



**Urban Studies Seminar  
2016 - 2017**

**Annual Theme: Rethinking Urban-Rural Relations in an Age of Migration, Displacement, Environmental Transformations and Fringe Urbanization**

**Chaired by Prof Ulrike Freitag, Dr Nora Lafi and Dr Katharina Lange**

**Monday, 21 November 2016, 5 pm**

**What is Still Relevant for Urban Theory Today in Williams "The Country and the City"?**

Lecture by **Peter Dirksmeier** (Humboldt-University)

This lecture reflects upon intellectual possibilities of Raymond Williams' classic study *The Country and the City* within current urban theory. First, it canvasses the relevance of the book by constructing a frame of reference based on its citations in urban and regional studies. The principal findings of this approach discern frequent use of the main points developed by Williams in recent discourse. Thereafter the lecture raises two issues that have been somewhat neglected in the present adoption of *The Country and the City*. First, the intellectual possibilities of the concept of structure of feeling still seem underdeveloped in urban theory today. The idea of generation-specific structures aims at the very heart of the habit of urban theory-making. Second, drawing on the work on hierarchies of French anthropologist Louis Dumont the binary relationship between country/city shown in the book could be used as a fruitful methodological starting point for thinking about representation in more recent studies of spatial relationships.

**Peter Dirksmeier's** research combines social geography with the insights from wider urban studies. He has published or co-published papers in this area of research in journals like *Geoforum*, *Urban Studies*, *Urban Affairs Review*, *Visual Studies*, or *City*. Together with Ilse Helbrecht he co-edited the anthology *New Urbanism: Life, Work and Space* in the *New Downtown* published by Ashgate. His current research focusses on social aspects of urban cohabitation like encounters, prejudices, tourism, or affects. He is now turning a second research focus on social aspects of regional development in the postcolonial society of Mauritius. Before joining the Geography Department at Humboldt-University, he worked at Bremen University. Dirksmeier holds a Diploma in Geography from University of Cologne, a doctoral degree from University of Bremen, and a postdoctoral qualification (habilitation) from Humboldt-University. Currently he is interim professor (full) for human geography at the Department of Geosciences and Geography at Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg.

**Twice a month,  
Mondays 5 pm - 7 pm**

**Venue:**

Conference Hall  
Zentrum Moderner Orient  
Kirchweg 33  
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Please register  
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