

in collaboration with the Africa Network Norway
hereby invite to an open seminar

*Note venue:
Universitetshuset room 4
Biskopsgatan 3, Uppsala*

Wednesday 24 March 2010, 10.00-12.00
Universitetshuset, room 4, Biskopsgatan 3

Explorations of 'Afrinesia'

Experimental Approaches to Political and Legal Anthropology in Africa

Africanist anthropology has widened its scope to encompass new phenomena such as 'globalisation', 'democratisation', 'modernity', and 'postcolonialism'. These processes and developments extend the reach of social dynamics beyond the limits of the anthropological fieldsite to question the salience of social phenomena, their relationships, and the relevant context of study.

In this respect, recent advances in Melanesianist anthropology are of relevance. Marilyn Strathern and her collaborators investigate notions of gender, personhood, and relationality to uncover pervasive forms that underpin local social life. In this process, theoretical oppositions and dichotomies - such as those between society and individual, nature and culture - are questioned, reconceptualised, and even dismantled.

This open seminar ends a two-day workshop that queries whether new approaches to political and legal anthropology in Africa are possible in light of concepts and ideas developed from Melanesia. The focus is restricted to these domains because they appear most affected by the new developments in Africanist anthropology, and seem most vulnerable to the presuppositions called into question by recent Melanesianist anthropology. The notion of 'Afrinesia' thus aims to contrive a conversation between far-flung peoples and places, in order to investigate similarities and differences between Africa and Melanesia, and explores novel approaches to legal and political anthropology.

Speakers:

Harri Englund, University of Cambridge

Niklas Hultin, Swarthmore College

Knut Christian Myhre, Nordic Africa Institute/University of Oslo

Daivi Rodima-Taylor, Boston University

Sita Zougouri, University of Ouagadougou

Inquiries: Knut Myhre, knut.myhre@nai.uu.se, 018-562271