



States of Imagination: Ethnographic Explorations of the Postcolonial State (Politics, History, and Culture)

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The state has recently been rediscovered as an object of inquiry by a broad range of scholars. Reflecting the new vitality of the field of political anthropology, *States of Imagination* draws together the best of this recent critical thinking to explore the postcolonial state. Contributors focus on a variety of locations from Guatemala, Pakistan, and Peru to India and Ecuador; they study what the state looks like to those seeing it from the vantage points of rural schools, police departments, small villages, and the inside of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Focusing on the micropolitics of everyday state-making, the contributors examine the mythologies, paradoxes, and inconsistencies of the state through ethnographies of diverse postcolonial practices. They show how the authority of the state is constantly challenged from the local as well as the global and how growing demands to confer rights and recognition to ever more citizens, organizations, and institutions reveal a persistent myth of the state as a source of social order and an embodiment of popular sovereignty. Demonstrating the indispensable value of ethnographic work on the practices and the symbols of the state, *States of Imagination* showcases a range of studies and methods to provide insight into the diverse forms of the postcolonial state as an arena of both political and cultural struggle.

This collection will interest students and scholars of anthropology, cultural studies, sociology, political science, and history.

Contributors. Lars Buur, Mitchell Dean, Akhil Gupta, Thomas Blom Hansen, Steffen Jensen, Aletta J. Norval, David Nugent, Sarah Radcliffe, Rachel Sieder, Finn Stepputat, Martijn van Beek, Oskar Verkaaik, Fiona Wilson

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