the Anthropology of Fiji, is that scholars have been paying ethnographic attention almost exclusively to only one of the many ethnic groups that constitute Fiji's society (indigenous Fijians, Indo-Fijians, Rotumans etc.). In fact, it has been only very recently that anthropologists have begun to explore aspects of Fiji Islander sociality that is not necessarily demarcated by ethnic boundaries but fuelled, for example, by urban class formations (cf. Brison 2014) or transnational migration (cf. Schieder 2015). Drawing on fieldwork conducted with Fiji Islanders of various ethnic backgrounds in Tokyo and London, this paper aims to offer a fresh perspective on Fiji's supposedly plural society. By extension, it urges us to engage anew with long held perceptions of indigenous Fijian personhood. For the purpose of my discussion, I borrow Long and Moore's definition of sociality as a 'dynamic and interactive relational matrix ... within which subjects are constantly interacting in ways that are co-productive, and continually plastic and malleable' (2012:2,4). I also draw on Firth's seminal work on social organization which foregrounds 'acts of choice and decision' as intrinsic to 'the systematic ordering of social relations' (1971:40). In doing so I interrogate comparatively several social projects in which diasporic Fiji Islanders navigate self and belonging in (multi-)ethnic ways.