

Analysis of field research and behavioral aspects of field activities

Interactive Session with Anthropologist Martin Schoenhals

Resource Person: Dr. Martin Schoenhals

Venue: AMMACHI Labs, Amrita Vishwavidyapeetham, Amritapuri

Date: 23-09-2015

Attendees: Unnikrishnan R, Christopher Coley, Radhika Mohan, Bijesh Nambiar P.K, Alexander Muir, Vishnu Soman, Harish, and Srividya Sheshadri

Dr. Martin Schoenhals is a cultural anthropology professor who has taught at Columbia University, Johns Hopkins University, and more. He is currently visiting Amrita University and meeting with students and professors. Martin Schoenhals is a cultural anthropology professor who has taught at Columbia University, Johns Hopkins University, the University of Pennsylvania, Swarthmore College and Dowling College. He specializes in contemporary Chinese culture, with a secondary interest in India. Schoenhals is a fluent speaker of Mandarin Chinese, and he has lived in China and conducted research there for more than 25 years, the period during which that nation's massive industrialization has taken place.

His first book, *The Paradox of Power*, describes the role of "saving face" and shame in Chinese culture, helping to explain many of the puzzles scholars have raised about modern Chinese history. This book has attracted the attention of many scholars, leading to an invitation to address the faculty China seminar at Harvard University. Schoenhals strives to embody the ideals of a scholaractivist, and he has used his knowledge in a variety of venues to promote greater equality and tolerance, both nationally and internationally. He has recently finished a manuscript for another book, one that prescribes bold ideas for a new society based upon research from the social sciences and biology.

AMMACHI Labs hosted him for a three-day workshop and interactive session. He met with our researchers and other team members who have spent time in rural villages all over in India as part of the Women's Empowerment: Sanitation Campaign. With his specialization in contemporary Chinese culture and his research experiences in India, Dr. Schoenhals brought out several interesting insights on rural management. By presenting the factors of cultural hurdles to the social systems existing in the country, he exemplified the denial of rural management and pointed out how educational projects like LILA can resolve the issues to a great extent. As part of the Women's Empowerment: Sanitation Campaign, AMMACHI Labs team members visited many villages across India. Dr. Schoenhals interviewed each member about their village experiences and encouraged them to share their personal observations and gathered their suggestions on how to

improve the lives and environment of the respective village community. In this way, information was compiled from in-depth interviews about villages in Odisha, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and Goa.

He inspired our teams with insights and conducted a detailed analysis of our research and behavioral aspects of the field activities. We would be thrilled to have his guidance for our future endeavors.



AMMACHI Labs team members with Dr. Martin Schoenhals