

**EUROCORES Program BOREAS: Histories from
the North - environments, movements, narratives**

**BOREAS Workshop "Heading North, Heading South:
Arctic social-sciences research in a global dialogue"**

Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle
6-9 March 2008

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: 10 GRANTS FOR WORKSHOP PARTICIPATION

The European Science Foundation is providing funds for 10 grants to enable young scholars to participate in the BOREAS Workshop "Heading North, Heading South: Arctic social-sciences research in a global dialogue". This event, as part of the European Science Foundation EUROCORES Programme BOREAS, is supported by funds from the EC Sixth Framework Programme under Contract no. ERAS-CT-2003-980409.

www.esf.org/boreas/

BOREAS is an ESF-funded initiative for promoting research in humanities and social sciences in the North, for the North, and from a Northern perspective.

The North has long been influential in the history of European humanism and science, and this significance is set to increase in the run-up to International Polar Year in 2007-8.

A major commitment of BOREAS is to place the circumpolar North into wider contexts. There is the need for "deprovincializing" Arctic/Northern social-sciences research. BOREAS has the unique potential to demonstrate how social-sciences and environmental research activities in the Arctic can provide new insights for, and be linked up with, research in other parts of the world. The Workshop "Heading North, Heading South: Arctic social-sciences research in a global dialogue" will offer a major opportunity to do so.

BOREAS researchers will share their "lessons from the North" with internationally renowned scholars who, in their turn, will offer "lessons from the South" (Africa, Central and South Asia, South America, and other regions of the southern hemisphere). Seven sessions will be organized facilitate the dialogue from cross-sectional perspectives. In addition to bringing together renowned scholars from the South and the North, the workshop also aims at integrating the next generation of scholars into the debates. For this reason, the European Science Foundation has provided financial means for 10 Workshop Grants.

Workshop sessions

1 Frontiers and borders

The Amazon and the Arctic, the deserts of Africa and Siberia all carry the notion of frontier. Previously perceived by colonial powers as peripheral regions that need yet to be conquered, civilized and exploited, these regions and their inhabitants were subjected to scientific inquiry in a specific way. Nation-state borders cut across the Arctic, fragmenting indigenous peoples' spaces politically and economically. Perceptions the North have somewhat changed over the last years, but the geopolitical role of the Arctic as a mineral resource base still prevails. What does the legacy of colonial research have to offer to the descendants of those who were then "under study"? How do incomers and long-time settlers negotiate "belonging" to the community and how do they deal with shifting notions of "home" and "frontier"?

2 Indigeneity and indigenism

In both the North and the South, indigenous movements have strongly grown in importance over the last 10 to 20 years. They have established trans-national and international networks. New forms of identity representation and political leverage have resulted in a much higher degree of complexity of legal and political negotiations. How do indigenous movements, organizations and spokespeople connect with and represent themselves towards official institutions on the one hand, and how with local communities on the other?

3 Conversion and community cohesion

Along with the growing importance of spirituality and the “return” to religion that can be observed in many regions of the world, there is increased interest in the activities of various religious denominations worldwide (for example, Pentecostalism). For the individual who has converted, religion provides a new sense of belonging and participation in a truly global network; however, missionary activities may have a negative impact on the social “fabric” of the local community. What do we know about the speed and intensity of conversion processes in different regions of the North/South? To what extent can we speak of religious identifications as either collaterals or alternatives to ethnic/indigenous ones? Why does religious conversion help create a particular local identity in some cases, whereas in other cases it has a disruptive effect on community cohesion?

4 Migration

Of all migratory processes affecting Northern and Southern countries likewise, rural out-migration is the most decisive one. More and more, sparsely populated areas lose permanent residents, as employment is more and more concentrated in urban areas. On the other hand, there is a trend to temporal forms of residency and land use (e.g. tourism, mineral resource extraction). How much do we know about the reasons for these migrations, and what are the likely consequences for both rural and urban areas? How do changing patterns of land use influence people’s perceptions of “home” and their degree of mobility?

5 Relocation

Patterns of displacement and relocation in the North seem to be caused by very different processes than in the South. While refugees appear to be a “Southern” problem, resettlement over large distances, organized by state authorities “from above”, is a phenomenon known from many parts of the North. These processes seem to lead in opposite directions: some people are pushed to the periphery whereas others are moved to the centre against their will. To what extent can such divergent cases be discussed and

integrated within a common theoretical framework, such as colonialism? What do we know about local responses and coping strategies, physically and psychologically?

6 Development and conversation

The political discourse on development is commonly associated with “third-world” countries in the South. Development policies in the North have received much less attention, although nation-wide modernization projects (e.g. during Soviet times) have led to large-scale social and economic change, and frequently also to environmental change. The discourse on nature conservancy runs counter to the one on development and modernization. Who takes part in the formulation of such principles as “rational land use”, “sustainable development”, protection of “cultural heritage”? How are they implemented in practice, appropriated and/or subverted by various actors? How, and how much, are social scientists themselves involved in local empowerment or paternalism?

7 Environmental change

Public awareness of global climate change has led to increasing attention of the Polar Regions. Research on the likely impact of global climate change on land use and human living conditions is now being conducted in many parts of the Arctic. Climate change in the Arctic is likely to improve access to mineral resources and spur new conflicts concerning the control over resources. Why is there, in comparison, such a small number of studies that address the impact of global environmental change on economies and populations in Africa or other “Southern” regions? How do farmers, hunters and pastoralists deal with climatic risk factors in semi-arid regions as compared to the tundra and tree-line regions? How can research on prehistoric environmental conditions and human adaptations help us to understand the consequences of climate change from a long-term perspective?

With the aim to assess these questions, the BOREAS Scientific Committee will bring together scholars who are known for their competence and international scientific impact.

Programme Outline

The Workshop will be held at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle (Saale), Germany. For information about the Institute please visit www.eth.mpg.de

March 6: inter-CRP meetings before the start of the workshop

March 7: opening session, keynote speech, sessions 1-3, poster session

March 8: sessions 4-7, workshop dinner

March 9: final session, inter-CRP meetings after the end of the workshop

Your application for a Workshop Grant

The 10 junior researchers who join the workshop on the basis of a grant are expected to present their current research activities in a poster session. Your application for a Workshop Grant should summarize the scope and topicality of your research activities and simultaneously make clear how your research articulates with the issues and questions discussed in the seven thematic sessions of the workshop (2 pages maximum) and a short CV (2 pages maximum). We encourage applications from all over the world, with applicants having typically received their doctoral degree in humanities or social sciences within the last 4 years.

Workshop Grants will cover national and international travel to Halle (Saale) within reasonable limits (economy airfare, 2nd class railway tickets), full board, and accommodation for 5 consecutive nights.

Please address applications or further inquiries to

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Subject Header: BOREAS Workshop Grant

Deadline for applications: 16 December 2007