

American University of Central Asia
Anthropology Department
Contemporary anthropological thought

Spring 2011

Instructor: Rahimov Ruslan, PhD candidate

Time and venue:

Tuesday: 9:25, room 109

Thursday: 9:25, room 309

Attendance

Participation in the discussion is essential to this class. Therefore, regular attendance is expected and will be monitored through the quizzes, assignments, etc. Missing 5 or more class without proper documentation will result in a failing grade in the course. Avoid disrupting a class session by arriving late or leaving early. Coming late more than 15 minutes will result in a warning and then in a 5% penalty on the final grade.

If an emergency forces you to miss a class or a test, notify the instructor before it. Cell phones or other electronic must be switched off during the class.

Please do not make a noise during someone's presentation or class discussion, you should respect each other and contribute to the class discipline. Otherwise it will be reflected on your assessment.

Academic Honesty

All cases of plagiarism and cheating will be handled according to AUCA policies. Students are expected to present their own ideas and recognize the work of those who have provided them with the building blocks of their thought. Plagiarism, i.e. copying other people's work without proper attribution is a serious academic offence and will be heavily penalized. If you are caught plagiarizing or cheating, you will automatically receive a zero for the assignment (no make-ups or extra assignments will be given) and you will receive an F for the class. Students committing plagiarism run the risk of not only failing the course but also being expelled from the University. Students must always indicate that they used someone else's words and ideas if they have done so, by using quotation marks and mentioning the source in the text or a footnote. A bibliography must also follow after the end of your work.

Class Syllabus. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the class outline, exam dates or assignment. It is your responsibility to attend the class and be informed of any changes to the syllabus.

Assignments

Attendance and participation (40 % of grade) All students have to attend the class and come prepared. Active participation is encouraged and important to stimulate students understanding of contemporary anthropology through interactive discussions.

Mid-term exam (15 % of grade) 8 week

Exam will consist of 2 essay questions which will cover class topics.

2 Reflection papers (20% of grade, 10% each) 4th and 10th weeks.

Each student has to submit two reflection papers (2, 3 pages, 12, double-spaced) on a following articles:

-Henrietta Moore, *Anthropological Theory Today*, Polity Press, 1999,

-or any other article based on a course readings. This paper should reflect an outline of the article, main points and problems positioned by the author, merits and limitations, importance for contemporary anthropology and impact on your understanding.

Final paper and presentation (25 % of grade) 13-15 weeks

Each student is expected to choose one concept based on class readings (e.g.: habitus, postmodernism, episteme, discourse of power, subaltern, symbolic capital, thick description, post-structural, practice/praxis, deconstruction, hegemony, hermeneutics, positivism, etc.) and write a paper (4-5 papers, 12, double-spaced) which will be presented in class. It should be an analysis with evaluation, critique of the selected concept, outlining its genesis, meaning, advantages, limitations and your understanding of its importance for contemporary anthropology. Presentation may be limited to: 1) an overview of your analysis, 2) a reflection on the impact of the term on your understanding.

Guest lecturers: 3 lecturers will be invited to explore interesting topics in contemporary anthropology and related fields

1 week

presentation of syllabus, introduction

The future of anthropological theory

Henrietta Moore, *Anthropological Theory Today*, Polity Press, 1999, pp. 1-20

2 week Post-modernism in anthropology

Jean-François Lyotard, "The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories"

3-4 week Post-structuralism

M. Foucault, "What Is an Author?" (1969). Trans. in LCM

Said, Edward (1977) *Orientalism*. London: Penguin, Introduction, 1-28 pp.
J. Derrida, "Of grammatology"

5-6 weeks Post-colonial studies

Homi Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse",
Chatterjee P., "The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories"

7 week Post-socialist studies

Humphrey C. *The Domestic Mode of Production in Post-Soviet Siberia?*
Oushakine S. *The Politics of Pity: Domesticating Loss in a Russian Province*
Alexei Yurchak, "Everything Was Forever, until it was no more" *The last soviet generation*, Princeton University.

8 week Linguistic anthropology

Roman Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistic and poetics"
Teun A. Van Dijk, *Critical Discourse Analysis*

9 week Cultural Intimacy

Herzfeld Michael, *Introducing Cultural Intimacy*, p.1-38

10 -11weeks Anthropology "of" and in Central Asia

David Gullette, *Kinship State and "Tribalism": the genealogical construction of the Kyrgyz Republic*, PhD thesis, Cambridge 2006.
Saulehh Yessenova, "Routes and Roots" of Kazakh Identity: urban migration in Postsocialist Kazakhstan, *The Russian review* 2005.

12 week Study of memory in anthropology

Nora Pierre, *Between memory and History: Les lieux de memoire*, *Representations* 26:7 -25, 1989
Savage Kirk, *Politics of memory, black emancipation and the civil war monument*, pp.1-12

13-16 week Presentation of final papers