

Department of Social Anthropology
Stockholm University
Fall Semester, 2016, Advanced Level, 15 ECTS
Lecturers: Annika Rabo and Beppe Karlsson
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Key Themes in Contemporary Anthropology

The course offers a selective overview of a number of key empirical and theoretical themes or fields of study in contemporary anthropology. The themes and reading lists are replaced on a regular basis to keep the course up to date. The course focuses attention on contextualizing and historicizing the themes in order to offer an understanding of how contemporary anthropology has developed. The overarching theme is “anthropology after globalization.” Intersecting sub-themes that follow from this are: “urban infrastructures,” “the politics of compassion,” “occult cosmologies,” and “fractured citizenship”. These themes address contemporary phenomenon linked to global markets, transport systems, energy grids, waste management, development projects, humanitarianism, modern forms of magic and witchcraft, conspiracy theories, state institutions, refugees and other people on the move. The course will be organized as a research practicum in which students will read and engage with academic journals and journal articles as well as carry out a minor research task.

Course Requirements

You must attend the lectures and seminars and have prepared for the discussion by doing the readings ahead of time. To pass the course you must complete the following three course assignments:

- 1) **Four approved reaction papers.** For every sub-theme, the student will be writing a two pages reaction paper that will be presented and discussed at the end-of-the-week seminar. To pass the course, the student must have submitted these four reaction papers and have them approved by the course instructors. In case of illness etc, reaction paper can be submitted at the end of the course (e-mail the course instructor in advance if you can't make it to class).
- 2) **Journal Abstracts Report.** The class will be divided into smaller groups that will read through all the abstracts of articles published in the last 10 years in a leading anthropology journal. The purpose of this exercise is to learn to quickly review articles in order to gain an overview of developments and further key themes in anthropology. Look for emergent trends; themes, theories and concepts that come into fashion (others disappears). Each group will present the key findings of their search during a joint seminar on Monday, December 19, 10-12.
- 3) **Final Essay/Paper.** Each student will choose a topic relating to one of the sub-themes. After the topic has been approved, the student will do a two-week fieldwork (December 5-16) somewhere in or around Stockholm. The fieldwork and relevant course readings will be the basis of the final essay or paper. The paper should be around 3000-3500 words in length and

include a well-defined research problem linked to a contemporary issue in anthropology (dealt with in the course). The papers will be presented and discussed at the concluding seminar on Thursday, January 12, 2017. The paper must be uploaded on Mondo at least two days prior to the seminar. Each student will be acting as a discussant on one of the papers during the seminar.

Further Information

If you want to discuss any issue individually, please speak to or send an email to one of us to set up a meeting.

Introduction: Anthropology After Globalization

Lecture: November 1, B600, 10-12.

Lecture/Film/Discussion, November 1, B600, 13-15

Seminar: November 3, B600, 10-12 group A and 13-15 group B

Readings:

Ulf Hannerz (1989) "Notes on the Global Ecumene," *Public Culture* 1(2): 66-75.

George Marcus (1995) "Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 95-117.

Anna Tsing (2000) "The Global Situation," *Cultural Anthropology* 15(3): 327-360.

Aihwa Ong (2007) "Neoliberalism as a mobile technology," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 32(1): 3-8.

T. Thelen, L Vettters & K von Benda-Beckmann (2014) "Introduction of stategraphy", *Social Analysis*, Vol 58, 3:1-19.

Faegheh Shirazi (2016) *Brand Islam: The Marketing and Commodification of Piety*, Austin: The University of Texas Press. (book, 336 pages, discussed throughout the course)

Recommended:

Sherry Ortner (1984) "Theory in Anthropology since the Sixties," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26(1): 126-166.

Arjun Appadurai (1990) "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," *Public Culture* 2(2): 1-24.

Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1992) "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference," *Cultural Anthropology* 7(1): 6-23.

Michael Kearney (1995) "The Local and the Global: The Anthropology of Globalization and Transnationalism," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 547-565.

Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (2000) "Millennial Capitalism: First Thoughts on a Second Coming," *Public Culture* 12(2): 291-343.

Carla Freeman (2001) "Is Local : Global as Feminine : Masculine? Rethinking the Gender of Globalization," *Signs: Journal of Women, Culture and Society* 26(4): 1007-1037.

David Harvey (2005) *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford University Press), pp. 1-4.

Kalb, Don (2005) "From Flows to Violence: Politics and Knowledge in the Debates on Globalization and Empire," *Anthropological Theory* 5(2):176-204.

1: Urban Infrastructures

Lecture: November 7, B600, 10-12

Lecture/Film/Discussion: November 8, B600, 10-12

Seminar: November 11, B600, 10-12 group A and 13-15 group B (Reaction paper 1)

Readings:

Teresa Caldeira (1996) "Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation," *Public Culture* 8(2): 303-328.

Theodore Bestor (2001) "Supply-Side Sushi: Commodity, Market, and the Global City," *American Anthropologist* 103(1): 76-95.

Jonathan Bach (2010) "They Come in as Peasants and Leave as Citizens": Urban Villages and the Making of Shenzhen, China," *Cultural Anthropology* 25(3): 421-458.

Antina Von Schnitzler (2013) "Traveling Technologies: Infrastructure, Ethical Regimes, and the Materiality of Politics in South Africa," *Cultural Anthropology* 28(4): 670-93.

Lisa Björkman (2014) "Un/known Waters: navigating the everyday risks of infrastructural breakdown in Mumbai", *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 34(3): 497-517.

Hannah Appel et al. (2015) "The Infrastructure Toolbox,"

<http://www.culanth.org/fieldsights/714-introduction-the-infrastructure-toolbox>

Recommended:

Friedrich Engels (1943) *The Condition of the Working-Class in England in 1844* (Allen and Unwin), pp. 1-74.

Saskia Sassen (2000) "Spatialities and Temporalities of the Global: Elements for a Theorization," *Public Culture* 12(1): 215-223.

Setha Low (2001) "The Edge and the Center: Gated Communities and the Discourse of Urban Fear," *American Anthropologist* 103(1): 45-58.

Brian Larkin (2012) "The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 42: 327-43.

Christina Schwenkel (2015) "Spectacular infrastructure and its breakdown in socialist Vietnam," *American Ethnologist* 42(3): 520-534.

Veena Das & Shalini Randeria (2015) "Politics of the urban poor. Aesthetics, ethics, volatility, precarity", *Current Anthropology*, Vol 56, Supplement 11, S3- S14.

2: The Politics of Compassion

Lecture: November 14, B658 (CEIFO room), 10-12

Lecture/Film/Discussion: November 15, 10-12

Seminar: November 18, B600, 10-12 group A and 13-15 group B (Reaction paper 2)

Readings:

Arturo Escobar (1991) "Anthropology and the development encounter: the making and marketing of development anthropology", *American Ethnology*, Vol. 18(4): 658-682.

Nancy Sheper-Hughes (1995) "The Primacy of the Ethical: Propositions for a Militant Anthropology", *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 36(3): 409-440.

Liisa Malkki (1995) "Refugees and Exile: From 'Refugee Studies' to the National Order of Things", *Annual review of Anthropology*, Vol. 24: 495-523.

Didier Fassin (2007) "Humanitarianism as a Politics of Life", *Public Culture*, 19(3): 499-520.

Marisol de la Cadena (2010) "Indigenous Cosmopolitics in the Andes: Conceptual Reflections beyond 'Politics'", *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 25(2): 334-370.

Alpa Shah (2014) "'The muck of the past': revolution, social transformation, and the Maoists in India", *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 20(2): 337-356.

Stef Jansen (2014) "Hope For/Against the State: Gridding in a Besieged Suburb", *Ethnos*, Vol. 79(2): 238-260.

Kevin Donovan (2015) "Infrastructuring aid: materializing humanitarianism in northern Kenya," *Environment and Planning D* 33(4): 732-748.

Recommended:

David Mosse (2013) "The Anthropology of International Development", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 42: 227-246.

3: Occult Cosmologies

Lecture: November 21, B600, 10-12

Lecture/Film/Discussion: November 22, B600, 10-12.

Seminar: November 25, B600, 10-12 group A and 13-15 group B (Reaction paper 3)

Readings:

Jean Comaroff & John Comaroff (1999) "Occult economies and the violence of abstraction. Notes from the South African postcolony", *American Ethnologist*, Vol 26, No 2: 279-303.

Kathleen Steward & Susan Harding (1999) "Bad endings. American apocalypse", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol 28:285-310.

Mathijs Pelkmans & Rhys Machold (2011) "Conspiracy theories and their truth trajectories", *Focaal - Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology*, 59:66-80.

Nils Bubandt (2006) "Sorcery, corruption, and the dangers of democracy in Indonesia", *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 12:413-431.

Felicity Wood (2010) "Occult innovations in higher education: corporate magic and the mysteries of managerialism", *Prometheus*, Vol 28, 3:227-244.

Heike Behrend (2007) "The rise of occult powers, AIDS and the Roman Catholic Church in Western Uganda", *Journal of Religion in Africa* 37:41-58.

Judith Bovensiepen (2016) "Visions of prosperity and conspiracy in Timor-Leste", *Focaal - Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology* 75:75-88.

Recommended:

Peter Geschiere (2016) "Witchcraft, shamanism, and nostalgia. A review essay", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 58 (1):242-265.

David T. Ngong (2012) "Stifling the imagination. A critique of anthropological and religious normalization of witchcraft in Africa", *African and Asian Studies*, 11:144-181.

Harry West (2001) "Sorcery and construction of socialist modernization. Ways of

understanding power in postcolonial Mozambique”, *American Ethnologist*, Vol 28, No. 1:119-150.

4. Fractured Citizenship

Lecture: November 28, B600, 10-12

Lecture/Film/Discussion: November 29, B600, 10-12

Seminar: December 2, B600, 10-12 group A and 13-15 group B (Reaction paper 4 and title and short abstract for research task).

Readings:

Mahiye Secil Dagtas (2016) “‘Down with some things!’ The politics of humour and humour as politics in Turkey’s Gezi protests”, *Etnofoor*, Vol 28, 1:11-34.

David Graeber (2012) “Dead zones of the imagination. On violence, bureaucracy, and interpretative labor”, *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 2 (2):105-128.

Matthew S. Hull (2012) “Documents and bureaucracy”, *Annual review of Anthropology* 41:251-267.

Shahram Khosravi (2009) “Sweden. Detention and deportation of asylum seekers”, *Race and Class*, Vol 50 (4): 38-56.

Paula Meth (2010) “Unsettling insurgency. Reflections on Women’s insurgent practices in South Africa”, *Planning Theory and Practice*, Vol 11, 2:241-263.

Sasha Newell (2009) “Enregistering modernity, bluffing criminality. How Nouchi speech reinvented (and fractured) the nation, *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, Vol 19 (2): 157-184.

Mariz Tadros (2015) “Contentious and prefigurative politics. Vigilante groups’ struggle against sexual violence in Egypt (2011-2013)”, *Development and Change* 46 (6):1345-1368.

Recommended:

Patty Gray (2016) “Memory, body, and the online researcher. Following Russian street demonstrations via social media”, *American Ethnologist*, Vol 434, 3:500-510.

Carolien Jacobs & Christy Schuetze (2011) “Violence against violence. In search of security and justice”, *Etnofoor*, Vol 23, 2:16-36.

Gregory Rawlings (2014) “The geo-classifications of colonial statelessness. The anthropology of *Kastom*, land and citizenship in the decolonization of Vanuatu”, *Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 26:145-173.

Marnie Jane Thomson (2012) “Black boxes of bureaucracy. Transparency and opacity in the resettlement process of Congolese refugees”, *PoLAR, Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, Vol 35, 2:186-205.

Fieldwork week 49 and 50.

Journal Review Seminar Monday 19 December, 10-12, Room B600 (group presentations)

Post-Fieldwork and Pre-Writing Seminar Tuesday 20 December, 10-12, Room B600 (reflections on the fieldwork and how it has made you revise the topic and the theoretical and conceptual framework). In the afternoon you can sign up for individual supervision/consultation.

Presentation and Opposition of Final Essays Thursday 12 January 10-12 and 13-16, Room B600. The Essays should be submitted to the assigned discussant at least one day prior to the opposition. Friday is reserved for post-opposition revisions, if required.