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:**


**Recommended:**


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:**


**Recommended:**


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:


**Recommended:**

**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:**


**Recommended:**


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

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:


Recommended:


**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.