

LINGNAN UNIVERSITY
CULTURAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT

Thinking Like an Anthropologist

CLB9018

2018-2019 2nd term

Instructor: Roberto Castillo
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Lecture Time: Fri 15:30 -17:20 LKK 307
Tutorial Time: Tue 16:30 – 18:20 LKK 201



Course Description

One of the most important skills for someone majoring in a Liberal Arts university nowadays is the development of a critical, reflexive, and inquisitive approach to investigating culture. To think like anthropologist is to engage with people and communities and to strive to describe and contextualise the ‘patterns of organisation’ that underlie *all* social practices. Rather than being a course solely about ‘anthropology’, *Thinking Like an Anthropologist* will take you on a historic, philosophical, inter-disciplinary and critical journey from the beginnings of anthropology and its concern with ‘culture’, to the contemporary importance of ethnography and the study of everyday life. The course is structured around a number of key questions, which are drawn mainly from cultural anthropology, and from the Cultural Studies critique of anthropology. The issues that we will debate are topical and foundational for all branches of the humanities and social sciences. Through our debates, your

understanding of the diversity of human culture and societies in the world will be enhanced. In our lectures and tutorials you will not only learn about politics, history, philosophy, anthropology and cultural studies but also about how you can actively think about cultural problems and how you can intervene and take action.

Aims

1. To introduce students to the main anthropological concepts, approaches, problems, debates and methods;
2. To facilitate students to be reflexive of their own culture;
3. To enable students to develop an attitude of understanding and appreciating cultural diversity;
4. To encourage students to develop self-reflexive, critical and inquisitive approaches when trying to understand (and do research around) other people's points of view and ways of life.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be able to demonstrate:

1. An understanding of the usefulness and relevance of the anthropological key questions and methods;
2. Proficiency in the analysis of major issues of cultural diversity and differences with anthropological concepts and knowledge;
3. The capacity to critically evaluate one's own cultural experiences and social life with anthropological perspectives;
4. An understanding of the differences and complementarity between Anthropology and Cultural Studies;
5. Critical reading, writing, and group work skills.

Indicative Content (see p.7 for detailed weekly schedule)

1. Anthropology and Culture
 - a. Concepts
 - b. Colonialism
2. Anthropological Questions
 - a. Methods and Ethics
 - b. Systems of Meaning
 - c. Interpretation
3. Methodologies
 - a. Fieldwork
 - b. Participant Observation
 - c. Ethnography

Delivery: Lectures, tutorials, independent group work, online individual participation.

Attendance, Timeliness and Conduct:

In order to facilitate the class discussion, during lectures, I will introduce key concepts and provide broader historical and intellectual contexts. During tutorials, we will make use of film clips, open discussions, debates, and group presentations to delve deeper into the complexities of the topic at hand. For your part, please complete the weekly

readings before class and use the Reading Responses to further explore the subjects we cover. Please make sure you critically engage with the readings and bring your interpretations and perspectives to the lectures and tutorials, as I expect you to develop and employ critical and creative thinking skills to your best ability. This course requires a high level of student participation, both online and offline (see 'Course Participation' below).

You are expected to come to class prepared and on time, and to bring your readings with you. I will take the roll at the beginning of each class. You will be allowed one absence (without an excuse) over the course of the semester to accommodate any illness, family emergency, or other conflict that might arise. Any additional absence (without justification) will cause you to lose 2% of your attendance mark. Regardless of the reason for your absence, you are responsible for catching up on all material covered in class that day.

Please note that any changes in the syllabus and announcements of class activities will be made on Moodle and/or via email.

Assessment

Continuous Assessment: 70%

Attendance and Participation 20%

Tutorial Presentation* 20%

Written assignments** 30%

Take home final examination 30%

*oral presentation of assigned tutorial readings

**three short written assignments are required

Course Participation

Attendance (10%) Class Discussion (10%)

Each of you represents a potential learning resource for everyone else in the class. As such, the questions and comments you make in class might help your classmates (and me) better understand the readings, deepen the experience of a lecture or panel discussion, and stimulate new lines of thought or inquiry. I value and will recognize the thoughtful and informed contributions each of you make to our class discussions. Students are to treat each other with civility and respect and to distinguish between criticism of ideas and personal attacks. The latter is neither appropriate nor acceptable in the classroom.

Written Assignments: Reading Responses (30%)

Critical reading skills are one of the most important aspects of academic life. In order to help you improve your critical reading skills, you will be required to write or record responses for **three of the assigned readings (e.g primary reading and other sources)**. If written, each response should be 500-600 words, and has to be posted on the blog. If recorded, you have to produce a 5 to 7 minute 'vlog' (on Wordpress compatible platforms e.g. Youtube; Vimeo) in which you record yourself (or a slideshow with a voiceover) summarising and giving us your critical thoughts on the assigned reading. Either way, written and recorded responses have to be posted to **thinkanthropology.wordpress.com** by the start of the class session on the day when we discuss the readings in question. Responses may not be posted after the day on which the readings are discussed. For the first response, choose any reading between Week 2 and Week 4. For the second response, choose any reading between Week 5 and

Week 8. For the third response, choose any reading between Week 9 and Week 11. For reference, please consult the 'Reading Response sample' on Moodle. Responses will:

- ensure that each week several of you are well prepared for discussion;
- help you prepare for the Final Exam;
- and help you improve your critical reading skills and scholarly writing.

Tutorial Presentations (20%)

For the Tutorial Presentation you have to do an oral/multimedia individual or group presentation of an assigned reading*. Presentations will take place during tutorial time. Group size will vary depending on enrolment. You are expected to produce a 15 to 20 minutes multimedia-based presentation (see the 'Presentation Guidelines' section at the end of this syllabus). In the presentation, you have to summarise the main arguments of the reading(s); provide a critical reflection on the reading (your own opinion); link it to contemporary examples of culture and society; and propose a set of 'discussion questions' for class discussion. The schedule of the Presentations will be defined by Week 3, once we have definitive enrolment figures.

*Readings will be assigned once the schedule is defined. These readings are not the weekly readings.

Final Exam (30% Take Home)

The exam will take place during the assessment period at the end of the Semester. The exam paper will focus on all the course materials (e.g. 'Primary Readings', 'Other Sources' and films). A review session will be provided at the end of the term where general strategies for answering questions will be discussed (if requested).

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you have specific physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know during the first week of class so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. All discussions will remain confidential.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. Class participation and discussion (LO1 & 2)
2. Tutorial presentation (LO2 & 3)
3. Written assignments (LO3 & 5)
4. Final examination (LO3, 4 & 5)

Rubric for different modes of assessment

Class participation (lecture and tutorial) 20%

Participation	Very Good/ Outstanding	Good	Fair	Poor	Inadequate
Attendance 30% Active participation 70% Total: 20 marks	Actively participates; comments are on topic, show a critical understanding of the assigned readings , and meaningfully connect the assigned readings to cultural issues in contemporary social contexts . <u>16 to 20 marks</u>	Actively participates; comments are on topic, and show a basic but satisfactory understanding of the arguments developed in the assigned readings . The comments do not meaningfully connect the reading under discussion to cultural issues in contemporary social contexts . <u>12 to 15 marks</u>	Student may speak and display assimilation of basic information provided by the texts, but comments are not well-developed, and do not display a clear understanding of the arguments developed in the assigned readings . <u>8 to 11 marks</u>	Student may speak, but shows no clear evidence of having engaged with the assigned readings . The quality of comments strongly suggests that the student did not put very much effort into preparation. <u>4 to 7 marks</u>	Does not speak , or is disruptive. Any comments offered are entirely unrelated to the topic at hand, and fail to display any understanding of the reading or the cultural issues at stake. <u>0 to 3 marks</u>

Tutorial Presentation 20%

	Excellent (16-20)	Good (11-15)	Fair (6-10)	Poor (0-5)
Presentation	Strictly follows the guidelines	Follows the guidelines	Fails to follow some guidelines	Does not follow presentation guidelines

Written Assignments 30%

	Excellent (26-30)	Good (21-25)	Fair (16-20)	Poor (5-15)
Summary & Analysis	Summary is clear, analysis thorough and student shows full understanding of the topic.	Summary is clear and student shows good understanding of the topic.	Summary is acceptable but analysis lacks in clarity.	Summary is poor and analysis fails to touch upon the main points.
Communication	Free of grammar, spelling, diction and formatting errors.	A couple of errors related to grammar, spelling, diction or formatting.	Several grammar, spelling, diction and formatting errors.	Major grammar, spelling, diction and formatting errors.

Final take home exam 30%

	Excellent (26-30)	Good (21-25)	(Fair 16-20)	Poor (5-15)
Answers	<p>Subject content: a comprehensive grasp of the subject matter is demonstrated, including an in-depth understanding of the relevant concepts, theories, and issues related to the topic addressed</p> <p>Critical thinking: an ability to think critically is demonstrated in the analysis, synthesis and evaluation of relevant information</p> <p>Takes a position: a thoughtful statement of position is presented and defended through logical arguments; the arguments presented build to a consistent conclusion</p>	<p>Subject content: a thorough grasp of the subject matter is demonstrated</p> <p>Critical thinking: answer goes beyond description to interpretation, analysis, synthesis and evaluation</p> <p>Takes a position: a position is adopted and logically argued</p>	<p>Subject content: a basic grasp of the subject matter is demonstrated</p> <p>Critical thinking: accurate information incorporating relevant sources and examples is conveyed</p> <p>Takes a position: a position is adopted</p>	<p>Subject content: fails to grasp the subject matter</p> <p>Critical thinking: makes an attempt at providing a critique but does not incorporate relevant sources</p> <p>Takes a position: fails to take a position</p>

Reading List

Specific readings and chapters are listed for each lecture below. As a minimum, you should plan to read the primary reading before each lecture.

COURSE SCHEDULE (*not definitive; subject to modification*)

Week 1 – Jan 18: Introduction (No Tutorial)

No readings

Week 2 – Jan 25: Anthropology and culture: conceptual frameworks (No Tutorial)

Primary Reading

Lassiter, Luke (2009). “Anthropology and culture”. In *Invitation to Anthropology*, AltaMira.

Other Sources

Monaghan, John and Just, Peter. (2000). “Bee larvae and onion soup – culture”. In *Social and Cultural Anthropology. A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Week 3 – Feb 1: Race, ethnicity and colonialism in anthropology (No Tutorial)

Primary Reading

Kottak, Conrad Phillip. (2007). “Race and Ethnicity”. In *Mirror for Humanity: A Concise Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*. Kottak, Conrad Phillip. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2008.

Other Sources

Lewis, Diane. (1973). Anthropology and Colonialism. *Current Anthropology*, 14(5), 581-602.

Week 4 – Feb 15: Investigating culture: methods and ethics of anthropological research (Tutorial: Tues Feb 19)

Primary Reading

Clifford, James. (1986). “Introduction: Partial Truths”. In *Writing Culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography*. Clifford, J. and Marcus, G. E. (Eds). Berkeley, CA: University of California.

Other Sources

Kottak, Conrad Phillip. (2007). “Ethics and Methods”. In *Mirror for Humanity: A Concise Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*. Kottak, Conrad Phillip. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2008.

Screening (Tutorial time)

The Grace Lee Project, a film by Grace Lee (2005).

Week 5 – Feb 22: Questions of interpretation: culture as a system of meaning (No tutorial)

Primary Reading

Gray, Ann (2003). “Grasping Lived Cultures” and “Articulating Experience”. In *Research Practice for Cultural Studies*.

Other Sources

Pickering, Michael (eds). Research methods for cultural studies. Chapter 1: experience and the social world.

Week 6 – Mar 1: Fieldwork methods: Participant Observation (Tutorial: Tues Mar 5)

Primary Reading

Nightingale, Virginia. Why observing matters. In Michael Pickering (eds). Research methods for cultural studies.

Screening (Tutorial time)

The Aggressives, a film by Daniel Peddle (2005).

Week 7 – Mar 8: Fieldwork methods: Visual Ethnography (No Tutorial)

Primary Reading

Pink, Sarah. Analysing visual experience. In Michael Pickering (eds). Research methods for cultural studies

Screening (Lecture time)

TBA

Week 8 – Mar 15: Case Studies: Urban China, ethnographies of contemporary culture (Tutorial: Tues Mar 19)

Primary Reading

Chen, Nancy N et al. China Urban: Ethnographies of contemporary culture (selected chapters)

Screening (Tutorial time)

Nostalgia, by Hao Lun Shu (2012).

Week 9 – Mar 22: The goal is ethnography: ethnographic authority and writing (No Tutorial)

Primary Reading

Gray, Ann (2003). “Writing”. In *Research Practice for Cultural Studies*.

Other Sources

Miller, Daniel. (2017). Anthropology is the discipline but ethnography is the goal. *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 7 (1): 27-31.

Week 10 – Mar 29: Thinking like a digital ethnographer: gender, ethnicity and self-representation in ‘cyberspace’?

(Tutorial: Tues Apr 2)

Primary Reading

Hine, Christine (2016). "From virtual ethnography to the embedded, embodied, everyday internet". In *The Routledge Companion to Digital Ethnography*.

Week 11 – Apr 12: The problem with anthropology: cultural studies and anthropology
(No tutorial)

Primary Reading

Wade, Peter. (1996). "Cultural Studies will be the death of Anthropology". In *Group for Debates in Anthropological Theory*, 1997.

Week 12 – Apr 26: Conclusion: overview and the future of 'ethnographic cultural studies' (Tutorial: Tues Apr 30 Handout: Take-Home Exam due May 7th)

Primary Reading

Castillo, Roberto (2016). "Landscapes of Aspiration in Guangzhou's African Music Scene: Beyond the Trading Narrative". *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 44 (4): 83-115.

Screening (Lecture time)

Stranded in Canton, a film by Li Hongqi and Mans Mansson (2014).

TAKE-HOME EXAM SUBMISSION DEADLINE: May 7th (23:59)

Essential Readings

- Clifford, James and George E. Marcus (eds) *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press.
- Kuper, Adam *Culture: The Anthropologist's Account*. MA: Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Monaghan, J. & Just, P. *Social and Cultural Anthropology. A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Kottak, Conrad Phillip. Mirror for Humanity: A Concise Introduction to Cultural Anthropology, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2008.
- Lassiter, Luke Eric *Invitation to Anthropology*, AltaMira, 2009.
- Welsch, Robert, Kirk Endicott, eds. *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in Cultural Anthropology*. 2nd ed., Guildford, CT: McGraw-Hill, 2005.
- Omohundro, John, T. *Thinking Like An Anthropologist. A Practical Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*, 1st ed., New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007.
- Gray, Ann (2003). Research practice for Cultural Studies. Grasping Lived Cultures and Articulating Experience.
- Pickering, Michael (eds). Research methods for cultural studies. Chapter 1: experience and the social world.
- Pink, Sarah. Analysing visual experience. In Michael Pickering (eds). Research methods for cultural studies.
- Nightingale, Virginia. Why observing matters. In Michael Pickering (eds). Research methods for cultural studies.
- Chen, Nancy N et al. *China Urban: Ethnographies of contemporary culture*

Supplementary Readings

- Crapo, Richley *Cultural Anthropology. Understanding Ourselves and Others*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002.
- De Vita, Philip, ed. *Stumbling Toward Truth: Anthropologist At Work*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 2000.
- Dresch, Paul, Wendy James & David Parkin, ed. *Anthropologists In A Wider World: Essays on Field Research*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2000.
- Garbarino, Merwyn S. *Sociocultural Theory in Anthropology: A Short History*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland, 2013.
- Gruenbaum, Ellen *The Female Circumcision Controversy: An Anthropological Perspective*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2000.
- Gunde, Richard *Culture and Customs of China*, London: Greenwood Press, 2002
- Malinowski, Bronislaw *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea, Enhanced Edition*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 2014.
- Mead, Margaret *Coming of Age in Samoa*. New York: Perennial, 2001.
- Yamado, Takako *The Worldview of the Ainu*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.

Date	Week/Topic	
18/01	Week 1: Introduction, main themes	
25/01	Week 2: Anthropology and culture: conceptual frameworks	
1/02	Week3: Race, ethnicity and colonialism in anthropology	
15/02	Week 4: Investigating culture: methods and ethics of anthropological research	T (Feb 19)
22/02	Week 5: Questions of interpretation: culture as a system of meaning	
1/03	Week 6: Fieldwork methods: Participant Observation	T (Mar 5)
8/03	Week 7: Fieldwork methods: Visual Ethnography Screening: <i>TBA</i>	
15/03	Week 8: Case Studies: Urban China, ethnographies of contemporary culture	T (Mar 19)
22/03	Week 9: The goal is ethnography: ethnographic authority and writing	
29/03	Week 10: Thinking like a digital ethnographer: gender, ethnicity and self-representation in 'cyberspace'?	T (Apr 2)
12/04	Week 11: The problem with anthropology: cultural studies and anthropology	
26/04	Week 12: Conclusion: overview and the future of 'ethnographic cultural studies'	T (Apr 30)
Take Home Exam	To be given on Apr 30 Tutorial Time – Due on May 7th	

Lectures: Fri 15:30 to 17:30

Venue: LKK 307

Tutorials: Tues 16:30 – 18:30

Venue: LKK 201

First day of teaching : Jan 18 2019

Last day of teaching : 30 Apr 2019

Marking scheme

Attendance and participation (20%)

- Contribution to class discussion

Reading Responses (30%)

- Ability to explain and critically reflect on academic texts
- Ability to relate concepts to examples

Tutorial Presentation (20%)

Presentation (20%)

- Comprehension of course readings
- Capability to apply concepts creatively and responsibly
- Capability to identify social and cultural issues of interest
- Skills for self-expression in public and discussion leading

Final Exam (30% Take Home)

- Comprehension of concepts
- Capability to apply concepts creatively and responsibly
- Capability to identify social and cultural issues of interest
- Ability to find and integrate outside resources from the library
- Writing skills (data collection, argumentation, references)

Important Notes:

(1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3* hours of class contact and 6* hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.

(2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.

(3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.

(4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>.

* Numbers of hours are subject to adjustment for individual courses.