

RESEARCH SEMESTER
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PARTICIPATION AT THE AUCA

In my mobility term, I went to the American University of Central Asia (AUCA) in the capital of Kyrgyzstan, where I participated in seminars on International Development, Production and Exchange in Social Life, the History of Kyrgyzstan, a Kyrgyz and a Russian language course.

JEWELLERY IN KYRGYZSTAN

A MIXTURE OF VALUES IN PRODUCTION AND USE

EXAMPLE

A case in point is a piece of jewellery made of coins to be worn by men as a pendant for the belt, and as hair decoration by women. The great variety of coins used in it (in terms of shape, materials, ornaments, with or without hole) brought about manifold scopes for design. This example expresses very well the commercial value (numeraire and means of payment) and the social value (indicator for status and wealth).

METHODOLOGY

I conducted a research on jewellery with different methods: questionnaire, (participant) observation, takings and drawings of pictures of jewellery that I saw while I walked on through the streets, literature research, and visits to museums and special exhibitions. And of course, I conducted different kinds of interviews with scholars, experts, students, and vendors – including a group interview when I was asked by a professor to present my theme of research in front of his class.

THEORETICAL FOCUS

For my MA thesis, I put my focus first on jewellery theory which includes the functionality and the impact of jewellery on humanity with the special focus on Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia. The second part is about the theory of anthropology of money; therefore, I aim at a comparison between different values of money and jewellery. My argument is based on the concept of „the two sides of the same coin“ which distinguishes between commercial and social value.