

VORTRAG IM OBERSEMINAR**MONTAG, 13.01.2020****18:15 - 20 Uhr Raum L-155****Dr. Ivo Syndicus** (Maynooth University, Ireland):**Nation-building and the concept of 'culture' in Papua New Guinea****The reification of culture, consolidating provincial identities and emerging stereotypes: nation-building and the concept of 'culture' in Papua New Guinea**

In this paper, I analyse articulations of cultural difference, provincial identities, and related stereotypes among staff and students at the University of Goroka in Papua New Guinea. Drawing on 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork in 2013 and 2014, I illustrate how Papua New Guineans represent and reflect on putative cultural differences across the country. Students, for example, often suggest that their changed standing vis-à-vis kin that comes with the privilege of a university education is experienced differently across Papua New Guinea. These putatively different experiences relate to varying forms and expectations of reciprocity by kin and sponsors, which in turn become attributed to a distinct ethos of exchange and 'culture' of a province or region in Papua New Guinea. Such emic reifications and representations of 'culture' do not only become evoked as part of expressed self-identification with a province or region, but also circulate as stereotypes about others. I analyse these representational dynamics both in view of the historical trajectory of nationalism and provincial student associations at Papua New Guinean universities, and in terms of how the category and concept of 'culture' becomes mobilised in Papua New Guinea today, or reducing the institutional margins.