

Mediators” called the role of the artist as the sole performer and the status of the researcher as an outside observer into question. One of the last panels, “Life-Action Roleplay; or the Performance of Realities”, guided the conference participants through a 90-minute collaborative performance, encouraging critical and creative reflections that resonated with general concerns about the position and responsibility of academics. By analyzing both emerging technologies of mediation that have so far been overlooked, by identifying a wide range of mediators including academics, and by looking at both the political and material conditions and obstructions of mediation, the conference served as a great vantage point for future explorations on cultural mediation.

Marlène Harles and Martijn de Rooij

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

FRIAS Junior Researcher Conference, Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies (FRIAS), University of Freiburg, January 14–16, 2015.

Conveners of the conference were Tabea Bork-Hüffer (National University of Singapore), Kirsten Hackenbroch (University of Freiburg) and Stefan Rother (University of Freiburg/FRIAS). It was organized in cooperation with FREINEM (Freiburger Netzwerk für Migrationsforschung), and the Freiburg Center for Transcultural Asian Studies (CETRAS). The conference was aimed at exploring the nexus of international migration, spatial practices and urban transformation. Researchers were invited to explore the advantages of translocality as a research approach. Participants presented both conceptual considerations and empirical research and discussed the conceptual value of translocality in two working group sessions.

Two keynote lectures opened the conference. Elaine Lynne-Ee Ho (National University of Singapore) discussed Sino-Myanmar mobilities and the current urban transformation. In her case study on trans-border cultural exchanges she traced translocal connections, development corridors and their interrelations with wider global patterns. She highlighted the need to differentiate between the overlapping, though distinct, concepts of transnationalism and translocality.

In the second keynote lecture, Ayona Datta (University of Leeds) pointed towards the simultaneity of local, regional and global influences and transfers in the development of smart cities in India. With reference to the current state of Indian politics, smart cities are celebrated as the incarnation of connectivity between spaces, places and people and presented as the only way to bring order to the chaos of urbanization. At the same time, the local rural population has been systematically excluded from the decision-making process in these new projects.

Clemens Greiner (University of Cologne) introduced the notion of coupling between different spatial or hierarchical dimensions in an attempt to further differentiate between mobilities and transfers in a given spatial context. Julia Verne (University of Frankfurt/Main) added the idea of relationality to the conceptual debate on translocality, referring to entanglements of different connections which led to the emergence of points or nodes rather than lines connecting pre-existing points. Patrick Sakkapolrak (University of Bonn) emphasized the influence of social practices on the materiality of local fields, which in turn influence social practices.

In his presentation on the region of South China, North Laos and North Vietnam, Peter Kesselburg (University of Freiburg) argued that the existence of different shared languages



and ethnicities shapes social practices and leads to informal cross-border communication and para-diplomacy through powerful local actors. With a focus on spatial transformations, Hew Wai Weng (Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin) analyzed the combination of economic and religious factors and the motivations for Hui Muslims to migrate from China to Malaysia as these migrants seek to join a majority Muslim community. There, they thrive through their markedly Hui Muslim business models. Stefan Rother showed how specific places in Hong Kong have emerged as spaces for social meetings and political organizing of migrant domestic workers. These places have become part of a transnational political space between the Hong Kong administration and governments of the countries of origin as well as global institutions.

Most of the papers at the conference dealt with the phenomenon of urban transformation as a result of translocal practices. Due to the linkage between transformation to a directed, planned change of system, the use of the term "transformation" was questioned by the conference's participants. The term "change" seemed to offer a wider research perspective. Furthermore, regarding migrants as actors in urban spaces, the question was raised on the ability of actors in positions of low power and influence such as non-citizens, to contribute to urban changes. Tabea Bork-Hüffer focused on domestic and international migrants' contribution to urban change in the Pearl River Delta (PRD), China, and Dhaka, Bangladesh. Street vendors' activities change public spaces through their individual agency. Public spaces in PRD cities are strictly regulated and highly contested by all actors, which leads to the exclusion of migrants. Focusing on Pakistani immigrants in Germany and their contribution to urban transformations in Pakistan, Atif Aslam (TU Dortmund University) showed that through translocal practices Pakistani immigrants influence urban developments in Pakistan, for instance through property purchases. Francesca Giangrande (Sapienza University of Rome) argued in her presentation that due to migration flows from Tatum to Milan, remittances are changing the face of the built environment in Tatum. However, the dual spatiality of migrants leads to the neglect of their rights by the city of Milan. As an example of translocal historical developments, Tim Kaiser (University of Gießen) analyzed the impact of flows of ideas and people on local planning application. The emergence and re-situation of socialist housing complexes and the embedding of citizen participation in Vinh City, Vietnam, has resulted in entanglements of local, national and international planning ideas.

With an emphasis on education, Susan Thieme (FU Berlin) gave an account of Kathmandu's 'educational bazar' where agents and intermediaries provide services to students wishing to go abroad. In times of the global commercialization of education these agents professionalize and formalize their work and come to understand themselves as translocal actors. In her recently launched project on student mobilities and planning cultures in Bangladesh, Kirsten Hackenbroch investigates how international experiences shape urban imaginations and how returnees' entering the local job markets impact the local planning culture, practices and urban transformations. Andreas Benz (FU Berlin) focused attention on educational migration within Baltistan, Pakistan, and how this brought about 'boundary works' when shifting from the 'safe' environment of the village to the 'unsafe' city. The girls' hostel in the city became a secluded space with strict rules, while at the same time, this was contrasted with the campus as a place where such norms could be transgressed.

Finally, participants agreed that it would be useful to include quantitative data into the research as it would enable us to recognize patterns and dimensions of translocal phenomena. One should also consider the temporality of spaces as actions situated in them often change in the course of the day, week or year. A few of the questions which came up during the conference remain to be answered. Is there something that can be subsumed as Asian



urbanism? Can translocality be described as a concept in its own right or as a research perspective which only yields the best results if applied in combination with other concepts?

Anne-Kathrin Haase, Friederike Heitmann

## **Towards an Effective NCD Surveillance System for the City of Pune**

Pune/India, March 14, 2015

The final workshop of the project “Disease surveillance in the Indian megacity of Pune: conceptualization, implementation and evaluation“ took place on March 14, 2015 at Bharati Vidyapeeth University in Pune. The project is funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) as knowledge transfer project. This funding scheme provides the opportunity for researchers to use their previously gained knowledge in an application oriented project in cooperation with a non-academic partner. In this case, the project was based on a project on health disparities in Pune, funded by the DFG from 2010 to 2012. The transfer project is led by Prof. Dr. Frauke Kraas and Dr. Carsten Butsch (both Institute of Geography, University of Cologne). The cooperation partners are the Bharati Vidyapeeth Institute for Environment Education and Research (Indian research partner) and the Bharati Medical Foundation (application partner). Target of the workshop was to present results of the study and to discuss recommendations for setting up an effective non-communicable disease surveillance system for the city of Pune. The workshop was attended by 60 participants covering various groups such as representatives of the Pune Municipal Corporation and the Ministry of Health, scientists and students from medical sciences. All private practitioners who had participated in the research project were also invited.

The workshop was inaugurated by the director of the Bharati Vidyapeeth Institute for Environment Education and Research, Prof. Dr. Erach Bharucha, and Prof. Dr. Frauke Kraas, one of the principal investigators of the project. Afterwards, the Additional Commissioner of the Pune Municipal Corporation, Mr. Rajendra Jagtap, highlighted in his keynote address the importance of non-communicable disease prevention and control. He mentioned lack of adequate data and heterogeneity of the private health care sector as major challenges for surveillance. In the second session, Dr. Mareike Kroll, Dr. Revati Phalkey (both University of Cologne) and Sayani Dutta (Bharati Vidyapeeth University) presented major findings from the empirical work in Pune, which was conducted in a multi-steps research approach: First, all private health care facilities were mapped in three selected research areas, second, a knowledge-attitude-practice (KAP) survey on surveillance was conducted among private practitioners in these areas, third, a pilot study on non-communicable diseases surveillance was implemented for six months on a voluntary basis. The pilot study was evaluated by analysing the reported cases, the data collection process and the standardized feedback provided by the study participants.

In the third session, experts provided input statements on challenges of disease surveillance in Pune. Dr. C.S. Yajnik, diabetologist and researcher at KEM Hospital in Pune, gave a presentation on risk factors and disease burden of diabetes as major challenge for public health in Indian cities. He highlighted the fact that diabetes affects people at younger age (around 10 years earlier) compared to developed countries. Dr. Jitendar Sharma, Head of Healthcare Technology, National Health System Resource Centre, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in New Delhi, discussed the necessity of surveillance data for informed decision making and program planning. He raised the issue of missing standards and guidelines for case recording and reporting. Another three invited speakers, Dr. S. T. Pardeshi