In Memoriam
Franz von Benda-Beckmann

On January 7, 2013, Professor Franz von Benda-Beckmann passed away unexpectedly and prematurely, only shortly after his retirement. Franz has been a consulting editor for, and a regular contributor to, *Focaal* for many years.

A German national, he earned his PhD in law with an anthropological study on legal pluralism in Malawi (1970), and subsequently held positions in Zürich, Leiden, Wageningen and Halle. Together with his wife Keebet von Benda-Beckmann, Franz did long-term fieldwork in various parts of Indonesia and Nepal, and developed courses in legal anthropology – first in India and Nepal under the auspices of the Ford Foundation, and subsequently as part of the Legal Pluralism committee of the IUAES. By focusing their brand of legal anthropology on power, security, rights and sustainability against the backdrop of legal pluralism, Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann became the globally leading scholars in the field of legal anthropology. In 2000, they moved to Halle to set up a project group on legal pluralism at the newly established Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology.

Franz published 29 books – often in collaboration with Keebet or others – and numerous papers. In 1994 he co-edited (with Keebet and Hans Marks) a thematic issue of *Focaal* on ‘Coping with insecurity: An ‘underall’ perspective on social security in the Third World’ (republished in 2000 in Indonesia). In 2003 Franz rebutted Hernando de Soto in his *Focaal* article ‘Mysteries of capital or mystification of legal property?’. But he will, perhaps, be mostly remembered as a generous mentor to students and junior colleagues from around the world, and as a warm and pleasant colleague. *Focaal* would like to remember Franz von Benda-Beckmann for his contributions to global anthropology.