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Founded in 2000, the Institute for World Society Studies at Bielefeld University has pursued research, research training, outreach and networking activities on a range of issues in the broad thematic fields of globalization, transnationalization and international relations, often from the perspective of sociological theories of world society. Research at the Institute is open to a range of theoretical and methodological approaches, ranging from discourse theories and analysis to quantitative approaches and including modern systems theory and sociological neo-institutionalism. The Institute’s emphasis on strong theoretical foundations serves as one of its hallmarks in an international research environment. In the burgeoning field of globalization research, the distinctive feature of the work carried out at the Institute for World Society Studies lies in combining empirical investigation with theoretical analysis. The Institute therefore encourages international and interdisciplinary orientation in a broad range of activities. Past and current interdisciplinary projects include, for example, cooperation between history, political science and sociology (‘Transnational political spaces’), between political science and geography (‘Geopolitical images of aid organizations’), or between sociology, law and spatial planning (‘Human Rights’; ‘FLOOR’).

The Institute will in the future seek to build on and extend the interdisciplinary character of its work and explore possibilities to reach out to additional disciplines. The field of global studies is characterized by activities from many disciplines, making interdisciplinary outreach a strategic necessity, especially for sociology. The Institute’s activities are oriented towards fostering intellectual exchange and excellent research output regarding publications and research training. This includes individual and collective research projects, with or without third party-funding, conferences and workshops, colloquia and seminars. In addition to its role as an active research institute, the Institute for World Society Studies also serves as a thematic focus point for a range of doctoral dissertations and post-doc research projects.

The Institute for World Society Studies currently has about eighty members. Its executive board comprises five members: Mathias Albert, Political Science; Ulrike Davy, Law; Katja Freistein, Political Science; Boris Holzer, Sociology; Lutz Leisering, Sociology. Sebastian Lemme is the current executive manager.
Mathias Albert

Mathias Albert is Professor of Political Science at the Faculty of Sociology and Honorary Professor at the University of Aarhus/Denmark. His work is on various aspects of international relations and world society theory. Recent books in the field include *New Systems Theories of World Politics* (co-ed. with L.-E. Cederman and A. Wendt, Palgrave 2010) and *Bringing Sociology to IR. World Politics as Differentiation Theory* (co-ed. with B. Buzan and M. Zürn, Cambridge 2013). He is currently working on a book entitled *A Theory of World Politics*.

Ulrike Davy

Ulrike Davy is professor for constitutional and administrative law, German and international social law, and comparative law at the Faculty of Law of Bielefeld University. Additionally, she is the managing director of the Zentrum für interdisziplinäre Forschung (ZiF) and member of the University Council of Bielefeld University. Her research concentrates on migration and refugee law, history and theory of the welfare state, European social policy, and universal human rights law, in particular, social rights and the right to equality. Recent publications: *Exploring global social citizenship: Human rights perspectives*. International Journal of Social Welfare 22, 2013, Supplement 1 (ed., with Benjamin Davy and Lutz Leisering); *How human rights shape global social citizenship. On citizenship and the understanding of economic and social rights*. Washington University Global Studies Law Review 2014.

Lutz Leisering

Lutz Leisering is professor of social policy in the Faculty of Sociology. His research interests include international and comparative social policy, theory and history of the welfare state, policy analysis and global social policy. His current focus is on social assistance in the global South. Recent publications: *Exploring global social citizenship: Human rights perspectives*. International Journal of Social Welfare 22, Supplement 1, 2013 (ed., with Benjamin and Ulrike Davy); *German Social Policy. 5 vol.s* (ed. and introduction). Berlin Heidelberg: Springer, 2013.
Katja Freistein

Katja Freistein is a postdoctoral researcher at the Collaborative Research Centre "From Heterogeneity to Inequality" (SFB 882) in the project "Conceptions of Global Inequality in World Society". Her main research interests are international relations theory, international organisations and discourse theory.


Boris Holzer

Boris Holzer is Professor of Political Sociology at Bielefeld University. He earned his Ph.D. from the London School of Economics and Political Science and has subsequently worked at Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich and the University of Lucerne. His current research interests include political and economic sociology, social networks and globalization. Recent publications in these fields include the book Moralizing the Corporation (E. Elgar, 2010) and chapters in The Political Role of Corporate Citizens (ed. by K. S. Helgesson and U. Mörh, Palgrave 2013), in Netzwerke in der funktional differenzierten Gesellschaft (ed. by M. Bommes and V. Tacke, VS 2011) and, with G. Mutz, in Globalisierung Süd (ed. by A. Paul, A. Pelfini and B. Rehbein, VS 2010). He is currently preparing the edited volume From Globalization to World Society (co-ed. with F. Kastner and T. Werron, Routledge 2014), which focuses on neo-institutional and systems approaches to globalization.
Economic cultures in global-comparative perspective

Funded by: Hans-Böckler-Foundation

Principal Investigators: Prof. Dr. Werner Abelshauser (Bielefeld University)
Project Team: Tristan Graefen
Project Duration: 2011 - 2016

When David Ricardo published his theorem of comparative (labor) cost advantages he triggered a revolution within the theory of world trade which is still state of the art. Almost 200 years later and against the background of postindustrial development, we need a new approach because labor costs are no longer the most decisive factor for competitive advantage on technologically advanced markets. Yet the key to immaterial (postindustrial) production is comparative institutional advantages based on new, widely accepted mindsets (shared mental models) and market behavior – the rules of the game. An economic culture of this kind is important within clearly defined fields of the social system of production, such as the financial system, corporate governance, interest policy, the inter-company system, the fields of vocational training and education and – last but not least – industrial relations.

This project analyses the changing conditions for Ricardo's law today. This includes an outline of the emergence and performance of the economic culture. The marketplace of world society is dominated by companies from North America, Europe and East Asia. But what is the role of their respective cultural background in this competitive field? The increasing dynamics of world markets make it all the more urgent to understand the cultural background via scientific research. Obviously cultural differences are what drive economic competition within world society and ensure its future. The project focuses on the economic cultures of the four most competitive trading nations (USA, China, Japan, Germany) contrasting their comparative institutional advantages with the economic culture of less successful economic regions on the world market.

The project started 2010 with a Bielefeld conference on “Economic Culture – Cultures of World Economy” which was funded by the Institute for Global Society Studies and the Hans-Böckler-Foundation. The results of the conference have been published in a special issue of the German journal for historical social science “Geschichte und Gesellschaft”: W. Abelshauser / David A. Gilgen / A. Leutzsch (Hg.), Kulturen der Weltwirtschaft, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2012. The aim of the project is a monograph on the subject.

Publications:
Ethnization and De-ethnization of the Political. 
Negotiations of Inclusion and Exclusion in the Andes and South Asia

Funded by: Project Segment of SFB 584
(Collaborative Research Centre) 
“The Political as Communicative Space in History”

Principal Investigators: Prof. Dr. Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka (Bielefeld University) 
Prof. Dr. Christian Büschges (Bielefeld University)

Project Team: Friso Hecker 
Dr. Olaf Kaltmeier

Project Duration: 2004 - 2012

On 9 November 1990, a new constitution in Nepal came into force which defined the Nepali nation-state as “multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, democratic and constitutional”. In June of the same year a countrywide protest movement occurred in Ecuador which lasted several days with the stated aim to achieve a constitutional recognition of the cultural identity and political representation of various indigenous groups in the country. Eventually, in 1998, the constitution of Ecuador was reformed, and henceforth the state was defined as “democratic, pluricultural and multi-ethnic”. Both constitutions are an expression – at least on a formal legal level – and temporary climax of current processes of ethnization of the political sphere which are under way in the region of the South American Andes as well as in South Asia. These processes are important to study not only because of their transformative potential which is sometimes coupled with the risk of violent social disruptiveness, but also because of a central paradox immanent in this process: discourses of ethnic oppression and injustice as well as forms of ethnic and national self-representations tend to stress the group-specific and the unique. The respective actors tend to use parochial symbols in the fight for their particular vision of communitarian forms of inclusion into the wider social and political process while at the same time postulating the universal character of their particular demands within the democratic process.
The similarities of political trajectories of both regions are significant and cannot be overlooked. The project therefore aims to examine in a comparative perspective the occurrence and meaning of ethnic semantics (discourses and symbols) within the communicative space of the political in Ecuador and Nepal. It also looks at the political actors who introduce these semantics as a tool of political communication as well as those who deny the validity of these arguments. To do so, the project distinguishes between three historical phases of distinct forms of discursive inclusion and exclusion of ethnically and non-ethnically defined actors and topics. This is done both by examining wider historical processes of modern state-formation during the 19th and 20th century as well as in a second step focus on the current cycle of ethnization of the political in both countries.

Publications:


Research Projects

Expatriate Managers: A New Cosmopolitan Elite?
Habitus, Everyday Practices, and Networks

Funded by: German Research Council (DFG)
Principal Investigators: Prof. Dr. Ursula Mense-Petermann (Bielefeld University)
Dr. Anna Spiegel (Bielefeld University)
Project Team: Yan Junchen
Kathleen M. Park PhD
Franziska Richter
Bastian Bredenkötter
Florian Poppen
Project Duration: 2011 – 2015

The project considers a social figure that has increasingly become an object of attention in recent times, whenever questions of economic globalization, the development of transnational social spaces and questions of social inequalities on a global scale are discussed: the expatriate manager. Notwithstanding the growing interest in global assignments and the figure of the global manager in the International Business and Management Literature, little is known to date of how expatriates deal with the exacting demands in their everyday work and life at their places of assignment. Under which circumstances do globally mobile managers develop a cosmopolitan habitus – if at all? How do they arrange their everyday life? What kind of networks do they establish in order to cope with the professional and private challenges connected with a global assignment? And last but not least: Are there differences in the ways in which expatriates deal with the challenges of a global assignment connected with their national origin or with their place of assignment (home country and host country effects)? These questions are addressed by a systematic comparison of two different groups of expatriate managers from different national business cultures – German managers and US American managers - at three different locations of assignment (Germany, USA and China), which are differently positioned in global constructions of cultural difference. This project - taking a critical look at the ‘strong’ theses concerning the ‘global manager’ as protagonist of a new global elite (Sklair, Kanter) – aims at an in-depth study into the processes of structuration of the lifeworlds and of (re-)shaping of the habitus of expatriate managers abroad.
Publications:


Global Perceptions of Inequality in World Society

Funded by: Project Segment of SFB 882 (Collaborative Research Centre) „From Heterogeneities to Inequalities“

Principal Investigators: Prof. Dr. Mathias Albert (Bielefeld University)  
Dr. Martin Koch (Bielefeld University)

Project Team: Dr. Katja Freistein

Project Duration: 2011 – 2015

The project analyses the emergence and subsequent development of global inequality semantics in three international development organisations (World Bank, United Nations Development Program, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) within world society. According to our analysis, the dominant understanding of “global inequality” as relating primarily to unequal global income distribution results from the discursive stabilisation of a quite limited number of heterogeneity markers as indicators for inequality. Yet, with regard to inequalities in general, more recently a broader understanding as unequal opportunities or lack of equity has also entered organisational discourses and has been stabilised in anti-poverty programmes and similar key sectors.

Building on the textual analysis, the project develops a comprehensive understanding of the semantics of “global inequalities”. The analysis shows trends in the use of concepts, regarding the dimensions of inequality addressed (particularly income, wealth/poverty, health) and the heterogeneity markers used (such as gender or location), as well as the pervasive ideas about inequality/equality in global affairs. Particularly the dimension of conceptualising inequality has evidenced a divide between ideas about outcome inequalities (i.e. inequalities pertaining to income or wealth) and inequalities of opportunity (including different ideas such as capabilities or equity), marking a divergence of causes, socio-spatial references and strategies to tackle inequality.

Publications:


This project considers the long-term impact of globalization on the organizational structure, human resource management and employees interest representation of small and mediumsized enterprises (SME). Although SMEs do have a high relevance for the German economy, so far the consequences of their globalization for the whole SME and their employees have been understudied. In particular, this project explores how SMEs cope with the challenges of long-term globalization processes despite their limitations in organizational knowledge and capital. Various studies, however, have already shown that SMEs choose unique paths of entering into foreign markets. This, and the observable high degree of informal reconciliation of interests between employers and employees within SME structures, points to peculiarities of the globalization practices of SMEs as compared to “global players”. This research project aims to reconstruct the special logics and typical paths of SME globalization in its own complexity and in its implications for the employees and their representation of interests. The three questions that guide this project are: (1) What are the specific risks and chances of the globalization of SMEs? Can we understand SME globalization as an “ongoing Globalization” (i.e. as an extension of the economic processes of globalization by the involvement of more and more SMEs), or is SME globalization only a „short-term adventure“ which eventually leads to a re-re-location of foreign direct investment back home? (2) What are the typical resources that SMEs use for this process of globalization? (3) What are the consequences of this unique globalization path for the employees and their representation of interest within SMEs? How do these process of globalization transform the typical „social world“ (Kotthoff/Reindl 1990) of SMEs? To answer these questions, we compare SMEs from machine builder and automobile supplier industries within the framework of a qualitative case study approach. As an exemplary field for our research, we choose to analyze the establishment of subsidiaries in China.
Microdynamics of Political Communication in World Society. The Social Life of the Democracy Concept in Bangladesh and Senegal

Funded by: German Research Foundation (DFG)

Principal Investigators: Prof. Dr. Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka (Bielefeld University) Prof. Dr. Eva Gerharz (Ruhr-University Bochum) PD Dr. Christian Meyer (Siegen University)

Project Team: Dr. Sandrine Gukelberger Sambalaye Diop Éva Rozália Hölzle Katrin Renschler

Project Duration: 2011 – 2015

The project „Microdynamics of Political Communication in World Society. The Social Life of the Democracy Concept in Bangladesh and Senegal“ examines the global spread of the terms democracy/democratization on the basis of their local appropriation. It is assumed that the concept of democracy has penetrated remote regions of the world, where it experiences unexpected enrichment due to specific connotations. Such reinterpretations are negotiated in interactions, characterized by different positioning acts, and in constellations of actors, shaped by asymmetries of power. The main interest of the project is to explore how the global norm of democracy generates local realities through social practices: To what extent and in which ways are the globally circulating notions of democracy and democratization - for example through development channels re-interpreted in local contexts, debated, modified, used strategically, appropriated or rejected? To answer these questions, the project focuses on culturally embedded notions of the "good life", that is happiness, law and handling violence. The comparative analysis investigates the negotiation processes of the local understanding of democracy and in particular their relevant current domains in both research regions.

Publications:

Observing the World.
The Contribution of International Statistics and UN World Conferences to the Rise of a Global Comparative Order, 1949-2009

Funded by: German Research Foundation (DFG)
Principal Investigators: Prof. Dr. Bettina Heintz (Universität Zürich)
Project Team: Jun.-Prof. Dr. Marion Müller (co-investigator)
Hannah Bennani
Sophia Cramer
Sebastian Hoggenmüller
Project Duration: 2010 – 2014

Globalization is usually described as an intensification of structural linkages resulting from an expansion of exchanges and network ties across national boundaries. Less attention is paid to a second mechanism of globalization that is based on cultural rather than on structural linkages. Worldwide comparisons are an excellent point in case to investigate how such cultural linkages work and what effects they may cause.

The project 'Observing the World' examines the emergence, change and consequences of global comparisons. First, it analyses according to which criteria states are compared and to what extent these criteria have changed over time, and, secondly, it investigates when and how the global nexus has been described as an entity of its own – as a “world society”. We assume that international statistics and world conferences play a pivotal role in the emergence of a global comparative order and in the growing awareness of the world as a whole. Empirically, the project focuses on international statistics and the preparatory and final documents of UN world conferences. It covers the period 1949 to 2009 and includes all world conferences which have dealt at least two times with the same issue. The leading questions of the project will be investigated from three different angles. The subproject International statistics: measuring the world investigates to what extent the categories and classification schemes of selected UN statistics (e.g., Statistical Yearbook, World Development Report) have changed over time and how the comparative data are represented (e.g., tables, rankings, diagrams). The subproject UN world conferences: negotiating the world retraces the semantic shifts of the global values and concepts (e.g., human rights, development, equality) propagated in the preparatory and final documents of world conferences. The subproject Global encounters: representing the world adopts a micro-sociological perspective and analyses world conferences as global interactive encounters. It is based on an ethnographic field study (UN-Conference on Indigenous Peoples, 2014) and investigates how “world society” is symbolically and interactively performed.
Publications:


On the geopolitics of need:
The production of geopolitical images through aid organizations

Funded by: Fritz Thyssen Stiftung
Principal Investigators: Prof. Dr. Paul Reuber (Westfälische Wilhelms-University of Münster)
                      Prof. Dr. Mathias Albert (Bielefeld University)
Project Team: Kirsten Linnemann
              Anne Tecklenborg
              Sebastian Lemme
Project Duration: 2011 – 2013

The project aims to analyse how fundraising campaigns of non-public aid and donor organizations utilize geopolitical and gendered images and thus contribute to ‘strategic regionalisations’, i.e. visions of some kind of quasi-given geographical disparities of world society, operating as parts of hegemonic discursive formations. A guiding question is the extent to which NGOs which actually aim at overcoming regional and social disparities partially contribute to reproducing them: How do “wellintending” actors of international aid organisations locate “needy others”? How are specific spatial constructions (stereo-typed in order to talk about allegedly “underdeveloped” and “needy” regions? The project analyzes PR and fundraising campaigns under this perspective, focusing on development and emergency aid organizations on the one hand (Münster), and child help/protection organizations on the other hand (Bielefeld).

Publications:
Polar (Geo-) Politics:
How does Global Environmental Change (GEC) cause a transformation of political relationships between and within the circumpolar Argentina, Canada, Chile and the U.S.?

Funded by: Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, Project Segment of the interdisciplinary BMBF project "The Americas as Space of Entanglement(s)"

Principal Investigators: Prof. Dr. Mathias Albert (Bielefeld University)

Project Team: Dorothea Wehrmann

Project Duration: 2013 - 2017

Environmental change caused by continuing global warming and climate change has precipitated growing political interest on the part of various state and non-state stakeholders in the polar regions. With new access to formerly ice-covered areas, economic opportunities (particularly the prospect of resource extraction and the use of new seaways) have arisen. This has put policy makers in a double bind: While, on the one hand, collective measures are needed to protect the environment; on the other hand, the exploitation of valuable and limited resources serves economic interests. Against this background the research project deals with the question of whether this political challenge is leading to more cooperation between pivotal political actors in the Arctic and in the Antarctic region or supports the return to and/or development of stronger national "Polar identities" in four selected countries.

In a first step, main political actors involved in polar politics will be identified. Due to their geographic proximity to both regions, the project focuses on actors from Argentina, Chile, Canada, and the USA that are particularly affected by the impact of environmental change and political developments in the Arctic and the Antarctic. In a next step follows the examination of their positions as explicated in official documents (laws, strategy and policy papers, declarations and campaigns). The comparison of their diverse interests (also considering assumed legitimations) will reveal if political actors are envisaging cooperation in the polar regions or not. Moreover, the depiction of crucial events and influential policies that relate to the polar regions will be examined in important national print media in order to, first, clarify the perception of polar politics in the media and, second, to compare how specific mental images are used by political actors and the media with regard to polar politics.

Publications:
Social Security as a Human Right.
The Global Construction and Diffusion of Civic Minima
(FLOOR = Financial Assistance, Land Policy, and Global Social Rights)

Funded by: .......................................................... German Research Foundation (DFG)

Principal Investigators: ........................................... Prof. Lutz Leisering PhD (Bielefeld University)
Prof. Dr. Benjamin Davy (Dortmund University of Technology)
Prof. Dr. Ulrike Davy (Bielefeld University)

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Aylin Alexandra von Radzewieski
Jens Hansschmidt
Tao Liu
Tim Vitic

Project Duration: .................................................... 2010 - 2015

Towards global social citizenship? The research group FLOOR aims to advance the new field of research ‘Global Social Policy’ in theoretical, empirical and methodological terms from an interdisciplinary perspective, encompassing sociology, land policy studies, and law. The group comprises three research projects:

- a project on social cash transfers, directed by Prof. Lutz Leisering PhD, Institute for World Society Studies and Faculty of Sociology, Bielefeld University;

- a project on socio-ecological land policy, directed by Prof. Dr. Benjamin Davy, School of Spatial Planning, Dortmund University of Technology; and

- a project on global social (human) rights, directed by Prof. Dr. Ulrike Davy, Institute for World Society Studies and Faculty of Law, Bielefeld University.

Additionally, FLOOR is associated with a cooperation group funded by the Zentrum für interdisziplinäre Forschung (ZiF) in Bielefeld (April through June 2011).

The FLOOR group starts from the assumption that social policy and, even more, ‘welfare state’ are concepts which originated in European nation states, expressing a formal responsibility of governments for individual welfare. Can we expect that social policy in this sense will also emerge in the global arena, even in the face of cultural diversity,
economic globalisation and the absence of a world state? We enquire into the rise of global social policy: What does ‘global social policy’ mean? What is ‘global’ and what is ‘social’ in global social policy? For our study we choose social security as a key field of social policy, especially basic social security which is a test case because it represents the moral minimum in social welfare (‘social floor’): Is there a global social minimum? We assume that three forms of basic social security have gained importance in world politics in recent years but are under-researched and normally not analysed together: social rights in a human rights context; social cash transfers; and socio-ecological land policy which aims to secure access to vital land use by individuals.

The overarching question is whether the move towards a global social floor in these three dimensions can be seen as a step towards global social citizenship. Regarding the more modest goal of fighting poverty, social cash transfers are often associated with the hope to reduce poverty in the short term, thus contributing to the Millennium Development Goal of halving global poverty till 2015. Land rights are a sensitive issue in global discourses because they involve territorial sovereignty and the distribution of wealth. Still, the Millennium Development Goal 7.11 aims at tenure security when it demands that, by 2020, a ‘significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, as proposed in the “Cities without slums” initiative’ be achieved. Social (human) rights are perceived as conceptual framework for combating global poverty.

Publications:


The construction of political spaces by semantics of in- and exclusion: Development and function of the term “international community” in politics and in the law of nations

Funded by: Project Segment of SFB 584 (Collaborative Research Centre) “The Political as Communicative Space in History”

Principal Investigators: Prof. Dr. Mathias Albert (Bielefeld University)

Project Team: Dr. Jochen Walter

Project Duration: 2008 - 2012

The project focuses on the changing semantics and strategies of in- and exclusion with regard to the term “international community”. The term of the “international community” is often and prominently used in political and public debates. Nevertheless, this prominence coincides with an extreme ambivalence in the use of the term and its actual content. In international politics as well as in the mass media, the term “international community” is used extensively to label a coherence of the world of nation states guaranteed by norms and rules. It is thereby mainly used in an excluding manner: The reference to an “international community” generally highlights the denomination or explicit conviction of an action to be standing outside the international community. Besides, the content of such a community is not explained or at best assumed by reference to certain fuzzy norms or behavioral standards. The term or concept “international community” has thus to be regarded as a kind of “empty” or “floating signifier” which is not, or only temporarily, charged with specific meanings. But even though or maybe even because of that, it can be used strategically to support a certain argumentative position or to justify certain politics. The project analyzes the shifting meanings of the concept of “international community” in two different discursive arenas. On the one hand, it looks at the vast body of scientific literature that has dealt or still deals with the definition and problems of “community” in an international context. On the other hand, the daily usage of the concept shall be analyzed, for example in the news coverage.

Publications:
Research Projects

The discursive construction of conflict and international organizational decision-making processes between normative frameworks of peacebuilding and securitization. The case of the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI)

Funded by: .................................................. German Foundation for Peace Research

Principal Investigators: .................... Prof. Dr. Mathias Albert (Bielefeld University)

Project Team: ........................................ Kerstin Eppert
Mitja Sienknecht

Project Duration: ......................... 2012 - 2014

The current project focuses on the impact which a ‘security overlay’ may have on the implementation of an international intervention. Using the case of the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), the project comprises two main areas of research. Connecting organizational and sociocultural dimensions of international interventions, the project asks, firstly, how contextual frameworks of securitization and peacebuilding shape and guide decision-making processes of international interventions in (post-) conflict environments. It analyzes decision-making strategies that are used in order to manage contextual uncertainty that emerges from the conflictive logics of securitization and peacebuilding. Secondly, the findings will be contextualized in view of the interrelation between world society (theory) and the construction of the ‘Other’.

The primary aim of the project is to contribute to a better understanding of the interdependence between the international political context, the parameters and operations of international assistance missions and the relevance of the normative frameworks of securitization and peacebuilding for the implementation of the missions. The secondary aim is to provide concrete input to the improvement of oversight mechanisms of international organizations involved in the missions by explaining the interdependence of the ‘re’- or ‘deconstruction’ of conflict and organizational decision making.

Publications:
The history of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy

**Funded by:** Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy

**Principal Investigators:**
- Prof. Dr. Werner Abelshauser (Bielefeld University)
- Prof. Dr. Jan-Otmar Hesse (Bielefeld University)
- Apl. Prof. Dr. Christopher Kopper (Bielefeld University)

**Project Team:**
- Tristan Graefen
- Raphael Hennecke

**Project Duration:** 2012 - 2015

On November 1, 2011, the German Federal Minister for Economic Affairs appointed Werner Abelshauser as part of the ministry’s independent historical commission. This commission is tasked with researching the history of German economic policy featuring the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy and its predecessor organizations as main actors. Starting with the history of the establishment of the Reich Office of Economic Affairs in 1917, the research project covers the period until German reunification in 1990 with a perspective to present time. The results will be published in four volumes. Abelshauser will be the managing editor of the fourth volume (Federal Republic of Germany from 1945 to 1990). He has asked colleagues from German and British Universities with extensive research experience in German economic history (in Bielefeld Jan-Otmar Hesse and Christopher Kopper) to contribute to this volume. The group of investigators also takes part in volume II. For research into source materials, the authors will travel not only to the Federal Archives in Berlin and Koblenz, but also to the State, Federal and European Archives in London, Paris, Washington, D.C. and Florence/Italy. The fourth volume will be focused on the very character of German economic policy on two empirical fields. How is German economic policy placed between the single European market and world market strategies? And what is its position between economic governance (Ordnungspolitik) and process policy: i.e. regulatory economic governance (Produktive Ordnungspolitik).
Research Training Group 844 (2003-2012)
'World Society – Making and Representing the Global'

Report by Ralf Rapior/ Christian Hilgert

Since the establishment of the post graduate program, the dissertation projects of its members addressed a broad array of structures and semantics of world society. But while in the course of the first generations there has been a strong focus on "structures" this focus shifted to "semantics" over the years. This development was in particular stimulated by the conceptual proposition of Bettina Heintz and Tobias Werron to highlight the cognitive or cultural dimension of globalization (e.g. categories, stories, discourses, narratives, models) as opposed to the mainstream focus of globalization research on the relational dimension (e.g. global flows, network ties, action chains). Following this proposition, in the final phase of the graduate school attention was directed to the performance of global observation practices and systems for the emergence and development of worldwide structures, i.e. actual relational processes between actors or events.

Particularly, the concept of "global categories" became a center of theoretical and empirical attention. It refers to specific cognitive schemes, e.g. classifications, cultural idioms and typologies, which play a crucial part in the emergence of global systems of meaning and action. The graduates outlined and discussed approaches to global categories and applied them to different world societal research areas, e.g. the category of ‘indigenous people’ in the context of United Nations policies, product categories in global markets, ‘invasive species’ as a globalization related ecological risk, visual forms allowing to see the ‘world as a whole’ and actor categories in global politics.

This line of research shared and elaborated an understanding of global categories as cognitive devices of global communication processes. Such devices structure evaluation processes of local entities and events by placing them into global horizons of comparison. Thus previously disparate social and natural entities can be perceived as similar and related items, e.g. as participants in global competitions or as events of one worldwide social or natural system (e.g. elements of financial markets, causes or effects of climate change).
What counts as an element in such orders is by no means a simple reflection on the nature of things, but a product of categorization. If global categories are institutionalized and disseminated their reception can stimulate affirmative, creative or critical actions which produce, transform or cut linkages between observed entities and events. Through such feedback loops global categorization does not only describe global connections, but produces and changes them.

The joint work on global categories culminated in a final conference of the graduate school in June 2012. Under the heading "Globalisierende Kategorien – Verweltgesellschaftung durch Beschreibung" (Globalizing Categories – The Emergence of World Society through Descriptions) the conference reflected and evaluated the development and outcomes of the whole graduate program in the light of the relevance of categorical devices for globalization processes. The various sessions and contributions discussed conditions and consequences of the emergence, universalization, distribution, reception, and institutionalization of global categories, identified mechanisms of categorical globalization in the context of different theories and empirical cases, and estimated their relevance to World Society Studies.
Conferences and Workshops

2014

Annual conference of the Institute for World Society Studies
30./31.11.2014, Bad Salzuflen

“Understanding Southern Welfare – the B(R)ICS countries”
24.11. - 26.11.2014, Bielefeld
Organizers: Ulrike Davy/Lutz Leisering/Benjamin Davy

“Social Evolution in World Politics“ (Workshop)
02./03.06.2014, München
Organizer: Mathias Albert

2013

“Quantifying the World Society. Knowledge technologies, governance, rights”
Author’s colloquium with Sally Engle Merry (New York University)
11./12.11.2013, Bielefeld
Organizer: Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka

„Spaces of violence in democracies“
24. - 26.10.2013, Bielefeld
Organizers: Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka/Eva Gerharz/Christian Meyer

„Global inequality and development”
07./08.02.2013, Bielefeld
Organizers: Katja Freistein/Martin Koch/Bettina Mahlert

„Menschenrechte in der Weltgesellschaft“ (Workshop)
24./25.01.2013, Bielefeld
Organizers: Bettina Heintz/Britta Leisering

2012

„How are global markets possible?“
15./16.12.2012, Luzern
Organizers: Tobias Werron/Martin Bühler

„In search of the „social“: European and global perspectives on the idea of the welfare state”
14./15.12.2012, Bielefeld
Organizer: Lutz Leisering

Annual conference of the Institute for World Society Studies
29./30.11.2012, Bad Salzuflen
Events

„Global horizons of comparison: Comparative politics and world society“
26./27.10.2012, Blankenbach
Organizers: Mathias Albert/Detlef Sack

„Exploring global social citizenship: Human rights perspectives“
27./28.06.2012, Bielefeld
Organizers: Ulrike Davy/Lutz Leisering/Benjamin Davy

„Globalisierende Kategorien – Verweltgesellschaftlichung durch Beschreibung“
08/09.06.2012, Bielefeld
Research Training Group 844 'World Society - Making and Representing the Global', final conference

„Arbeit in der Weltgesellschaft. Zur Transnationalisierung hochqualifizierter Arbeit“
25./26.05.2012, Bielefeld
Organizer: Ursula Mense-Petermann

„Changing patterns of migration – changing patterns of inequalities? Borders and boundaries in the enlarged Europe“
(in cooperation with ZDES)
12./13.04.2012, Bielefeld
Organizers: Anna Amelina/Andreas Vasilache/Tatjana Zimenkova
Lecture Series 'Signaturen der Weltgesellschaft'

Summer term 2012
Bo Strath (Helsinki)
Christian Reus-Schmidt (Florenz)
Roland Wenzlhuemer (Heidelberg)
Daniel Maul (Gießen)

Winter term 2012/2013
Julia Angster (Mannheim)
Alexander Engel (Göttingen)
Sven Opitz (Hamburg)
Daniel Speich (Luzern)

Summer term 2013
Hans Joas (Freiburg)
Samuel Moyn (New York)
Misha Petrovic (Singapur)

Winter term 2013/2014
Sally E. Merry (New York)
Volker H. Schmidt (Singapur)
Mathias Albert (Bielefeld)

Summer term 2014
Stefan Kühl (Bielefeld)
Elmar Rieger (Bamberg)
Boris Holzer (Bielefeld)
Hanna Lerner (Tel Aviv)

Winter term 2014/2015
Thorsten Bonacker (Marburg)
Eveline Dürr (München)
Rudolf Stichweh (Bonn)
Alexandra Kaasch (Bielefeld)
Publications 2012 - 2014


Report
2012–2014