



Wednesday Seminars

SOMMERSEMESTER 2018

Stan Frankland

The paradox of the performing 'Pygmy'

Donnerstag 13.06.2018, 17.00, HS C, IKSA, NIG, Universitätsstraße 7, 1010 Wien, 4. Stock



Stan Frankland is lecturer at the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of St Andrews. Dr. Frankland's research interests lie in visual anthropology (overlapping with art practices), African

'hunter-gatherers'-communities and hypermarginalities, colonial and post-colonial representations of Africa, as well as concerns with development, conservation and tourism.

...kommende Termine

20.06.2018 **18.30 Johannes Neurath**
Die Ambivalenz der Gabe in einer komplexen Gesellschaft gegen den Staat: Ritual und Autonomie der Wixarika West-Mexikos

Das Programm für den Herbst 2018 wird im September bekannt gegeben.

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The musical and choreographic skills of Africa's 'Pygmy' populations have long been defining features of their particular way of life. These performative talents have been taken as signifiers of a unique evolutionary heritage, as markers of ontological difference and of a sacred, forest-bound existence. Whilst acknowledging creativity and agency, this paper eschews a speculative longue duree and focuses on a relatively short-term and knowable history of events that have taken place in the Ituri forest, the Great Lakes region and Europe. From moments of colonial first contact through missionary encounters to contemporary engagements with the State, conservation and tourism, an image of the all singing, all dancing 'Pygmy' emerges. What this image reveals is a highly complex and shifting web of power relations that govern how the 'Pygmy' is conceptualized and, more importantly, how the world has and continues to engage with very real people. The performing 'Pygmy' has been given a value within a very particular logic and mode of extraction that involves hunting, capturing, trading and collecting in various forms. This 'Pygmy' has been biologized, zoologized and anthropologized, transformed into a cypher of other people's desires. The consequence is a state of exclusion, 'bare life' and extreme hypermarginality.