

CALL FOR PAPERS

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AMDO RESEARCH NETWORK

International Workshop, Prague, February 2017

Dynamics of Power:

Political, Sociocultural, Religious, and Economic Structures in Past & Present

Amdo

This second Amdo Research Network workshop continues to focus on “dynamics”, this time emphasising the interdisciplinary notion of power. While definitions of “power” are as ubiquitous and problematic as those of “culture”, the socio-political theorist Steven Lukes aptly observed that “power” goes beyond classic definitions of power as the ability to achieve outcomes. Power is also the ability to confine the scope of decision-making processes, including conscious “nondecision-making” (suppressing divergent voices), as well as the ability to shape people’s perceptions and preferences in order to legitimise one’s own agenda. Conversely, John Friedmann envisioned empowerment as alternative forms of development by subaltern groups, based on a view of power as a transformative capacity. This may involve creative adaptations and strategic redeployments of dominant notions for subaltern purposes.

In regards to power, research on Tibetans has at times been dominated by a somewhat simplistic and unidirectional binary framework of the dominant Han majority (or government / state) versus the subaltern or “oppressed” Tibetans. In this way, much more complex local power relations are easily overlooked. Development-as-power has long been part of Chinese governmentality, not least since the advent of “holistic development” (Ch. *quanmian fazhan*). But this is also a prime example of the complexities and contradictions of power dynamics. There are not only alternative minority agendas of the Chinese “development” notion. We also encounter development-as-power dynamics within the Tibetan community, i.e. between educated elites and lesser-educated rurals, or within and among other ethnic groups inhabiting the Amdo area, such as for example the Mongols, Han or Hui.

Amdo Research Network

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At this second workshop, presentations of the dynamics of power in Amdo and Yushu are anticipated to be diverse and expected to transcend purely binary constellations of Han vis-a-vis minority. The dynamics of change highlighted during the first workshop already point toward many multi-faceted power dynamics across disciplinary boundaries, involving many areas such as religion, health, education, politics or economics, etc., viewed from the perspective of different historical periods. This second workshop will offer a focused continuation and expansion of these findings within a range of topics.

We welcome paper submissions from researchers with a focus on Amdo and Yushu regions. We again encourage participants, if possible, to coordinate their papers and presentations so that they can coherently align with a given theme.

The workshop will be organised through kind support of the Oriental Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, the Faculty of Arts of Charles University and the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation International Sinological Center at Charles University.

The accommodation in Prague will likely be provided for the participants, limited travel funds for the participants are to be confirmed.

As before, presenters will be invited to submit their papers for peer-reviewed publication in the second issue of "Mapping Amdo" edition volume of the Amdo Research Network.

Please let us know your interest in participating as soon as possible. The submission deadline for titles is 31st of March 2016. The final abstracts can be submitted until 30th of June 2016.

For submission or any questions, please contact Jarmila Ptackova at ptackova@orient.cas.cz, Adrian Zenz at adrian@zenz.org, or Ute Wallenböck at ute.wallenboeck@univie.ac.at.

We look forward to proceed with idea of Amdo Research Network and see as many of you as possible in Prague!

Ute Wallenböck

Adrian Zenz

Jarmila Ptackova

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