



Institut für Politikwissenschaft



MeSoS Vienna
Department of Methods in the Social Sciences



Institut für
KULTUR- UND SOZIALANTHROPOLOGIE
Department of
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

The section “Ethnography” of the Department of Methods, the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, the Department of Development Studies, and the Department of Political Science (all at the University of Vienna) invite applications for:

Practices of Bureaucracy and State Practices. Power, Interaction, Exclusion

3rd Vienna Ethnography Lab, June 9th- 11th 2016

Practices of bureaucracy are inextricably linked to state power. Within the social sciences these practices have attracted more interest since the unified concept of the state as an entity was abandoned. Since then the question of how states are actually (re)produced through bureaucratic practices have taken centre stage. Following the cultural turn, different disciplines differentiate state images from state practices and insist on the analysis of the everyday working of local bureaucracies in order to understand the state (Gupta 1995, Migdal and Schlichte 2005). Furthermore, nation-state bureaucracies often use classificatory systems of in- and exclusion that build upon the symbolism of family and the language of blood and race (Herzfeld 1992). A distinct line of inquiry in organizational sociology focuses on bureaucrat-client interactions in welfare bureaucracies and how these produce policy and exclusions (Lipsky 1984; Dubois 2005). However, clients are not only disciplined or subordinated to such measures, but can use bureaucratic technologies within state welfare institutions to make “the state” act as wished for (Street 2012). Similarly, local implementations of standards issued by the central government express state ideas that become situationally negotiated on the ground (F. and K. von Benda-Beckmann 1994, 2007). Following Norman Long (1989) such interactions can be understood as ‘interfaces’ between the life-worlds of ordinary citizens, bureaucrats, and experts. Similarly Poulantzas’ idea of the state as social relation (Poulantzas 1978, Demirovic 2007), can be used as a window for an interdisciplinary dialogue between concrete empirically based sociological and ethnographic work and theoretical abstraction.

The laboratory’s goal is to provide a forum for intensive interdisciplinary discussions of young scholars’ ongoing or recently completed research in the field. Discussions will focus on practices of bureaucracy in their capacity of contributing to the creation of community as well as differentiation (inclusion/exclusion). Question might concern how boundaries between “the” state and other entities are dissolved, reproduced, and transformed in concrete institutional settings and social relations. Also, research might focus on the qualities of bureaucratic

interactive work and the capacity to reproduce power (i.e. affective labor). Possible examples include: practices in welfare bureaucracies, border regimes, the gendered nature of the state and the reproduction of gender inequalities through practices of bureaucracy, resource management / societal relationships with nature, concepts of "fragile" or "failed states" and the monopoly on the legitimate use of violence, concepts of indigeneity and processes of indigenization of the state.

The laboratory offers a selected group of advanced PhD students and young post-doctoral scholars (max. 12 participants) the opportunity to discuss their work with two distinguished guest scholars and present their findings and ideas at an interdisciplinary forum.

Guest Scholars 2016

Prof. Dr. Julia Eckert, Bern

Prof. Dr. Klaus Schlichte, Bremen

Organizers

Prof. Dr. Tatjana Thelen (Department of Methods / Social and Cultural Anthropology)

Prof. Dr. Birgit Sauer (Department of Political Science)

Prof. Dr. Wolfram Schaffar (Department of Development Studies)

Application

We invite prospective participants to send us their application by 15th March 2016 (**Deadline extended until 31st March 2016**). Applications should include a letter stating the reasons for applying, a short CV, an abstract (250 words maximum) and an outline of research results (up to 5 pages) to be presented at the laboratory.

Please send your application to: office.methodenzentrum@univie.ac.at

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of the selection process by mid-April 2016.

Format and Organization

The laboratory is based on the discussion of pre-circulated papers. Participants should hand in their full papers (up to 8000 words excluding the bibliography) by 15th May 2016 to be distributed among all participants. Participants are expected to read all papers in advance and comment at least on one of them during the workshop. The short presentations (10 minutes) will be followed also by guest scholars' comments and intensive discussion. Each day will be opened by a morning session with senior scholars' input.

Coffee breaks and lunches are provided. There are no fees; however please note that we cannot cover travel expenses or accommodation.



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