ANTH 601, Fall 2007

INTER-CULTURAL THEORIES IN ANTHROPOLOGY: 
DECOLONIZING ANTHROPOLOGICAL EPistemOLOGY, THEORY, AND PRACTICE

Course Director: Dr. Maximilian C. Forte
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Concordia University
Office: H-1125-11
Office Hours:
  Tuesdays, 3:00pm—5:00pm
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Fall Semester, 2007
03 credits
04 September - 29 November, 2007
Meeting days and times:
Tuesdays: 6:00pm—9:00pm
Campus: SGW, Room H-1120

Science is a social field of forces, struggles, and relationships that is defined at every moment by the relations of power among the protagonists. Scientific choices are guided by taken-for-granted assumptions, interactive with practices, as to what constitutes real and important problems, valid methods, and authentic knowledge. Such choices also are shaped by the social capital controlled by various positions and stances within the field.


A. INTRODUCTION

“This course explores the roots of anthropological theory in Western culture and the decolonization of anthropology since the 1960s.” (From the Graduate Calendar)

The leading concern of this course lies in the historical emergence of anthropology as part of the structures of knowledge of nineteen-century Europe and the imbrication of the discipline with colonial ideologies and practices. While it is true that many scholars and political leaders have singled out anthropology as colonialist in its mission, sometimes with ample evidence, this course is not designed as a simple indictment of anthropology. Instead, we will examine the various trends, contradictions, and openings in this disciplinary venture that has, in the words of different interlocutors, been hailed as the “science of man,” the “science of difference,” and the “science of otherness.” We will jointly explore some of the underpinning conceptual frames that have introduced and maintained the tension within anthropology between the universal and the particular, between objectivity and subjectivity, between emic and etic, between theory and practice, and between science and advocacy. As such, the course straddles the divides between the history of anthropology, anthropological theory, research methodology, and applied anthropology.
B. OVERVIEW
The course begins with discussion of the dominant epistemological facets associated with European expansionism, specifically Eurocentrism, and we will then consider how imperialism and Eurocentrism structured (and were shaped by) the rise of the social sciences and the position of anthropology within that historical framework. We then proceed to explore tendencies that constituted anthropology as a science of difference, and the interrelationships between the discipline, its practitioners, and colonialist ideological and practical projects. Having done that, we consider the more contemporary ways that some anthropologists have militated for the decolonization of the discipline. We examine indigenous critiques of anthropology, and reflect on efforts to create indigenous anthropologies. In line with some very penetrating and controversial critiques within anthropology, that echo some of the more prominent indigenous critiques, we will analyze and discuss anthropological methodology, specifically with reference to advocacy, reciprocity, and accountability. We end the course by raising questions as to whether “post-colonialism” offers avenues for the further decolonization of anthropology.

C. STUDENT and INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES
Reading and discussion constitute the core work of this course. Students are required to do all assigned readings, and to come prepared to lead class discussions. Attendance and participation are not optional. Students are required to be respectful of others in class discussions.

The course director is responsible for individual advising, the timely review of all written work, moderating class discussions, and preparing supplementary lecture material. He will be available during office hours, and to some extent by email. It is also the course director’s duty to maintain an atmosphere in class that permits frank and collegial discussion, without animosity and acrimony among any of the participants. The course director must also maintain, as much as possible, consistent and fair standards for evaluating course work, without unwarranted favour or prejudice to any student.

D. POLICIES
The course director's policy on late work is very simple: it is not accepted. All late work is assigned a grade of zero. Serious illness as documented by a doctor, for the exact period of the work in question, or a death in the family (documented by a published obituary or other formal documentation) may, if adequate, be accepted as the basis for negotiating an extension. Any other exceptional case can be discussed in private with the course director.

In the event that the course director is absent due to illness, a notice will be posted on the Class Cancellations page of the Concordia University website. Please make sure that you develop the habit of regularly checking this, and the digital billboards on campus, for information on cancellations of any classes, prior to coming to class.
**E. GRADING**

Grades for this course are assigned using the following scheme, adapted from the Graduate Calendar:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LETTER &amp; GPA EQUIVALENT</th>
<th>PERCENT</th>
<th>QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+ = 4.3</td>
<td>95-100</td>
<td>Meets or exceeds highest expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A = 4.0</td>
<td>88-94.99</td>
<td>Excellent work of an advanced quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A- = 3.7</td>
<td>85-87.99</td>
<td>Excellent work, with some room to improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+ = 3.3</td>
<td>80-84.99</td>
<td>Very good, demonstrates insight and ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B = 3.0</td>
<td>73-79.99</td>
<td>Good, requires further improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B- = 2.7</td>
<td>70-72.99</td>
<td>Fair, little beyond the minimum expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C = 2</td>
<td>50-69.99</td>
<td>Meets minimum expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail = 0</td>
<td>0-50</td>
<td>Unacceptable quality/ non-submission/ late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Fail/Absent = 0</td>
<td>0-50</td>
<td>Absent/ non-submission/ late</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numerical grades are assigned to course work (to facilitate easier calculation of a final grade), with the qualitative assessments above used to justify which numbers seem appropriate for a given piece of work. Students should note and understand that grades in the “A” range are not automatically assigned or guaranteed, and course work that does the bare minimum that is expected for a graduate course will receive a “C.”

**F. ASSIGNMENTS and GRADE VALUES**

Class participation (coupled with evidence of coverage of assigned readings): **25%** of the final course grade.

More details on written assignments will be discussed and provided in class, and due dates will also be set in the context of class discussion. In general, essays will be based primarily on assigned readings for the course, inviting maximum reflection, and will generally be due two weeks after they have been assigned. There will be no exams.

**Essay #1**—Anthropology as a Discourse of Colonialism? **25%** of the final course grade.

**Essay #2**—Decolonizing/Indigenizing Anthropological Practice: **25%** of the final course grade.

**Essay #2**—A Personal “Manifesto”: **25%** of the final course grade.
G. COURSE READINGS
Two items comprise all of the assigned readings for this course. Both are available in the course bookstore:

(1) *Anthropology And The Will To Meaning: A Postcolonial Critique*

by Vassos Argyrou
Pluto Press, 2002

(2) *Course Reader*

**SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS ON RESERVE (WEBSTER CIRCULATION DESK):**

Call Number: GN 33 E44 2001
Author/Editor: Ellingson, Terry Jay
Title: The myth of the noble savage

Call Number: GN 17 D35
Author/Editor: edited by Regna Darnell
Title: Readings in the history of anthropology

Call Number: GN 17 A57 1973b
Author/Editor: edited by Talal Asad
Title: Anthropology & the colonial encounter

Call Number: GN 345 D43 1991
Author/Editor: edited by Faye V. Harrison
Title: Decolonizing anthropology: moving further toward an anthropology for liberation

Call Number: GN 380 S65 1999
Author/Editor: Smith, Linda Tuhiwai
Title: Decolonizing methodologies: research and indigenous peoples
Call Number: GN 308 C64 1991
Author/Editor: edited by George W. Stocking Jr.
Title: Colonial situations : essays on the contextualization of ethnographic knowledge

Call Number: GN 46 A357A47 2006
Author/Editor: edited by Mwenda Ntarangwi, David Mills, and Mustafa Babiker
Title: African anthropologies : history, critique, and practice

Call Number: GN 308 C66 1999
Author/Editor: edited by Peter Pels and Oscar Salemink
Title: Colonial subjects : essays on the practical history of anthropology

Call Number: E 76.6 I53 1997
Author/Editor: edited by Thomas Biolsi and Larry J. Zimmerman
Title: Indians and anthropologists : Vine Deloria, Jr., and the critique of anthropology

Call Number: GN 302 I5 1982
Author/Editor: edited by Hussein Fahim
Title: Indigenous anthropology in non-western countries : proceedings of a Burg Wartenstein symposium

Call Number: GN 625 A74 2005
Author/Editor: edited by Jan van Bremen, Eyal Ben-Ari and Syed Farid Alatas
Title: Asian anthropology

Call Number: GN 46 A357A47 2006
Author/Editor: edited by Mwenda Ntarangwi, David Mills, and Mustafa Babiker
Title: African anthropologies : history, critique, and practice

Call Number: GN 307.7 W48 1993
Author/Editor: edited by Caroline B. Brettell
Title: When they read what we write : the politics of ethnography

Call Number: E 76.8 N37 1998
Author/Editor: edited by Devon A. Mihesuah
Title: Natives and academics : researching and writing about American Indians

Call Number: JV 51 Y68 2001
Author/Editor: Robert J.C. Young
Title: Postcolonialism : an historical introduction

Call Number: JV 51 P652 2005
Author/Editor: edited by Ania Loomba ... [et al.]
Title: Postcolonial studies and beyond
Call Number: H 61 W34 1999
Author/Editor: Immanuel Wallerstein
Title: The end of the world as we know it : social science for the twenty-first century

Call Number: H 61.15 W35 2004
Author/Editor: Immanuel Wallerstein
Title: The uncertainties of knowledge

Call Number: H 61 G864 1996
Author/Editor: Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences
Title: Open the social sciences : report of the Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences

Call Number: HC 51 W29 2000
Author/Editor: Immanuel Wallerstein
Title: The essential Wallerstein
H. SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

Tues., Sept. 4:

**INTRODUCTION**

Film: *Man to Man*

Tues., Sept. 11:

**EUROCENTRISM, UNIVERSALISM, AND IMPERIALISM**


Optional:


Tues., Sept. 18:

**STRUCTURES OF KNOWLEDGE: RISE OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES—1**


Optional:

**Tues., Sept. 25:**

**STRUCTURES OF KNOWLEDGE: RISE OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES—2**


**Optional:**


Tues., Oct. 2:

**ANTHROPOLOGY AS THE SCIENCE OF DIFFERENCE?**
- chapter 3: The Salvation Intent (p. 28-59) [In Anthropology and the Will to Meaning]

*Optional:*

Tues., Oct. 9:

**ANTHROPOLOGY AND COLONIALISM—1**
- chapter 1: Introduction: Of Scholars, Gamblers and Thieves (p. 1-9) [In Anthropology and the Will to Meaning]
- Asad, Talal. 1991. “From the History of Colonial Anthropology to the...

Optional:

Tues., Oct. 16:

**ANTHROPOLOGY AND COLONIALISM—2**


Optional:

**Tues., Oct. 23:**

**DECOLONIZING ANTHROPOLOGY**

- chapter 2: Has There Ever Been a Crisis in Ethnological Representation (p. 10-27) [In *Anthropology and the Will to Meaning*]

**Optional:**


**Tues., Oct. 30:**

**INDIGENOUS CRITIQUES OF ANTHROPOLOGY**

- chapter 4: What the Natives Don't Know (p. 60-91) [In *Anthropology and the Will to Meaning*]


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**Tues., Nov. 6:**

**INDIGENIZING ANTHROPOCHY**


**Optional:**


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**Tues., Nov. 13:**

**INDIGENIZED AND INDIGENOUS ANTHROPOLOGY**


Optional:

Tues., Nov. 20:
**ADVOCACY, RESPONSIBILITY, ACCOUNTABILITY**


Optional:
Tues., Nov. 27:

**POST-COLONIALISM**


*Optional:*