

Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Call for Applications: Seminar 2014

When: Tuesday, December 9 to Friday, December 12,
Where: Café Sowieso, Wesemlinrain 3, 6006 Luzern
Language: English
Application deadline: September 25

The Politics of Knowledge and Representation

A Seminar with Professor Timothy Mitchell (Columbia University)

Organised by the GSL in cooperation with Professor Daniel Speich Chassé and Patricia Hongler, M.A.

The Scholar

Timothy Mitchell is a political scientist and professor of Middle Eastern Studies at Columbia University. He has made influential contributions to the history and politics of modernity as well as to cultural and postcolonial theory. His first book *Colonising Egypt* (1988) is a study of Western conceptions of order and truth and the making of modernity during colonialism. In *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (2002) Professor Mitchell examines the creation and power of technopolitics and the making of 'the economy' as an object, a topic that he further explores in his 2011 book *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil*. There he studies the role of coal and oil in the emergence and limitation of modern democracy.

The Seminar

The four-day seminar will offer a forum to discuss Professor Mitchell's theoretical and empirical work as well as the participant's own research projects. The emphasis will be on the importance of binarisms in the modern world and on how separations like the one between representation and reality influenced practices and forms of discipline or violence. These questions will be approached through various topics such as tourism, economic and technical expertise or democracy. We will discuss the making of objects that shaped the politics of the 19th and 20th century, for instance 'the orient' or 'the economy'. Finally, we will ask how material and technical things influence historical and political processes and thereby interact with human agency.

Participants

This is an interdisciplinary workshop aimed at PhD students from disciplines such as Ethnology, Cultural and Science Studies, Philosophy, Economics, History, Political Science or Sociology.

Participants are expected to give a presentation of 15 minutes based on their current research project and drawing on some of the questions mentioned above.

Application

Please send your application till September 25, 2014 to the following e-mail-address: gsl@unilu.ch. Please provide a short CV and an abstract (not more than one page) of your current research project.

If you have questions concerning the seminar, please contact patricia.hongler@unilu.ch