



## ZiF-WORKSHOP

**Momentum of its own  
Inherent Dynamism in Pre-Modern Societies**

12 –14 February 2020

Franz-Josef Arlinghaus, Andreas Rüther (both Bielefeld, GER)

The core thesis the conference wants to discuss is that the fundamental structures of pre-modern societies worldwide display elements which are in themselves driving forces for constant changes of these societies. At the same time, the nature of this change is specifically pre-modern. This continuous restructuring, so the second assumption, tends to lead to these very structures becoming clearer. In other words: in a way, pre-modern societies come into their own only by the end of the observation period (c. 700 to c. 1700), shortly before their comparably rapid and surprising restructuring into a functionally differentiated modern age.

The organisers developed most of their considerations on the basis of West European material on the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age. The workshop aims at a) assessing the theses regarding this region, b) discussing them with experts in pre-modern history of other world regions, and c) putting this approach up for discussion in the field of historical research. “Inherent dynamism” as a term and general concept means that *specifiable* changes can arise *from the phenomena themselves*, for instance through the interaction of elements belonging to them.

As basic structures of pre-modern societies, three aspects appear to be central: 1. Segmentary formation of groups: Max Weber drew attention to the fact that membership in a group (guild, monastery, aristocratic *familia*) comprehensively determined the overall quality of the person right into private life. The ensuing membership regimes and jurisdictional problems led to permanent restructuring of both the internal structure of these groups and the relationships between them. 2. Estate-based hierarchical order: Niklas Luhmann emphasized the extensive equality within an estate, but hardly bridgeable difference between the different estates (e.g. between nobility and peasants). However, both the gradual differences within and the differences between the *strata* repeatedly required reaffirmation and/or readjustment. 3. Presence culture and consensus orientation: courts, councils and diets and the people’s presence or absence there had a completely different constitutive meaning than today; dissent and dissenting opinions were dealt with differently than in the present.

We therefore ask whether the specifically pre-modern relationship of the individual to the respective association of persons, whether the hierarchical structure of societies and the type of communication show similarities across world regions that generate comparable dynamics of their own.

The aim of the conference is to explore the explanatory potential of inherent dynamics as an up to now almost unregarded impetus for social change in pre-modern times. The question is whether, and if so, to what extent, changes have arisen from the basic structures of pre-modern societies themselves. The importance of other aspects (e.g. cultural transfer, entanglement of different regions) should not be questioned. Precisely because the project also takes these proposals seriously, weighing these incentives for change against the considerations made here will be a question of importance as well.

The innovative aspect of the project is that pre-modernism, which is usually regarded as static, is not only not described as static, but even produces social change from its own structure. The relevance of the thesis can be seen in the fact that it puts question marks behind the ‘special path-narratives’ that are prominent in every region of the world, which outline that one’s own modernity has roots that go back centuries and is based on one’s own specific culture.

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**WEDNESDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2020**


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30 minutes presentation / 30 minutes discussion

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13:00-14:00      *Get together Snack*

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14:00-14:30      Welcome Adress  
Franz-Josef Arlinghaus, Andreas Rütter: Einführung

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**1. Theoretical und conceptual principles**

Moderation: Elena Esposito, Bielefeld

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14:30-15:30      Rudolf Stichweh, Bonn:  
Eigendynamiken der Vormoderne und die Genese funktionaler Differenzierung

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15:30-16:00      *Coffee Break*

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16:00-17:00      Ulla Kypta, Hamburg:  
Eigendynamische Institutionalierungsprozesse. Überlegungen zur Entstehung von Organisationen und Normen

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17:00-18:00      Franz-Josef Arlinghaus, Bielefeld:  
Kampf um Autonomie und Freiheit? Zur Identifikation eigendynamischer Prozesse bei der Ausformung hochmittelalterlicher Stadtgesellschaften

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18:00-19:30      *Dinner at ZiF*

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19:30-20:45      **Evening Lecture**  
Moderation: Willibald Steinmetz, Bielefeld  
Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, Berlin:  
Verfahrensautonomie in der Vormoderne - von der Emergenz des Unwahrscheinlichen

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*Ab ca. 20:45      Wine and Snack*

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**THURSDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2020**


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**2. Dynamics in and between associations of persons**

Moderation: Angelika Epple, Bielefeld

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9:00-10:00      Daniel Schley, Bonn:  
Öffentlichkeit in Japan – Überlegungen zur Struktur politischen Handelns am Hof (10.–11. Jahrhundert)

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10:00-11:00      Frank Rexroth, Göttingen:  
Die Verbreitung der Universitäten in Europa – agency und Eigendynamik

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11:00-11:30      *Coffee Break*

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11:30-12:30 Masaki Taguchi, Sapporo:  
*Ikki* als Gruppenbildung vom japanischen Kriegeradel im Vergleich mit den spätmittelalterlichen deutschen Adelsverbindungen

12:30-14:00 *Lunch*

### 3. Hierarchy with implemented change? Estates and inherent dynamism

Moderation: Antje Flüchter, Bielefeld

14:00-15:00 Josef Matzerath, Dresden:  
 „Denen von Adel zukommende Erlustigungen gebrauchen“. Eigendynamik durch Konsens und Ausgrenzung

15:00-16:00 Julia Burkhardt, Heidelberg:  
 Fremde Könige im eigenen Land? Dynastische Umbrüche und gesellschaftliche (Eigen)Dynamiken im vormodernen Ostmitteleuropa

16:00-16:30 *Coffee Break*

16:30-17:30 Andreas Rüter, Bielefeld:  
 Kloster verpflichtet. Adelige Eigendynamiken in Mecklenburg und Pommern vom 12. bis 13. Jahrhundert

19:30 *Conference Dinner*

FRIDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2020

### 4. New forms of communication and new legal relationships as a result of inherent dynamic processes?

Moderation: Wolfgang Braungart, Bielefeld

9:00-10:00 Jörg Quenzer, Hamburg:  
 Dichten in Gemeinschaft: Anmerkungen zu literatursoziologischen Dynamiken in Japan am Übergang zur Frühen Neuzeit

10:00-11:00 Johannes Pahlitzsch, Mainz:  
 Zur rechtlichen Stellung der melkitischen Christen unter islamischer Herrschaft. Zwischen Bewahrung der Tradition und Assimilation (8.-13. Jahrhundert)

11:00-11:30 *Coffee Break*

11:30-12:30 Bethany Walker, Bonn:  
 Land tenure as instruments to changes in the social order in traditional agricultural societies

12:30-14:00 *Snack and end of conference*