

FIRST AND SECOND NATIONS:

Reframing State-Society Categories by Analyzing Nasjaro's Vicissitudes as Member of a Transnational African-Maroon family-community

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Abstract

This paper reframes state-society conceptions from an anthropological-systemic angle. It is also dedicated to Nasjaro and his Maroon family-community who was one of 500 hundred young men in a research sample of my clinical fieldwork in nation-state: The Netherlands. Being raised in an Afro-Surinam-Maroon extended '[indigenous peoples](#)' family, who migrated to the Netherlands when he was three, his skin-color wasn't the only 'out of place' feature in Dutch national contexts. Nasjaro ran already into trouble in a Dutch small-town primary school as a pitch-black kid among white children. From 13 to 21 he was incarcerated in different juvenile state-institutions. Nasjaro became an exemplary case in my anthropological-systemic analysis in how individual (male) agency and dominant-dependent positions of aboriginal Dutch (regional) and migrant minorities could be compared in multicultural nation-state contexts (Van Bekkum 1994; 1995; Van Bekkum 2010). Introducing the concepts of First Nations (indigenous peoples) and Second Nations (nation-states) the dramatic 'coming of age vicissitudes' of Nasjaro could be researched, analyzed and described in a more parsimonious and reflexive manner (Van Bekkum 2014). This twin concept was constructed by combining conceptions of Michel Foucault's 'state's techniques of disciplining power' (1979; 1982), of James Scott's 'art of not being governed' (2009) and of Krishan Kumar's 'nation-states as macro-historical multicultural experiments' (2010). This reframing of state-society relations makes Nasjaro's dramatic confrontations, as member of a First Nation family-community, with Second Nation's institutions intelligible by mapping the incompatibilities and complementarities of both human 'cybernetic' systems (Bateson 1972; Juarrero 1999; Deacon 2012; Weber 2013).

Literature

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CFP: BEYOND EXOTICISM HOW SPECIFIC AND GENERAL ARE AFRICAN STATE-SOCIETY RELATIONS?

Panel at the 6th European Conference on African Studies/ECAS 2015 Paris, 8-10 July 2015

Convenor(s): Philipps Joschka / Centre for African Studies Basel (CASB)

Lar Jimam / BIGSAS – University of Bayreuth Deadline: 09.01.2015

The study of state-society relations in Africa has received renewed attention in recent years. Many debates seem to have overcome earlier analytical problems, as they go beyond both the dichotomy and the conflation of state and society in Africa. The less exotic perspective now begs the question of how specific and how general 'African' state-society relations are. How do African and non-African cases relate to one another? What can we learn from African cases about the workings of the world at large? Can we understand their specificity in non-geographical terms? Finally, what are the respective potentials and risks of contextualizing, generalizing, or comparative approaches?

To address these questions, we solicit papers that interpret their empirical material with a strong methodological and theoretical focus on generalizability and comparison beyond the African continent. Importantly, we also look forward to staunch critiques of cross-continental generalization. Potential topics should broadly fall into the category of state-society relations. They include riots, protest movements, and 'hidden transcripts' of resistance, policing, vigilantism, other security organizations and surveillance mechanisms, militias and emerging forms of collective violence, party politics and campaigning, political (de)stabilization through new media, and transnational political economic logics of faith-based organisations, to name but a few. Further information & submission: <http://www.ecas2015.fr/beyond-exoticism-how-specific-and-general-are-african-state-society-relations/>