



## – Institute's Colloquium –

**Prof. Dr. Denis Monnerie**  
**Universität Straßburg**

### **From Gardens to Social Relations in Arama (Northern New Caledonia)**

The autochthonous inhabitants of the far north of New Caledonia – who call themselves Kanak - dedicate a great deal of time, care and reflexion to horticulture. Their gardens are a variant of the classic polyvarietal and polyspecific Oceanian gardens. A specificity of Kanak horticulture and relations with their world is the extreme valuation of yams (*Dioscorea alata*). This is striking throughout the whole sequence of operating procedures of yam cultivation. It will be stressed that growing yams implies the yearly recreation of a largely human made ecosystem intertwining many different species and varieties of cultivated, semi cultivated and wild plants. Yams play a prominent part in the ceremonial elaboration of relations, most obvious in the yearly first yam ceremony. In order to better understand the strong valuation of this plant, the paper will explore some of the features and dynamics shared by yams and humans.

**on Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

**4-6 p.m.**

**Institute of Ethnology**

**Stuttstraße 21, Raum STU 105 (2.10)**

**Everybody is welcome!**