

HISTORY AND THEORY OF SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Proseminar II / Anthropology 2650b / Spring 2019

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Class meets Thursdays between
noon to 2:45pm in Tozzer 102.

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00-
3:00pm (please sign up in advance)
or by appointment.

The second semester of the graduate proseminar explores the political economy of anthropological knowledge production. It examines anthropology's relation to alterity and sociality in different historical contexts, in the colony and in the metropole, in the socialist East and the capitalist West, at the center and at the periphery. Anthropology has long been seen as a quintessentially "Western discourse" problematically aligned with the ideologies of power. Rather than approach the discipline as a unified whole, however, this seminar revisits key moments, figures, and events that demonstrate how important anthropological concepts emerged as expressions of—and reflections upon—complex historical conjunctures. Various attempts to conceptualize society, culture, race, hegemony, value, commodity fetishism, the state, ontology, and alterity have *resonated* with, but also beyond, their immediate contexts. Informed by a desire to de-center "the canon" (without losing sight, that is, of the effects of its normative centrality) or to *decolonize* the discipline, we pursue a set of theoretical and ethnographic *detours* through and around key anthropological moments and concepts, all along seeking to understand how idioms, objects, and events of theoretical and ethnographic attachment shape and are shaped by historical context. Thus, students are encouraged to think anthropologically about anthropology, its concepts, practices, potentialities, and futures. This presupposes not only reading texts closely but also identifying how the assigned readings resonate with one another; what potentialities they have for understanding the present and anticipating the future; and how such potentialities are to be activated, pursued, actualized.

Course Requirements

Grades will reflect students' level of engagement with the readings and assignments of this seminar as well as the extent to which they will have acquired critical knowledge and analytical skills throughout the semester.

- ❑ *Attendance and participation.* Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to participate in class discussions by formulating questions, responses, and critiques relevant to the assigned readings. To help you participate actively in class discussions, I would like you to write as you read. For each class, please prepare a short review question concerning one or more of the assigned readings. A good review question should very briefly sum up a selected argument of the reading(s). Then, it should unpack the argument critically, either by treating it on its own terms or by comparing it to issues emerging in discussions, lectures, and other readings covered for this class. To make your time in class a productive and pleasant experience for everyone, I ask that you do not use phones, laptops, or tablets.

- ❑ *In-Class Presentation: Introducing the Readings.* Each week two students will initiate discussion by raising a set of issues and questions related to the readings. Students will briefly introduce some of the main points of the readings assigned for that day and pose some questions for class discussion. Then, they will contribute to the discussion by raising new questions and critical points. Students will be graded according to how well they prepared to discuss the readings. The goal of this exercise is to encourage you to engage rigorously with the readings, unpack their arguments, and discover their significance. A sign-up sheet is circulated during the first and second week of classes.
- ❑ *Writing Assignment (Four Short Response Papers).* Response papers must deal with a concept or question that has emerged in the readings of each part of the seminar. You are encouraged to choose no more than three authors and, through a close reading of each, make an argument about their respective perspectives on a specific concept and—most importantly—on what we can learn from comparing/contrasting them. Each paper must be 5-7 pages, double-spaced. Papers are due: *February 28, March 28, April 18, and May 8*. Please drop off your papers in the professor's mail box in Tozzer 205. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Required Texts

The following texts are available for purchase at the Coop Bookstore and for consultation on a three-hour reserve at the Tozzer Library.

- ❑ * Amadiume, Ifi. 1987. *Male Daughters, Female Husbands: Gender and Sex in an African Society*. London: Zed.
- ❑ * Ciccariello-Maher, George. 2017. *Decolonizing Dialectics*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- ❑ Durkheim, Emile. 1995 [1912]. *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: Free Press
- ❑ Hurston, Zora N. 1938. *Tell My Horse: Voodoo and Life in Haiti and Jamaica*. New York: Harper.
- ❑ Kenyatta, Jomo. 1938. *Facing Mt. Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu*. New York: Vintage Books.
- ❑ Kohn, Eduardo. 2013. *How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology Beyond the Human*. Selections. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- ❑ Mazzarella, William. 2017. *The Mana of Mass Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- ❑ Munn, Nancy. 1992. *The Fame of Gawa: A Symbolic Study of Value Transformation in a Massim (Papua New Guinea) Society*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- ❑ Newell, Sasha. 2012. *The Modernity Bluff: Crime, Consumption, and Citizenship in Côte d'Ivoire*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- ❑ * Povinelli, Elizabeth A. 2002. *The Cunning of Recognition: Indigenous Alterities and the Making of Australian Multiculturalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- ❑ * Simpson, Audra. 2014. *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- ❑ * Taussig, Michael T. 1980. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- ❑ Verdery, Katherine. 2018. *My Life as a Spy: Investigations in a Secret Police File*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- ❑ Wa Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ. 2012. *Globalectics: Theory and the Politics of Knowing*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Books marked with a star symbol (*) above are available online through the Hollis website. All other readings will be available on the course website (on Canvas).

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

WEEK 1
January 31

INTRODUCTION – *method, politics, potentiality*

- ❑ Sedgwick, Eve K. 2003. “Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading, Or, You’re So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Essay is About You.” In Sedgwick E. *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*. Pp. 123-151. Durham: Duke University Press.
- ❑ Mazzarella, William. 2017. *The Mana of Mass Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [Read Introduction, Ch 1, 2]
- ❑ Ciccariello-Maher, George. 2017. *Decolonizing Dialectics*. Durham: Duke University Press. [Read “Ruptures,” Ch 1, 2, 4].
- ❑ Benjamin, Walter. 1999. “On the Theory of Knowledge, Theory of Progress.” In Benjamin W. *The Arcades Project*. Pp. 456-88. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

PART I

LOCATING THE SOCIAL – *colonial encounters, political utopias*

WEEK 2
February 7

UTOPIAS OF ‘SOCIETY’ – *order, organization, and the ‘other’ on the colonial frontier*

- ❑ Amadiume, Ifi. 1987. *Male Daughters, Female Husbands: Gender and Sex in an African Society*. London: Zed Books. [Read Ch 1, 2, 3, 7, 8]
- ❑ Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 1991. “Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness.” In Fox, R. (ed.) *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. Pp.17-44. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press
- ❑ Asad, Talal. 1973. “Two European Images of Non-European Rule.” In Asad, T. (ed.) *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter*. Pp. 103-18. Atlantic Highlands N.J.: Humanities Press.
- ❑ Kuklick, Henrika. 1991. “Of Councilors and Kings: Images of Political Authority in British Anthropology, 1885-1945.” In Kuklick H. *The Savage Within: The Social History of British Anthropology, 1885-1945*. Pp. 242-78. Cambridge U. Press.
- ❑ Fabian, Johannes. 1983. “Our Time, Their Time, No Time: Coevalness Denied.” In Fabian J. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object*. Pp. 37-69. New York: Columbia University Press.

WEEK 3
February 14

ENCOUNTER – *mimesis, alterity, and authorship on the ethnographic frontier*

- ❑ Mitchell, Clyde. 1956. *The Kalela Dance: Aspects of Social Relationships among Urban Africans in Northern Rhodesia*. Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press.
- ❑ Mafeje, Archie. 1971. "The Ideology of "Tribalism."" *Journal of Modern African Studies* 9 (2): 253–61.
- ❑ Schumaker, Lyn. 2001. "Atop the Central African Volcano" and "Africanizing Anthropology." In Schumaker, L. *Africanizing Anthropology: Fieldwork, Networks, and the Making of Cultural Knowledge in Central Africa*. Pp. 152; 166-169; 171-180; 183-189; 190-222, Durham: Duke University Press.
- ❑ Ahmed, Sara. 2000. "Knowing Strangers." In Ahmed S. *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Postcoloniality*. Pp. 55-74. New York: Routledge.
- ❑ Taussig, Michael. 1993. "In Some Way or Another One Can Protect Oneself from the Spirits by Portraying Them." In Taussig M. *Mimesis and Alterity*. Pp.1-18. New York: Routledge.
- ❑ Stoller, Paul. 1992. "Les maitres fous." In Stoller P. *The Cinematic Griot: The Ethnography of Jean Rouch*. Pp. 145-60. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Film: "[Les maîtres fous](#)" (1955) by Jean Rouch [36 min]

WEEK 4
February 21

THE SOCIAL – *totemism, totality, effervescence*

- ❑ Durkheim, Emile. 1995 [1912]. *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: Free Press [Read Book II: Chapters 1 – 3, 6, 7].
- ❑ Levi-Strauss, Claude. 1962. *Totemism*. London: Merlin Press. [Read Introduction, Ch 1 & 3]
- ❑ Tarde, Gabriel. 1903. "What is a Society?" In Tarde G. *Laws of Imitation*. Pp. 59-88. New York: Henry Holt & Co.
- ❑ Comaroff, John. 1987. "Of Totemism and Ethnicity: Consciousness, Practice and the Signs of Inequality," *Ethnos* 52 (3–4): 301–323.
- ❑ Manning, Paul. 2009. "The Epoch of Magna: Capitalist Brands and Postsocialist Revolutions in Georgia." *Slavic Review* 68(4): 924-45.

PART II POLITICIZING CULTURE – *race, hegemony, ethnographic authority*

WEEK 5
February 28

CULTURE, RACE, HEGEMONY – *intersections, coincidences, contradictions*

- ❑ Boas, Franz. 1928. “The Problem of Race” & “Stability of Culture.” In Boas F. *Anthropology and Modern Life*. Pp. 18-62; 132-167. New York: Norton.
- ❑ Berman, Judith. 1996. “The Culture as It Appears to the Indian Himself: Boas, George Hunt, and the Methods of Ethnography.” In G. Stocking *Volksgeist as Method and Ethic: Essays on Boasian Ethnography and the German Anthropological Tradition*. Pp. 215-56 Wisconsin: Wisconsin University Press.
- ❑ Du Bois, W. E. B. 1940. “The Concept of Race.” In Du Bois, W. E. B. *Dusk of Dawn*. Pp. 97-133. New York: Harcourt.
- ❑ Visveswaran, Kamala. 2010. “Race and the Culture of Anthropology.” In Visveswaran, K. *Un/ Common Cultures: Racism and the Rearticulation of Cultural Difference*. Pp. 52-73. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- ❑ Gramsci, Antonio. 2000. “Philosophie, Common Sense, Language and Folklore.” In Forgacs, D. (ed.) *The Gramsci Reader: Selected Writing 1961-1935*. Pp 323-362. New York: International Publishers.
- ❑ Rodseth, Lars. 2018. “Hegemonic Concepts of Culture: The Checkered History of Dark Anthropology.” *American Anthropologist* 120(3): 398-411.

Recording: [“James Baldwin and Margaret Mead: A Rap on Race”](#) (1971) [1h45 m]

WEEK 6
March 7

NATIONALISM – *the authority of culture and the invention of tradition*

- ❑ Kenyatta, Jomo. 1938. *Facing Mt. Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu*. New York: Vintage Books. [Pp. xv-xxi; 1-52; 98-162].
- ❑ Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1943. “The New Tasks of Modern Anthropology.” In Malinowski B. *The Dynamics of Culture Change: An Inquiry into Race Relations in Africa*. Pp. 1-13. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- ❑ Berman, Bruce and John Lonsdale. 2007. “Custom, Modernity, and the Search for *Kibooto*: Kenyatta, Malinowski, and the Making of *Facing Mount Kenya*.” In H. Tilley and R. Gordon (eds) *Ordering Africa: Anthropology, European Imperialism, and the Politics of Knowledge*. Pp. 173-98. Manchester: Manchester U. Press.
- ❑ Fanon, Franz. 1963. “On National Culture.” In Fanon F. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Pp. 145-168. New York: Grove Press.

- ❑ Hobsbawm, Eric. 1983. "Inventing Tradition." In Hobsbawm E. *The Invention of Tradition*. Pp. 1-14. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ❑ Geschiere, Peter. 2018. "African Chiefs and the Post-Cold War Moment: Millennial Capitalism and the Struggle over Moral Authority." In Comaroff J.L. and Comaroff J. *The Politics of Custom: Chiefship, Capital, and the State in Contemporary Africa*. Pp. 49-78. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

WEEK 7
March 14

THE ATLANTIC – *diasporic cultures and the politics of blackness*

- ❑ Zora Neal Hurston. 1938. *Tell My Horse: Voodoo and Life in Haiti and Jamaica*. New York: Harper. [Read Ch 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, 15]
- ❑ Mikell, Gwendolyn. 1999. "Feminism and Black Culture in the Ethnography of Zora Neal Hurston." In Harrison I. & Harrison F.V. *African-American Pioneers in Anthropology*. Pp. 51-69. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- ❑ Gilroy, Paul. 1993. "The Black Atlantic as a Counterculture of Modernity." In Gilroy P. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Pp. 1-40, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- ❑ Pierre, Jemima. 2013. "Race across the Atlantic... and Back: Theorizing Africa and/in the Diaspora." In Pierre J. *The Predicament of Blackness: Postcolonial Ghana and the Politics of Race*. Pp. 185-216. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- ❑ Mbembe, Achille. 2017. "The Subject of Race." In Mbembe A. *Critique of Black Reason*. Pp. 10-37. Durham: Duke University Press.

March 16-24

Spring Break

PART III **THE POWER OF VALUE – *political economy & cold war anthropology***

WEEK 8
March 28

VALUE – *exchange, conversion, and space-time*

- ❑ Munn, Nancy. 1992. *The Fame of Gawa: A Symbolic Study of Value Transformation in a Massim (Papua New Guinea) Society*. Durham: Duke University Press. [Read Pp. 3-20, 49-162].
- ❑ Graeber, David. 2001. "Value as the Importance of Action." In Graeber, D. *Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value: The False Coin of Our Own Dreams*. Pp. 49-90. New York: Pan Macmillan.
- ❑ Bohannan, Paul. 1955. "Some Principles of Exchange and Investment among the Tiv." *American Anthropologist* 57(1): 60–70.

- ❑ Guyer, Jane. 2004. "Conversions: Asymmetrical Transactions," *In* Guyer J. *Marginal Gains*. Pp. 27-28. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

WEEK 9
April 4

COMMODITY FETISHISM – *exchange value, labor, and the occult*

- ❑ Taussig, Michael T. 1980. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. [Read Ch 1, 2, 3, 5, 7]
- ❑ Matory, Lorand. 2018. "Introduction" and "The Afro-Atlantic Context of Historical Materialism." *In* Matory L. *The Fetish Revisited: Marx, Freud, and the Gods Black People Make*. Pp. 1-59. Durham, NC: Duke University Press
- ❑ Marx, Karl. 1990. "Commodity." *In* Marx K. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*. Vol. I, Pp. 125-177. New York: Penguin Books.

WEEK 10
April 11

THE STATE – *surveillance, governmentality, ethnography*

- ❑ Verdery, Katherine. 2018. *My Life as a Spy: Investigations in a Secret Police File*. Durham: Duke University Press. [Read Pp. 1-109; 279-294]
- ❑ Price, David. 2004. "A Running Start at the Cold War: Time, Place, Outcomes." *In* Price, D. *Threatening Anthropology: McCarthyism and the FBI's Surveillance of Activist Anthropologists*. Pp.1-33. Durham: Duke University Press.
- ❑ Foucault, Michel. 1991. "Governmentality." *In* Miller *et al.* *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality: With Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*. 87–104. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- ❑ Ferguson, James & Akhil Gupta. 2002. "Spatializing States: Toward an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality." *American Ethnologist* 29(4):981–1002.
- ❑ Mitchell, Timothy. (1991). "Society, Economy, and the State Effect." *In* Steinmetz G. (ed.) *State/Culture: State-Formation after the Cultural Turn*, Pp. 76-97. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

PART IV

THE VALUE OF DIFFERENCE – *alterity, late capitalism, social theory*

WEEK 11
April 18

MULTICULTURALISM – *indigeneity, difference, and the politics of liberalism*

- ❑ Povinelli, Elizabeth A. 2002. *The Cunning of Recognition: Indigenous Alterities and the Making of Australian Multiculturalism*. Durham: Duke University Press. [Read Introduction, Ch 1 & 6]

- ❑ Simpson, Audra. 2014. *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*. Durham: Duke University Press. [Read Chapters 1, 2, 4]
- ❑ Argyrou, Vassos. 2002. "Introduction." In Argyrou V. *Anthropology and the Will to Meaning: A Postcolonial Critique*. Pp. 1-9. London: Pluto Press.

WEEK 12
April 25

OTHER ONTOLOGIES – *objects, posthumanism, and the 'ontological turn'*

- ❑ Kohn, Eduardo. 2013. *How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology Beyond the Human*. Berkeley: University of California Press. [Read Introduction, Ch 1, 2]
- ❑ Holbraad, Martin and Pedersen, Morten Axel. 2017. "Things as Concepts." In Holdraad M. and M. Pedersen, *The Ontological Turn: An Anthropological Exposition*. Pp. 199-241. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ❑ Latour, Bruno. 2005. "Third Source of Uncertainty: Objects Too Have Agency." In Latour B. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Pp. 63-86. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- ❑ White, Hylton. 2013. "Materiality, Form, and Context: Marx contra Latour." *Victorian Studies* 55(4): 667-682.
- ❑ Bessire, Lucas and David Bond. 2014. "Ontological Anthropology and the Deferral of Critique." *American Ethnologist* 41(3): 440-456.

WEEK 13
May 2

DECOLONIAL DIALECTICS – *grounded theory, poor theory, theory from the south*

- ❑ Newell, Sasha. 2012. *The Modernity Bluff: Crime, Consumption, and Citizenship in Côte d'Ivoire*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [Read Introduction, Ch 3, 4, 6]
- ❑ Wa Thiong'o, Ngugi. 2012. *Globalectics: Theory and the Politics of Knowing*. New York: Columbia University Press. [Read Introduction, Pp. 16-26, Chapter 3]
- ❑ Comaroff, Jean and Comaroff, John L. 2015. "Theory from the South." In Comaroff J. and Comaroff J.L. *Theory from the South: Or, How Euro-America is Evolving Toward Africa*. Pp. 1-50. New York: Routledge.
- ❑ Kaiwar, Vasant. 2014. "The Postcolonial Orient." In Kaiwar V. *The Postcolonial Orient: The Politics of Difference and the Project of Provincializing Europe*, Pp. 301-375. Leiden: Brill.