

employment and Márta Fülöp's (Hungarian Academy of Sciences) account of her research on the conceptualization of competition among German, Japanese, Hungarian and Canadian youth.

The focus then turned to "Policy and Society", "Community" and "Japanese Politics", amongst others with presentations on emission trading (Sven Rudolph, University of Kassel); social policy in comparison (Chikako Mori, Saga University); and an account of post-populism in Tokyo by Mototaka Mori (Waseda University).

Aspects of immigration and assimilation were discussed in the session on "Ethnicity". A comparative analysis of dominant life courses of ethnic minorities in Germany and Japan by David Chiavacci (University of Zurich) was followed by Shigeki Sato's (Hosei University) account of the transformation of the German discourse on integration and an insight into acculturation research by Paul G. Schmitz (Bonn University).

The session on "Family in Comparison" was opened by Bernhard Nauck (Chemnitz University of Technology) reporting results of an empirical test of two models of social change of family formation using Germany and Japan as sample countries. An analysis of the value of children in Japan presented by Makoto Kobayashi (Tamagawa University) and his team nicely tied up with this, as it discussed intergenerational differences with regard to child bearing.

Following a session on "Culture and Value", the meeting concluded with a special session, in which Ken'ichi Tominaga (Tokyo University), Hiroshi Namiki (Keio University), Taketoshi Takuma (Tokyo Metropolitan University), Hans-Joachim Kornadt (University of the Saarland) and Gisela Trommsdorff discussed the missions and roles of the GJSSS in past and future.

A very warm thank you goes out to Akira Tokuyasu and his team from Hosei University for the smooth proceedings of the conference and the most hospitable atmosphere. Most impressive for both German and Japanese participants was the workshop on Noh theatre which was part of the welcoming party. The conference room on the 26th floor of Hosei University's Boissonade Tower with its breathtaking view of the Tokyo skyline was inspirational, a fact that without doubt also contributed to the lively participation in the discussions.

Carola Hommerich

First Students' Conference on Bengal Related Studies

Südasiens-Seminar, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Halle (Saale), 29.-31. Oktober 2010

The South Asia Seminar of the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg along with the association Bengal Link e. V. hosted the First Students' Conference on Bengal Related Studies from Friday, October 29 to Sunday, October 31, 2010. The

aim of the conference, organised by students of the hosting university, was to provide an inter-disciplinary venue for young scholars who focus on Bengal in their studies.

The Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg is one of the very few European universities focusing particularly on the Bengali regions, language and culture. After the emergence of numerous Bengal related studies from various disciplines the conference organisers realised the necessity of giving budding scholars an option to discuss their various topics and research approaches among each other, and of building up an interdisciplinary network for Bengal related studies.

Since the larger part of the Bengali regions is today occupied by the state of Bangladesh, the prelude to the conference was an informal discussion on Friday evening with the Ambassador of Bangladesh in Berlin, H.E. Mosud Mannan, who shared with the participants some present and future positive aspects of the otherwise rather negatively portrayed country in the "West", and welcomed the manifold interests of the conference participants regarding his native region.

Both Bangladesh and India related topics were the focus of the different presentations during the next two days. And as diverse as the disciplinary background of the presenters was (South Asian studies, geography, sociology, musicology, Indology, urban planning, anthropology, English literature), so diverse too were the thirteen presented papers. Aspiring scholars hailing from Germany, India, Bangladesh and Poland availed themselves of the opportunity to present, or listen to presentations, of MA, MPhil, and PhD dissertation topics, showing up their own fields of interest and obtaining new inputs from the perspective of other disciplines.

While on Saturday morning the first two sessions were dominated by topics related to literary works of Bengal (Dhrupadi Chattopadhyay and Chaiti Basu, Heidelberg University; Nandadulal Nandi, Zurich University), the sessions on Saturday afternoon and Sunday were more diverse. A new field of research, namely Heavy Metal in Dhaka, was introduced by David Micken (Cologne University). Two other main research fields were related to childhood in Bengal (Hia Sen and Dakhina Mitra, Freiburg University; Magdalena Falkowska, Siegen University) and Bengali women displaced into new environments (Annika Salingré, Cologne University; Suranjana Gangopadhyay, Asiatic Society Calcutta). Other presentations focused on the representations of and their influence on identity formations among minorities in Bangladesh (Mahmulul Sumon, Jahangirnagar University Dhaka; Carmen Brandt, University of Halle-Wittenberg), the changing urban and hence cultural landscape of Calcutta (Sourodip Lahiri, Jadavpur University Calcutta), and representations of Muhammad Yunus and the Grameen Bank (Lisa Zander, University of Halle-Wittenberg). In the final discussion all participants agreed on the need for further interdisciplinary discussions on Bengal related topics, and planned to hold the Second Students' Conference on Bengal Related Studies in two years.