

English version

Prof. Dr. Elisabeth Schömbucher-Kusterer (retired)

Elisabeth Schömbucher studied Social Anthropology, Classical and Modern Indology, and Indian History at the South Asia Institute of the University of Heidelberg, graduating in 1979 with a Magister Artium (M.A.).

After a 22-month period of field research among the Vadabaliya, a group of South Indian maritime fishermen, she received her doctorate in Social Anthropology from the Faculty of Oriental and Classical Studies at the University of Heidelberg in 1984. Topic of the dissertation: "The Vadabaliya in Andhra Pradesh and in Orissa. Aspects of the Economic and Social Organization of a Maritime Society." The doctorate was followed by a ten-month post-doctoral research at the Department of Anthropology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1985.

In 2003, she completed her habilitation at the Faculty of Behavioral and Empirical Cultural Sciences at the University of Heidelberg, receiving the *venia legendi* for the subject of Social Anthropology. The topic of her habilitation thesis was "Wo Götter durch Menschen sprechen. Besessenheit in Indien." [Where Gods speak through Humans. Possession in India.] Since September 2009, she has been adjunct professor at the Faculty of Behavioral and Empirical Cultural Studies, University of Heidelberg.

From 1989-1999, Elisabeth Schömbucher was assistant professor in the Department of Social Anthropology at the South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University. From 1999-2001, she held the position of the Women's Habilitation Program of Heidelberg University. From 2002-2003, she was assistant professor at the Department of Indology at the University of Würzburg. Since the summer semester 2007, she has been teaching at the Chair of Indology, University of Würzburg on topics related to South Asian Anthropology and Interculturality.

From 2008 to 2014, she coordinated the inter-faculty teaching project "**Global Systems and Intercultural Competence**" (<https://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/gsik/gsik-startseite/>) at the Chair of Indology.

From 2014, she has coordinated the BMBF-funded Indo-German *M.S. Merian - R. Tagore International Centre of Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences* "*Metamorphoses of the Political: Comparative Perspectives on the Long Twentieth Century*" (ICAS:MP) at the University of Würzburg and represented the University of Würzburg as a member of the Joint Committee until 2019. Since 2014 she is also module coordinator of the module TM5 "The Challenge of Gender" (with Prof. Jörg Gengnagel and Prof. Janaki Nair). <https://micasmp.hypotheses.org/>

Her research interests include the performative aspects of folk culture and folk religious practice, particularly in possession cults. She conducted several extended periods of fieldwork in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. Other research interests include areas from the Anthropology of Death, with a focus on *Death Cultures in India* and *Global Living and Death*. Since 2016, she has been conducting research on "*Polyphonic narratives of transgender lives in India and Germany*" as part of ICAS:MP.

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