Spring 2012

ANG 6930: Anthropological Problematizations of Globalization and Global Assemblages

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Meets: Wed. 11:45 am – 2:45 pm @ TUR 2341
Office Hrs: Tues. 2 pm - 3 pm @ TUR 3345
Weds. 3 pm - 5 pm @ TUR 3345

List of books used in the seminar:

EMPIRE, MICHAEL HARD AND ANTONIO NEGRI
GLOBAL SHADOWS, JAMES FERGUSSON
LOSING CONTROL, SASKIA SASSEN
NEOLIBERALISM, DAVID HARVEY
NEOLIBERALISM AS EXCEPTION, AIHWA ONG
GLOBAL COMPLEXITY, JOHN URRY
THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF GLOBALIZATION, JONATHAN XAVIER AND RENATO ROSALDO

Description:

The arguments surrounding the phenomenon of “globalization” are varied: there is no agreement whether the globalization is indeed happening, whether it’s a thing, or rather a process, what it means, and what the effects of this phenomenon might be.

Yet, the term has been incredibly popular and persistent in the past 10-20 years. It seems to refer to a wide range of processes observed in the world today, from new economic organization and social regulation, new forms of political governance, to new forms of ethical regimes and cultural formations of hybrid nature. In a word, “globalization” seems to imply significant transformations for human life that are often uncertain, “flexible”, “mobile”, yet that are also seemingly similar across cultural and social terrains, at the same time as being contradictory and confusing.

Seen in this way “globalization” affects the very core of modern scientific disciplines. More profoundly it has transformed significantly standard units of analysis, where various regionalisms, localisms along with transnational patters have become of increased interest to social observers.

Analyses of globalization have also proliferated. Some studies underscore what is perceived as grand transformation and a “new order of things” worldwide: a shift from modernization to globalization; the emergence of global cities and of the “global assembly line”; the rise of global elites and a new network society.
On a more micro level, anthropologists specifically, have looked at “localities” and how these respond, adapt and resist to changing “macro” processes. Most recently, another productive line of research has sought to capture globalization in terms of “assemblages” or “friction(s)”: the way in which global forms are articulated in specific situations and define ever more complex material, collective and discursive relationships of the "local-global”.

The arsenal of changes – administrative, institutional, political and economic – that underwrite these processes have also been referred as the “neoliberal turn”. What distinguishes such new global interventions (or ideologies of governing) is a marked shift in the management of populations and the administration of spaces that appear as nonpolitical and non-ideological problem-solving projects, driven “purely” by market calculations. The overall result is that in the last 25 years we have witnessed new “assemblages” of sovereign rule, market rationality and regimes of citizenship emerging around the globe with profound impact on nations, states and social life overall.

This seminar, will introduce students to the main debates in the field of studies of “globalization”, but more importantly we will try to show how within the problem-space of globalization we can frame today anthropological questions.

**Format and Assignments:**

Reading materials will be available electronically or through copies (please make sure you have the materials on time for each next class). The seminar is designed to help students formulate and express their own ideas on the topics taken up, and to sharpen their analytical skills, as well as understandings of theoretical traditions in the field. As such, **discussion and presentation** is the central component of this seminar. Each class is organized around presentations prepared by students, while the lecturer gives a short orientation into the topic, geared towards providing (historically, politically, and theoretically) contextualizing information on the themes selected each week.

Students who present are expected to write up a small synopsis of their material of choice and post it prior to class on E-learning. They should also include some discussion points. These commentaries will serve as a starting point for discussion in class.

There are two components to the assignments for this seminar. By the middle of the semester students are expected to have conceptualized a topic for their final paper and work on an annotated bibliography. The final paper aims to enable students to pursue their own areas of interest. They are expected to write an analytical paper on topics of their choice as related to the class material (up to 15 pages long double-spaced). The research for this paper may be based on the literature covered in class, or additional materials relevant to their field.

**Week 1: Introduction**
Week 2: The Problem-space of Globalization in Anthropology


Didier Fassin, 2008. “Beyond good and evil: Questioning the anthropological discomfort with morals”. In: Anthropological Theory 8: 333

Week 3: Spaces and Times of Globalization

David Harvey. 1990, c1989. The Condition of Postmodernity. Blackwell, Chapters 7-11, 17 (pp. 121-189 and 308-326)


Week 4: Diagnosing the Present Global


Week 5 – Sep 22: Neoliberalism and the powers of freedom


Rabinow, P and Rose, N 2006. “Biopower Today” In: Biosocieties 1 195-217
Week 6 Global flows


Further Readings:


MODERNITY AT LARGE, ARJUN APPADURAI


Week 7: Global Technologies of Governing


Michel Foucault, 2008 From: “The Birth of Biopolitics”


Week 8: Cultural Globalization and Subjectivity


Week 9: Governing in the Global Age: Citizenship and Ethics

Fergusen, James, 2006. Extracts from: Global Shadows. Duke University Press. Ch 1,2,6


Further readings:


Week 10: Immigration Tests the New Order


Nicholas De Genova and Peutz N 2010 “Introduction” to The Deportation Regime


Further readings:


Week 11: The transformation of work and employment


**Week 13 – Nov 10: Ethics of the Technoscientific Objects**


Joao Biehl 2010 Human Values and Political Life in the Wake of Global Aids Treatment. From: In the Name of Humanity

Zerner Charles, 2010. “Biomimesis and the Weaponization of Life” From: In the Name of Humanity


**Further Readings**


**Week 14 – Nov 24: Global Rights**


Richard Wilson, 2010. “Crimes against Humanity and the Conundrum of Race and Ethnicity at the International Criminal Tribunal.” From: In the Name of Humanity

**Further readings**