



## VORTRAG

### ERIC WOLF LECTURE

Jean Comaroff, John L. Comaroff

### History and the People beyond Europe: A Counter-evolutionary Story?

Rarely is "the Global South" seen as a source of theory and explanation for world historical events. Yet, as many nation-states of the northern hemisphere experience increasing fiscal meltdown, state privatization, corruption, ethnic conflict, and other crises, it seems as though they are evolving southward, so to speak, in both positive and problematic ways. Is this so? In what measure? In this lecture, Jean and John L. Comaroff take on these questions, seeking to reverse the usual order of things. They address a range of familiar themes – democracy, law, national borders, religion and the occult, liberalism and multiculturalism – and they ask how we might understand them anew with theory developed in the south. This view from the South renders key problems of our time at once strange and familiar, giving an ironic twist to the evolutionary pathways long assumed by social scientists, and by influential formulations like that of Eric Wolf in "Europe and the Peoples Without History."

**Am 9. November, besteht die Möglichkeit zu einer Diskussion mit Jean und John L. Comaroff;  
Zeit: 16.00-18.00 Uhr, Ort: IFK.**

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**Jean Comaroff**, Prof., is the Bernard E. and Ellen C. Sunny Distinguished Service Professor of Anthropology at the University of Chicago and Director of the Chicago Center for Contemporary Theory. She is also Honorary Professor at the University of Cape Town. Her research has focused on the making and unmaking of colonialism in southern Africa, medicine and body politics, religion and state transformation, crime and the "metaphysics" of disorder. She is IFK\_Guest of Director.

Publications (among others): with John L. Comaroff, *Theory from the South: Or How Euro-America is Evolving Toward Africa*, Boulder, CO 2010; with John L. Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.*, Chicago Studies in Practices of Meaning, London 2009; with John L. Comaroff, *Beyond the Politics of Bare Life: AIDS and the Global Order*, 2007; (eds.), *Law and Disorder in the Postcolony*, Chicago, London 2006; with John L. Comaroff, *Criminal Obsessions, After Foucault: Postcoloniality, Policing, and the Metaphysics of Disorder*, Chicago 2004; with John L. Comaroff, *Millennial Capitalism and the Culture of Neoliberalism*, Durham, NC/London, 2000.

**John L. Comaroff**, Prof., is the Harold H. Swift Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at the University of Chicago and Research Professor at the American Bar Foundation. He is also a former president of the Association for Political and Legal Anthropology in the USA. His current research in post-apartheid South Africa is on crime, policing, and the workings of the state, on democracy and difference, and on the nature of postcolonial politics. He is IFK\_Guest of Director.

Publications (among others): with Jean Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.*, Chicago, London 2009; (eds.), *Law and Disorder in the Postcolony*, Chicago, London 2006; (eds.) *Millennial Capitalism and the Culture of Neoliberalism*, Durham, NC/London, 2000; with Jean Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution* (2 vols.), Chicago, London 1991, 1997; with Jean Comaroff, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, Chicago, London 1992; (eds.) *Modernity and Its Malcontents*, Chicago, London 1993; (eds.), *Civil Society and the Political Imagination in Africa*, Chicago, London 1999.

**Kooperationsveranstaltung von IFK, dem Institut für Kultur- und Sozialanthropologie der Universität Wien sowie dem Institut für Sozialanthropologie der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.**

**8. November 2010  
18 Uhr c. t.  
Kleiner Festsaal der  
Universität Wien,  
1010, Dr. Karl Lueger-Ring 1**