

Einladung zum

# Mongolei-Colloquium

Donnerstag, 05. November 2015

18 (c.t.) – 20 Uhr

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## **Making Mongolia Multi-Ethnic: Knowledge, Power and Identity**

Today, Mongolians are accustomed to think of themselves as forming a nation (*ündesten*) and an ethnicity (*ugsaatan*) of more than 20 “nationalities” (*yas ündes* or *yastan*) or “ethnic groups” (*ugsaatny büleg*) such as the Khalkha, Dörböd, Dariganga and so on. All of these sub-Mongolian categories are officially recognized as “nationalities” and publicly accepted as “ethnic groups”. Yet, paradoxically, all of these “ethnic groups”, with the exception of the Kazakhs, are considered to belong to the Mongol ethnicity.

This situation raises several important questions. What exactly are these sub-Mongolian “ethnic groups” if they are ethnically Mongol? What could have motivated the Mongolian state to divide its own population into multiple nationalities instead of cementing them into a single nationality, as it was the case in most of the modern nation-building projects? How were these “different” nationalities or ethnic groups identified and recognized? How do Mongolians know to which nationality they belong? How and why have Mongolians come to think of themselves in ethnic terms at all?

To answer these questions, the research examines two hitherto neglected, yet critical developments: the ethnological study of Mongolia and the Mongolian state’s nationality policy, and their impact on Mongolians’ way of conceptualizing themselves in terms of nationalities or ethnic groups. In addition, by analyzing the agency that the state power and “scientific” knowledge play in the construction of an ethnically framed vision of society, this research aims to explore the theoretical implication of Mongolia’s apparently paradoxical and counterintuitive case to the understanding of ethnicity.

**Ort:** Universität Bonn, IOA  
Abteilung für Mongolistik und Tibetstudien  
Regina-Pacis-Weg 7 (Gebäude des Ägyptischen Museums)  
Raum: ÜR 2024 /Bibliothek

**Alle Interessierten sind willkommen!**