

Titel: 'Magic of the State': Power and Politics in Anthropology

VAK: 09-50-M4-6

Veranstalter: Dr. Ulrike Flader

Kurzbeschreibung:

Borrowing the title from Michael Taussig's (1997) book *The Magic of the State*, this seminar addresses some of the subtle assumptions which fundamentally shape our understandings of the state, power and politics.

From early on, anthropology has been interested in how societies are organised, how decisions are made, what hierarchies and political structures exist. The question of whether these societies have a state or not was key to political anthropology and what its representatives understood as political. Power, politics and the state remain to be crucial topics of anthropology, today.

This seminar aims at providing an introduction to the different ways in which anthropology has over time engaged with questions of the political. Focusing on key debates, questions and concepts, the seminar begins by looking into some early examples of anthropological writings and the crucial critique against them, before discussing research of contemporary scholars. In doing so, the seminar addresses the shifting approaches toward state and statelessness, hierarchies and inequalities, colonialism and transnationalism, power and resistance, policing and surveillance.

This seminar will be held in English, but assignments can also be handed-in in German.

Literatur:

Taussig, M. 1997. *Magic of the State*. New York: Routledge

Gledhill, J. 1994. *Power and its Disguises. Anthropological Perspectives on Politics*, London: Pluto Press

Vincent, J. (ed.) 2002. *The Anthropology of Politics. A Reader in Ethnography, Theory and Critique*, Oxford: Blackwell

Sharma, A. and Gupta, A. 2006. *The Anthropology of the State. A Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell

Talal Asad (ed) *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter*, Atlantic Highlands (NJ): Humanities Press

Trouillot, M. 2001. The Anthropology of the State in the Age of Globalization. Close Encounters of the Deceptive Kind. *Current Anthropology* 42 (1): 125-138

Fassin, D. 2011. *Enforcing Order. An Ethnography of Urban Policing*. Cambridge: Polity Press