

070.431
Senses of the State
Fall 2015

Wednesday 1:30-3:50
Hodson 316

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Thursdays 11:00-1:00
Tuesday 2:00-4:00

This course examines the contributions and limitations of ethnographic research for theoretical and political discussions of the modern state. We begin by asking what sort of object "the state" is. We then engage texts and authors that show how ethnographic attention to the temporal, material and sensory domains of everyday life can complicate and deepen interdisciplinary discussions of sovereignty, bureaucracy, violence and expertise. During the final sections of the class, we explore new ethnographic approaches to the study of the neoliberal state, international governance and law.

Course requirements include:

- a) active participation in all class discussions
- b) responsibility for leading at least two seminar discussions during the semester
- c) a 5 page midterm exam
- d) a final 10-15 pp. paper due the last week of class.

Prompts for the **midterm** exam will be handed out in class on October 7. Final midterm essays will be due in class on Wednesday **October 14**.

The **final paper** for this class should draw on original library or ethnographic research to address or deepen theoretical issues and topics from the assigned readings. Students should plan to finalize the topic for their final paper at least three weeks before the due date. Students are also encouraged, but not required, to draw on short term ethnographic work in the form of interviews or observations. The instructor will work closely with those students who wish to carry out new research for the paper. Grading rubrics and detailed instructions for the final paper, which is due Weds **December 16**, will be handed out in class in early November.

Schedule of Readings

I. Defining the object

Sept. 2 Introduction to class

A. Gupta & Sharma. 2006. "Rethinking Theories of the State in an Age of Globalization." In A. Gupta and A. Sharma, eds. *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, pp. 1-42. Oxford, UK & Malden, Mass: Blackwell

Sept. 9

Philip Abrams. 1988. "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State," JOURNAL OF HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGY, 1(1):58-89 [reprinted in: A. Gupta and A. Sharma, eds. 2006. *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, pp.112-130.]

T. Mitchell 1991. "The Limits of the State." *Am. Pol. Sci. Rev.*, 85(1):77-95

Sept. 16

Pierre Clastres. 1989. *Society Against the State* (1974). R. Hurley, transl. New York: Zone Books; **READ**: pp.189-20? (last chapter)

V. Das & D. Poole, eds. 2004 "Introduction," In *Anthropology in the Margins of the State*, pp. 3-34. Santa Fe, MN: SAR Press,

recommended:

G. Deleuze & F. Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: **READ**: pp. 351-514

II. Affect and expertise

Sept. 23

Michel Foucault. 1991. "Governmentality" (1978). In G. Burchell, C. Gordon & P. Miller (eds.), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, pp. 87-104. Chicago: University of Chicago Press [Also available in: A. Gupta and A. Sharma, eds. 2006. *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, pp.112-130.]

Stuart Elden. 2007. "Governmentality, calculation, territory." *Environment and Planning D*, 25:562-580

Timothy Mitchell. 2002. "Can the Mosquito Speak?" *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-politics, modernity*, pp. 19-53. Berkeley: University of California Press

recommended:

James C. Scott. 1998. *Seeing Like a State*. New Haven: Yale University Press. [READ esp'ly: pp. 11-52, 87-102, & 262-306]

Sept. 30

Zeiderman. 2013. "Living dangerously: Biopolitics and urban citizenship in Bogotá," *American Ethnologist*, 40(1):71-87

Matthew Hull. 2008. "Ruled by Records: The expropriation of land and the misappropriation of lists in Islamabad," *American Ethnologist*, 35(4):501-518

Fabiana Li. 2015. "Stepping outside the document." In *Unearthing Conflict: Corporate Mining, Activism, and Expertise in Peru*, pp. 185-214

Andrew S. Mathews. 2008. "State Making, Knowledge and Ignorance: Translation and Concealment in Mexican Forestry Institutions," *Political and Legal Anthropology Review (PoLAR)*, 110(4):484-494

October 7

D. Fassin. 2015. In D. Fassin, et. al., *At the Heart of the State: The Moral World of Institutions*, Pluto Press: **READ:** Introduction, Conclusion and Chapter 4 (pp. 1- 14, 93-116, and 257-261).

Y. Navarro -Yashin. *The Make-Believe Space: Affective Geographies in a Post-war Polity*. Cambridge U.P. **READ:** "Part II. Administration" (chapters 4 & 5), pp. 81-127

recommended:

M. Weber. 2006. "Bureaucracy." In A. Gupta and A. Sharma, eds. *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, pp.49-70 . Oxford, UK & Malden, Mass: Blackwell

III. Sovereignty

October 14 (Midterm essay due in class)

Max Weber. "Politics as Vocation" (1919).

T. Blom Hansen & F. Stepputat. 2006. "Sovereignty Revisited," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 35:16.1-6.22.

October 21

M. Nuijten. 2003. *Power, Community and the State. The Political Anthropology of Organisation in Mexico*. London: Pluto Press

Salvador Maldonado Aranda. 2013. "Stories of Drug Trafficking in Rural Mexico: Territories, Drugs and Cartels in Michoacan," *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 9(april 2013):3-66

October 28

R. Kernaghan. 200. "Readings of Time: Of Coca, Presentiment and Illicit Passage in Peru." In M A Pederson & M. Holbraad, eds. *Times of Security: Ethnographies of Fear, Protest and the Future*, pp. 80-102. New York & London: Routledge

"Culture and violence in the Peruvian Andes: Sendero Luminoso and the State." In D. Poole, ed. *Unruly Order: Violence, Power and Regional Identity in the High Provinces of Peru*, pp. . Boulder: Westview Press

recommended:

G. Agamben. 1998. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford University Press

IV. Neoliberalism (Scale and Form)

November 4

M. Foucault. 2010. *The Birth of Biopolitics. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*. New York: Palgrave. **READ:** Lectures 1-4, pp.1-100

Loic Wacquant. 2012. "Three Steps to an Historical Anthropology of Actually Existing Neoliberalism," *Social anthropology*, 20(1):66-79

A Gupta & J. Ferguson. 2002. "Spatializing States: Towards an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality," *American Ethnologist*, 29(4):981-1002

November 11

D. Poole. 2015ms. "Taking Risks: Participatory Budgeting and Legal Form in the Peruvian Neoliberal State." In D. Poole & P. Harvey, *Experimental States*, forthcoming, (chapter draft)

Andrea Ballesterio. 2012. "Transparency Short-Circuited: Laughter and Numbers in Costa Rican Water Politics," *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, 35(2):332-341

Andrew Orta. 2013. "Forged Communities and Vulgar Citizens: Autonomy and Its Limits in Semi-Neoliberal Bolivia," *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, 18(1):103-133

Recommended:

Filippo Zerilli. 2013. "The Rule of Soft Law: An Introduction," *Focaal*, 56(1):3-18

November 18

K. Hastrup. 2013. "The Productive Uncertainty of Climate Change Models." In *Anticipating Nature: The Social Life of Climate Change Models*, pp.1-29. New York & London: Routledge

E. Lovebrand & J. Strippel. 2013. "Bringing Governmentality to Global Climate Governance." In J. Strippel & H. Bulkeley, eds. *Governing the Climate: New Approaches to Rationality, Power and Politics*, pp. 27-41. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press

K. Conca 2008. "Rethinking Authority, Territory and Knowledge." *In* K. Conca, J. Park & Matthias Finger, eds. , *The Crisis of Environmental Governance: Towards a New Political Economy of Sustainability*, pp. . New York & London: Routledge

November 19: (make up class for December 2): Review of readings; and discussion of final papers

November 25: No Class (Thanksgiving break)

December 2: No Class

December 16: Final Papers Due