

## **COURSE NO.: SS: 455N: ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEORIES**

M.A. 2nd Semester, Compulsory Course, Winter Semester January–May,  
Credit: 4

Course Teacher: Professor Nilika Mehrotra

Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal  
Nehru University

This course introduces students to history of ideas and thinkers in the trajectories of theory development in Anthropology from nineteenth century to contemporary times. In tracing the debates on key concepts like Evolution, Structure, Culture and Agency etc students are required to read the original texts and participate in the discussions on a regular basis.

**Mode of Instruction:** 3 lecture classes (1hr) and a tutorial/Presentation class (2 hrs) per week

**Mode of Evaluation:** 4 credits: Presentations and write up (1), midterm test (1) and end semester (2). In the overall evaluation, students' participation in the class and aptitude would be assessed.

Presentations will be based on chosen core theory texts. The students are expected to select the text in consultation with the course teacher by **20th Jan 2016** after discussion with the Teacher /TA and make a presentation. Attendance in the presentation classes is compulsory.

Presentation paper should be submitted within a week of the discussion. (1,000 words).

Date of Midterm test : **21st Feb 2016.**

### **Section I *Classical Theories***

#### **Rise of Anthropological Theory**

Evolutionism (Morgan) Historical Particularism (Boas)

**Early Twentieth Century Approaches** Functionalism (Malinowski),  
Structural Functionalism (R.R. Brown) Culture and Personality (Benedict, Mead)

### **Section II *Theories after 1950 -60s***

**Theory at Mid Century** Structuralism (Levi Strauss) Symbolic Anthropology (Geertz)  
Neo Evolutionism (Sahlins) Postcolonialism (Asad)

**New Debates** Feminist Anthropology (Ortner) Poststructuralism and Postmodernism  
(Bourdieu, Clifford and Marcus) Globalization debate (Appadurai, Gupta & Ferguson)

### **Core Readings**

- Appadurai, Arjun. 1991. "Global Ethnoscapes: Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology," in Richard Fox (ed.), *Recapturing Anthropology*. Santa Fe (New Mexico): School of American Research Press.
- Barth, F. 1981. *Process and Form in Social Life: Selected Essays of Frederik Barth*. RKP
- Benedict, Ruth, 1934. *Patterns of Culture*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.
- Bourdieu, P. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press: London.
- Clifford, James and George Marcus (eds.). 1986. *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Douglas, Mary. 1966. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge.
- Geertz, Clifford 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books. ["Thick Description", "The Impact of the Concept of Culture on the Concept of Man", "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight"]
- Levi-Strauss, Claude 1963 in Levi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*. Trans. Claire Jacobson. New York: Basic Books. (Introduction, Structural Analysis in Linguistics and Anthropology)
- Marx, Karl. 1857. *Pre-Capitalist Social Formations. Lawrence and Wish Art*
- Malinowski, B. 1944. *A Scientific Theory of Culture*. University of North Carolina Press.
- Mead, Margaret. 1963. *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*. York [Introduction and Conclusion].
- Radcliffe-Brown, A.R. 1924, 1952. *Structure and Function in Primitive Society*. The Free Press  
( 'The Mother's Brother in South Africa', 'On Social Structure' ).
- Ortner, Sherry. 1974. "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?," in Michel Z. Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (eds), *Woman, Culture, and Society*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

## Reference Readings

- EvansPritchard, E.E. 1981. *A History of Anthropological Theory*
- Fox, R. 1991. *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. Santa Fe: SARASS [Especially Introduction & Chs by Abu Lughod (8) & Appadurai (1)]
- Firth, R. 1951. *Elements of Social Organization*. London: Athlone.
- Harris, Marvin 1968. *The Rise of Anthropological Theory*. New York: Crowell.
- Knauft, B. 1996. *Genealogies for the Present in Cultural Anthropology*. Routledge.
- Kuper, A. 1983[1973]. *Anthropology & Anthropologists: the Modern British School*. Routledge.
- Lowie, Robert 1937. *History of Ethnological Theory*. Holt, Reinhart and Winston.
- Gupta, A. and J. Ferguson.(ed).1997. *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*. Duke University Press.
- Manners, R.A. and D.Kaplan (eds). *Theory in Anthropology: A Sourcebook*. Chicago: Aldine.
- McGee, RJ and RL Warms, 1996. *Anthropological Theory: An Introductory History*. London: Mayfield Publishing Company.
- Mahmood, Saba. 2005. *Politics of Piety: Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton.

- Moore, Henrietta and Todd Sanders (eds).2006. *Anthropology in Theory: Issues in Epistemology*.U.K. Blackwell Publishing Company.
- Nadel, S. F. 1969. *Foundations of Social Anthropology*. London: Cohen & West.
- Ortner, Sherry 1984. "Theory in Anthropology since the 1960s," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*,6:126-166.
- Reyna, S.P. 1997. Theory in Anthropology in the Nineties. *Cultural Analysis* 9, 3: 325-50.

### Supplementary Readings

- Boas, F., 1896. "The Limits of the Comparative Method of Anthropology". [JSTOR]
- Boas, F., 1932. "The Aims of Anthropological Research". [JSTOR]
- Borofsky, R. 1997. CA Forum on Theory in Anthropology: Cook, Iono, Obeyesekere, and Sahlins [Article]. *Current Anthropology*. Vol.38, No.(2), Apr. 97, p.255-82.
- Collier, Jane F. and Michelle Rosaldo, 1981. "Politics and Gender in Simple Societies," in Sherry B. Ortner and Harriet Whitehead (eds.), *Sexual Meanings: The Cultural Construction of Gender and Sexuality*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gupta, A. and J. Ferguson, 1992. "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference," *Cultural Anthropology* 7(1):6-23.
- Gayle, Rubin, 1975. "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," in Rayna Reiter (ed.), *Toward an Anthropology of Women*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Harris, Marvin, 1966, "The Cultural Ecology of India's Sacred Cattle," *Current Anthropology* 7(1):51-66. [JSTOR]
- Harris, Marvin 1977. *Cannibals and Kings: The Origins of Cultures*.. New York: Vintage. [Chapter 9 ("The Cannibal Kingdom") and Chapter 12 ("The Origin of the Sacred Cow")].
- Leach, Edmund. 1961. *Rethinking Anthropology*. London: Athlone Press.
- Leach, E. 1954 [1964, 1970] *Political Systems of Highland Burma: A Study of Kachin Social Structure*. London: Bell & Athlone Press - especially Introduction. [KK635.B8]
- Leslie White, 1943, "Energy and the Evolution of Culture", *American Anthropologist*, 45: 335-356.
- Levi-Strauss, Claude, 1969. *Totemism*; tr by Rodney Needham. Boston Beacon Press.
- Malinowski, B. 1961 [1922]. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. New York: E.P. Dutton.[“Introduction: The Subject, Method, and Scope of this Inquiry.”]
- Marcus, George and Michael M. J. Fischer, 1986. *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.[Introduction and Chapter 5]
- Rabinow, Paul. 1977. *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco*. Berkeley: University of California Press. [Introduction and Conclusion].
- Said, E. 1989. "Representing the Colonized: Anthropology's Interlocutors", *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 15, no. 2, Winter, pp. 205-225.
- Rosaldo,Michelle Z. 1974. "Woman, Culture, and Society: A Theoretical Overview", in Michel Z. Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (eds), *Woman, Culture, and Society*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

- Service, Elman R. 1985. *Century of controversy: Ethnological Issues from 1860 to 1960*. Orlando Academic Press.
- Steward, Julian 1968. "Multilinear Evolution," in Manners, R.A./Kaplan, D., eds. *Theory in Anthropology: A Sourcebook*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Stocking, George W (ed.) 1983. *Observer Observed : Essays on Ethnographic Fieldwork*. The University of Wisconsin Press: Madison & London.
- Stocking, George W., editor, (1984) *Functionalism Historicized: Essays on British Social Anthropology*. Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Turner, Victor. 1967. "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites of Passage ," In *The Forest Of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Rituals*: 93-111. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Tsing, Anna 2000. "The Global Situation," *Cultural Anthropology* 15(3):327-360.
- Taylor, E. B. 1871 [1965]. "Animism", in William A. Lessa and Evon Z. Vogt (eds), *Reader in Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach* (abridged from Tylor, Primitive Culture, 1871). New York: Harper & Row.
- Tylor, Stephen. 1969. "Introduction to Cognitive Anthropology," New York, Rinehart And Winston.
- Wolf, Eric R., 1982. *Europe and the People Without History*. German. Frankfurt: Campus.