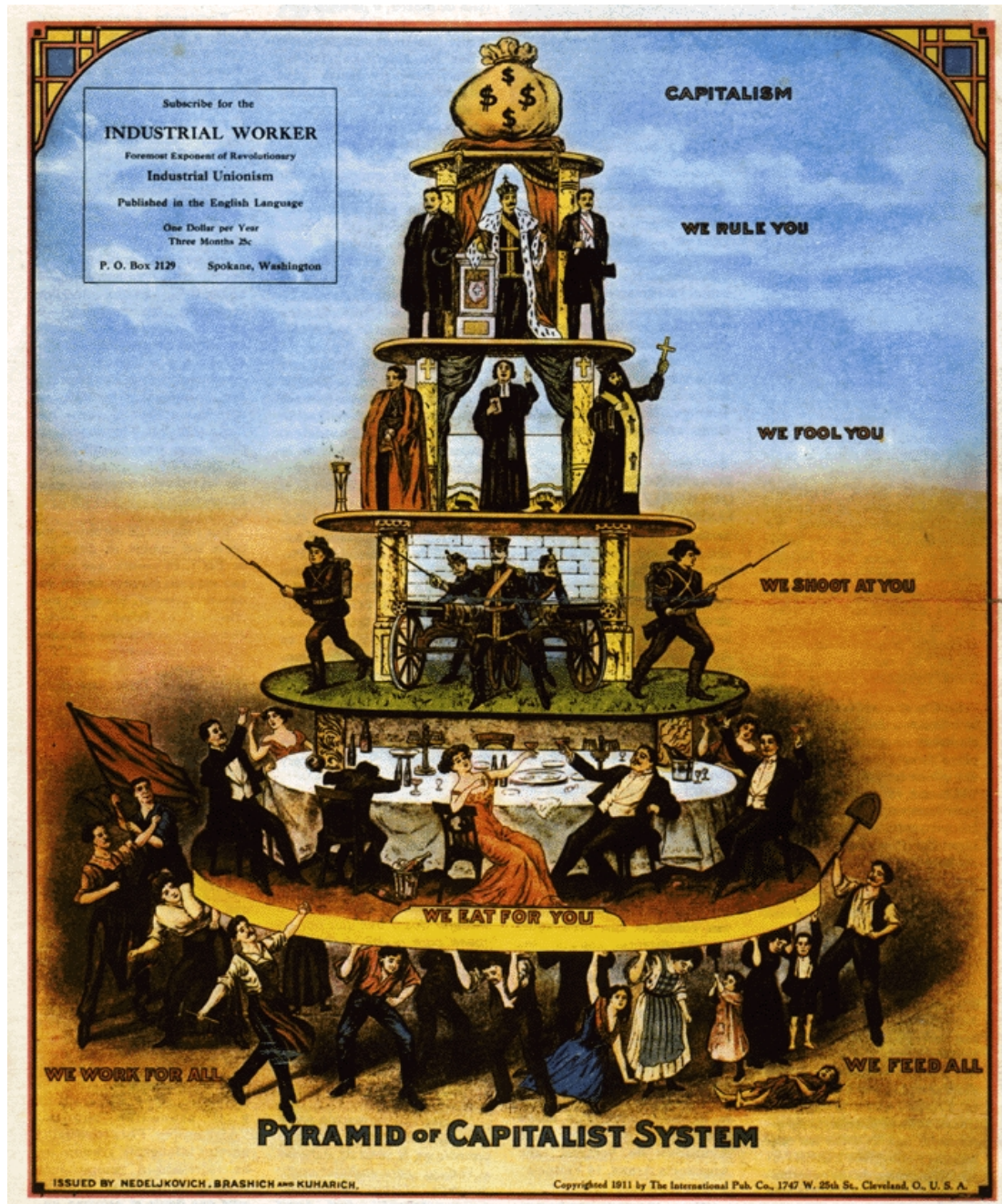


Political Anthropology

AHAN 6005

MODULE HANDBOOK 2017-18

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In this module we explore, through ethnographic examples, the interactions between changing political structures and the ways that people are enmeshed within power relations. Throughout the course we will be using the work of Marx and Foucault to reflect on the nature of power and to critically evaluate approaches that have political dynamics at their heart. A key objective of anthropology has been to understand unequal society by means of a contrast between those organized through the principles of the state and class and those more equal societies originally based on kinship, but now potentially on democracy and free association. Our aim in this module is to understand both the development of large-scale political structures and the self-organized institutions people have made for their own purposes, both in small-scale societies and under the modern conditions of state capitalism. In so doing, we explore major divisions of the contemporary world and the globalizing processes through the lens of political movements and categories, as well as the circulation of people, capital, goods and ideas.

AIM(S)

- To provide students with a detailed knowledge of a range of theoretical positions and ethnographic examples in the fields of political anthropology.
- To enable students to utilise their acquired ethnographic and theoretical knowledge to re-examine existing Euro-American assumptions about current global political situations and power relations.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to demonstrate:

1. a detailed knowledge and understanding of a range of thematic areas within the sub-fields of political anthropology;
2. a critical awareness of the relationships between production, consumption and power in a range of ethnographic contexts;
3. and display a clear understanding of appropriate theoretical positions in the field of political anthropology;
4. an ability to critically evaluate ethnographic data in relation to appropriate theoretical positions and utilising comparative ethnographic examples;
5. and display a critical awareness of the ways in which power relations can be analysed and understood.

ASSESSMENT

1. Coursework (70%): 1 x 3,000 word essay

Check Moodle for Deadline

2. Exam (30%): One paper (2 questions in 2 hours – equivalent to 2,000 words)

Date: January Exam Period

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Answer **one** question from the following. **You must use ethnographic examples to illustrate your answer**

1. To what extent is labour under capitalism always alienated?
2. Critically assess how globalisation challenges the sovereign authority of the nation-state?
3. How can a focus on 'the body' illuminate our understanding of power dynamics?
4. To what extent do Marx's and Foucault's approaches to power differ?

Assessment criteria will be made available on Moodle.

READINGS

GENERAL READINGS

The following books address a number of the themes covered in the module, and some (**in bold**) are also useful introductory texts. In addition, there are a number of introductory and explanatory texts on Marx and Foucault in the library, which you may find useful.

Anderson B. 1983, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso

Eriksen T. 1993, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*. London: Pluto Press

Featherstone, M. (ed). 1990, *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalisation and Modernity*. London: Sage.

Foucault, M. 1977, *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. London Allen Lane.

Gledhill, J. 1994 (later edition, 2000), *Power and Its Disguises: Anthropological Perspectives on Politics*, London: Pluto Press

Lechner, F. and J. Boli. 2004, *The Globalization Reader*. Malden MA: Blackwell

Lewellen, T.C. 2003, *Political Anthropology: An Introduction*, London: Praeger

Marx, K. 1954 (1857), *Capital vol 1*. Moscow & London: Lawrence and Wishart

Nugent D. and J. Vincent (eds.). 2007, *A Companion to the Anthropology of Politics*, Oxford: Blackwell

Seddon, M. (ed). 1978, *Relations of Production: Marxist Approaches to Economic Anthropology*. London: Cass

WEEK-BY-WEEK READINGS AND MODULE SCHEDULE

YOU ARE EXPECTED TO READ AT LEAST TWO KEY READINGS A WEEK (unless otherwise indicated): COME TO CLASS PREPARED TO DISCUSS THEM. The recommended readings are there as a guide for you to explore certain subjects in more depth and to pursue your interests.

Also, remember, to read the introductory blurb for each week before you start the readings.

Week 1: Neoliberalism: The 'Free' Market and the State

There are no key readings this week. Rather, I would like you to browse some of the introductory texts outlined above and research neoliberalism.

Week 2: Nationalism, Regionalism and the Nation-State

It can be argued that the global flows of capital, people, political ideologies and commodities fragments national political and cultural spaces. Supranational economic agreements and institutions – such as the European Union – and ethno-nationalism reinforce this trend towards 'glocalism' and the dissolution of the ideology of the nation-state. However, nationalist ideologies can also be seen to be re-emerging and legitimising growing inequalities in the new global order. This week we consider classical theories of nationalism and discuss ethnographies of conflicting – regional, supranational, national, global – identities. We also ask how the nation-state is made present in the everyday lives of its citizens, as well as asking what nation is present?

Key Readings

Anderson B. 1983, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London Verso.

Gledhill, J. 2000, *Power and its Disguises: Anthropological Perspectives on Politics* (esp. chapter 4). London: Pluto Press

Recommended Readings

Appadurai A. 1990, 'Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy', in *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalisation and Modernity*. M Featherstone (ed) London: Sage.

Eriksen T. 1993, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*. London: Pluto Press

Gellner, E. 1983, *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Hansen T. & F. Stepputat (eds.). 2001, *States of Imagination: Ethnographic Explorations of the Postcolonial State*, Duke University Press

Leach, E. 1960, The Frontiers of "Burma", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 3(1)

Radcliffe, A & S. Westwood. 1996, *Remaking the Nation*

Taussig, M. 1997, *The Magic of the State*, New York: Routledge

Week 3: Labour Relations: Production and Reproduction

Here we focus on Marx's studies of the capitalist labour process, and discuss the work of anthropologists who – variably influenced by the work of Marx – have explored issues of class, exploitation, alienation and relations of production. We explore the issue of alienated labour in the factory but also, following the work of such anthropologists of Godelier and Meillassoux, in the household, and highlight the relationships between production and reproduction, and labour and kinship. In doing so we consider how household hierarchies are (re)produced, and the dangers of fetishizing money.

Key Readings

Burawoy, M. 1982, *Manufacturing Consent*. (esp. ch 4) Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Carrier, J. 1992, 'Emerging Alienation in Production: A Maussian History', *Man* 27: 539- 558

Mollona, M. 2005, 'Factory, Family and Neighbourhood: The Political Economy of Informal Labour in Sheffield', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 11: 527-548

Recommended Readings

Abbots, E-J. 2012, 'In the Absence of Men?: Gender, Migration and Domestic Labour in the Southern Ecuadorean Andes', *Journal of Latin American Studies* 44(1)

Bloch, M. 1983, *Marxism and Anthropology*. Oxford: OUP

Cooper, F. 1992, 'Colonising Time: Work Rhythms and Labour Conflict in Colonial Mombasa', in *Colonialism and Culture*, N Dirks (ed). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press

Dickey, S. 2000, 'Permeable Homes: Domestic Service Household Space and the Vulnerability of Class Boundaries in Urban India', *American Ethnologist* 27(2) pp. 462-89

Engels, F. 1884, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. Penguin Classics

Godelier, M. 1986, *The Making of Great Men: Male Domination and Power Among the New Guinea Baruya*. Cambridge: CUP

Godelier, M. 1977, *Perspectives in Marxist Anthropology*. (chs 6-7) Cambridge: CUP 1975

Godelier, M. 1978, 'The Objects and the Methods of Economic Anthropology', in *Relations of Production: Marxist Approaches to Economic Anthropology*. D Seddon (ed) London: Frank Cass

Goody, J. 1977, *Production and Reproduction: A Comparative Study of the Domestic Domain*, Cambridge: CUP

Graeber, D. 2006, Turning Modes of Production Inside Out: Or Why Capitalism is a Transformation of Slavery' *Critique of Anthropology*. 26(1) 1

Marx, K. 1954 (1857). *Capital vol 1*. Moscow & London: Lawrence and Wishart

G. De Neve, M. Mollona, and J. Parry (eds) 2009, *Industrial Work and Life: An Anthropological Reader*. Oxford: Berg [On order]

Meillassoux, C. 1981, *Maidens, Meal and Money*. Cambridge: CUP

Pahl, R.E. 1988, *On Work*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell

Rubbo, A and M. Taussig. 1983, "Up Off Their Knees": Servanthood in Southwest Colombia' *Latin American Perspectives* 10(4): 5-23

Smith, T. C., 'Peasant Time and Factory Time in Japan', *Past and Present* 111: 165-197

Thompson E.P. 1967, 'Time, Work Discipline and Industrial Capitalism', in *Past and Present*. (vol 38)

Tranberg-Hansen, K. 1990, 'Domestic Trials: Power and Autonomy in Domestic Service in Zambia', *American Ethnologist* 17(2): 360-75

Young, G. 1987, 'The Myth of Being "Like a Daughter"', *Latin American Perspectives* 14(3): 365-80

Week 4: The Body in Capitalist Societies: Disciplinary Power and Commodification

This week we focus on the ways in which the body is governed and regulated in the capitalist system, and consider Foucault's notion of disciplinary power.

Through labour relations and time-management, we consider how the body is manipulated, as well as the ways in which the body can be used as a site of resistance. We further reflect on the ways in which economic decisions are made through the body, thereby questioning Cartesian assumptions of the thinking subject, 'economic man' and rationality. In addition, we reflect upon the ways in which the body is, in itself, commoditised and alienated through the processes of capitalism, and consider how global flows of bodies – and their fetishised parts – can further illuminate our understanding of gifts, exchange, money and markets.

Key Readings

Ong, A. 1988, 'The Production of Possession: Spirits and the Multinational Corporation in Malaysia', *American Ethnologist* 15(1):28-42

Sharp, L. 2000, 'The commodification of the body and its parts', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 29: 287-328.

Thompson, E.P., 1967, 'Time, Work Discipline and Industrial Capitalism', *Past and Present* 38

Recommended Readings

Abell, H. 1999, 'Endangering Women's Health for Profit: Health and Safety in Mexico's Maquiladoras.' *Development in Practice* 9(5):595-600.

Day, S. 2007, *On the Game: Women and Sex Work*. London: Pluto Press

Foucault, M. 1977, *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. London Allen Lane.

Holman, D., Batt, R. and Holtgrewe, U., 2007, 'The Global Call Centre Report: International Perspectives on Management and Employment - Report of the Global Call Center Network'. *ILR Collection - Research Studies and Reports*: Cornell University. Available from:

<http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/globalcallcenter/upload/GCC-Intl-Rept-US-Version.pdf> [5-12-2010].

Michaels, D. 1988, 'Waiting for the Body Count: Corporate Decision Making and Bladder Cancer in the U.S. Dye Industry.' *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 2(3):215-32.

Plant, R. 1977, 'Gifts, Exchanges and the Political Economy of Health Care Pt 1: Should Blood be Bought and Sold?' *Journal of Medical Ethics* 3(4): 166-173

Scheder, J. 1988, 'A Sickly-Sweet Harvest: Farmworker Diabetes and Social Equality.' *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 2(3): 251-77.

Scheper-Hughes, N. 2000, 'The global traffic in human organs', *Current Anthropology* 41: 191-224.

Smith, C. and N. Pun. 2006, 'The dormitory labour regime in China as a site of control and resistance', *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 17(8): 1456-1470

Titmuss, R.M. 1970, Is the gift a good one? in *The Gift Relationship: from Human Blood to Social Policy*. London: Allen and Unwin

Weiss, B, 1998, 'Electric vampires: Haya rumours of the commodified body' in *Bodies and Persons*, M Lambek & A Strathern (eds.): pp 172-194, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Week 5: Reflections on Marx and Foucault

This week we will critically evaluate the extent that the works of Marx and Foucault help our understanding of political relations. We will think about the various ways we have considered power dynamics in the module thus far, asking whether power is something that is held by a ruling class or perhaps more dispersed and enacted. We will further reflect on the structural categories and concepts – such as class – used in anthropological analysis, asking whether they continue to be useful in accounting for power dynamics in a globalised and (post) industrial context. This week will also give us an opportunity to review what we have learnt in the first few weeks, address any gaps and check our understanding

Week 6: READING WEEK: NO CLASSES

Week 7: Migration, (Trans)nationalism and the Reassertion of Place

While global migration is an ancient phenomenon, migrants represent a challenge to the ideologies of sovereignty and territoriality associated with modern states. More recently, flexible capitalism and the collapse of socialist regimes have intensified 'illegal' migrations between countries. We therefore consider how international migration is managed, and assess the continuing role of borders and territories. Building on the previous week we also touch upon how migration challenges and/or upholds gendered labour relations and ask whether a class-based structural approach can account for these new relations.

Key Readings

Abbotts, E-J. 2012, 'In the Absence of Men?: Gender, Migration and Domestic Labour in the Southern Ecuadorean Andes', *Journal of Latin American Studies* 44(1)

De Genova, N. 2002, 'Migrant "Illegality" and Deportability in Everyday Life', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31: 419-47

Recommended Readings

Anderson B. 1983, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London Verso.

Appadurai A. 1990, 'Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy', in *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalisation and Modernity*. M Featherstone (ed) London: Sage.

Borneman, J. 1992, *Belonging to Two Berlins: Kin, State, Nation*. Cambridge: CUP

Brettel. C. 2003, *Anthropology and Migration: Essays on Transnationalism, Ethnicity, and Identity*. Walnut Creek CA: Altamira Press

De Genova, N. 1998, 'Race, Space and the Reinvention of Latin America in Mexican Chicago', *Latin American Perspectives* 25(5): 87-116

Lutz H, 1997, 'The Limits to European-ness: Immigrant Women in Fortress Europe', *Feminist Review* 57 (Autumn): 93-111

Mummert, G. 2010, 'Making Sense of the Latin American Immigrant Experiences in the United States', *Latin American Research Review* 45(1): 244-255

Sassen, S. 1999 *Guests and Aliens*. New York: The New Press [on order]

Scott, J. 1998, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale UP

Stolcke J, 1995 'Talking Culture: New Boundaries, New Rhetoric of Exclusion in Europe', *Current Anthropology* 36(1): 1-24

Werbner P, 1999, 'Global Pathways. Working Class Cosmopolitans and the Creation of Transnational Ethnic Worlds', *Social Anthropology* 7(1): 17-35.

Werbner, P. 2008, *Anthropology and the New Cosmopolitanism*. Oxford: Berg

Week 8: Trade Unions and New Social Movements

This week we think about ways in which 'power' is resisted and contested, and how capital and the state collude, in some cases, to uphold social inequities. As such, we touch upon the topics of (legitimate and illegitimate) violence and direct action, as well as building on our existing knowledge in exploring the contexts of why these movements develop. There are no recommended

readings this week. Rather in preparation for the seminar, I would like you to research New Social Movements and Trade Union activities. You may want to focus on one group – for example, Occupy, in which the anthropologist, David Graeber, is heavily involved – or have a general overview. In particular, I would like you to think about the role of social media in this context. This topic also engages with – and blurs into – that of next week, so you may also find some of these readings helpful.

Key Reading

Gill, L. 2007, 'Right There with You': Coca-Cola, Labor Restructuring, and Political Violence in Colombia', *Critique of Anthropology* 27 (3): 235–60.

Week 9: Indigenous and Peasant Politics: Local Fights and Global Movements

This week we focus specifically on indigenous rights and peasant movements. We explore how indigeneity is constructed through political discourse, thinking particularly about notions of 'authenticity' and 'territoriality'. We ask 'who speaks for the indigenous', and examine the legal and 'rights' frameworks through which political claims are made. We thereby reflect back on our understanding of property and place in considering debates over cultural property and 'indigenous' knowledge. We also build on last year's discussions of embedded markets and money by considering the moral economy and post-peasant economies, discussing how peasants and farmers organize politically against global market forces. Further questioning assumptions around 'authenticity', we unpack definitions and models of 'the peasant', as well as exploring how they are mobilised in political and development discourses. We also consider the peasant 'problem' and the recent shift, in the face of seemingly increasing globalised homogeneity and alienation from food production, to a celebration of the smallholder 'lifestyle'.

Key Readings

Kenrick, J. and J. Lewis. 2004, 'Indigenous People's Rights and the Politics of the Term "Indigenous."', *Anthropology Today* 20(2): 4-9

Kuper, A., 2003, The Return of the Native, *Current Anthropology* 44(3): 389-402

Kurkiala, M. 2002, Objectifying the Past: Lakota Responses to Western Historiography, *Critique of Anthropology*, 22(4).

Recommended Readings

Brass, T. 1997, 'The Agrarian Myth, the New Populism and the 'New' Right, *Economic and Political Weekly* 32(4): 25-31

- Brass, T. 2000, *Peasants, Populism and Postmodernism. The Return of the Agrarian Myth*. London: Frank Cass [on order]
- Clifford, J. 1988, 'Identity in Mashpee' in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Collier, G. 1987, 'Peasant Politics and the Mexican State: Indigenous Compliance in Highland Chiapas', *Mexican Studies* 3(1): 71-98
- Conklin, B. 2002, 'Shamans versus Pirates in the Amazonian Treasure Chest', *American Anthropologist*. 104(4): 150-1061
- Conklin, B & L. Graham. 1995, The Shifting Middle Ground: Amazonian Indians and Eco-Politics, *American Anthropologist* 97 (4): 695-710
- Gledhill, J. 1998, 'The Mexican Contribution to Restructuring US Capitalism: NAFTA as an instrument of Flexible Accumulation', *Critique of Anthropology* 18: 279-296
- Seider, R. 2011, Contested Sovereignities: Indigenous Law, Violence and State Effects in postwar Guatemala', *Critique of Anthropology* 31(3): 161-184
- Stiglitz J. 2002, *Globalisation and Its Discontents*. (chs 1-2 & 4) London: Allen Lane. See also Stiglitz's chapter in *The Globalization Reader*, F. Lechner and J. Boli (eds.), Malden MA: Blackwell.
- de la Torre, C. 2006, 'Ethnic Movements and Citizenship in Ecuador', *Latin American Research Review* 41(2): 247-259
- Warren K & J Jackson. 2003, *Indigenous Movements: Self-Representation and the State in Latin America*
- Webber, J. R. 2007, 'Indigenous Struggle in Latin America: The Perilous Invisibility of Capital and Class', *Latin American Politics and Society* 49(3): 191-205
- Ortiz S. 2002, 'Labouring in the Factories and in the Fields', in *Annual Review of Anthropology*. 31: 395-417 .
- Rossett, P. 1999, *The Multiple Functions and Benefits of Small Farm Agriculture in the Context of Global Trade Negotiations – Policy Brief No. 4*. Oakland, California: Food First/The Institute for Food Development and Policy., available at <http://www.foodfirst.org/node/246>
- Scott, J. 1985 *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale UP
- West, H.G & N. Domingos. 2012, 'Gourmandizing Poverty Food: The Serpa Cheese Slow Food Presidium', *Journal of Agrarian Change* 12(1): 120-143

Week 10: Capital, Politics and the Media

This week we reflect on the political movement of ideas and images, and the ways in which media channels can (re)produce hegemony, while also facilitating its contestation. We ask how the compression of space and time and the notion that new technologies are 'disembedding mechanisms' that challenge ideas of territoriality, while also opening up new spaces of belonging and autonomy. We also explore the role of social media, considering the ways in which social movements are using new technologies to promote their political aims on a transnational scale. We thereby reflect once again upon the extent that technology can be regarded as an alienating force.

Key Readings

Baudrillard, J. 1995, *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*, Sydney: Power

Recommended Readings

Abu-Lughod, L. 2002, 'The Object of Soap Opera' in *The Anthropology of Media: A Reader*, K. Askew & A. Wilk (eds) Oxford: Blackwell. This article also appears in *Worlds Apart* (1995, ed. D. Miller), London: Routledge

Giddens, A. 1991, *Modernity and Self Identity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Ginsburg, F. 1991, 'Indigenous Media: Faustian contract or global village' in *Cultural Anthropology*. 6 (2): 92-112

Marx, K. 1867, *Capital: a critique of political economy*, Vol. 1. London, Penguin Classics. (chapters 10, 15 and 25)

Mele, C. 1999, 'Cyberspace and disadvantaged communities: the Internet as a tool for collective action', *Communities in Cyberspace*, M. A. Smith & P. Kollock. (eds), London: Routledge.

Turner, T. 1992, 'Defiant Images: The Kayapo appropriation of video', *Anthropology Today*, 8(6)

Wellman, Barry & Milena Guila, 1999, 'Virtual Communities as Communities: Net Surfers don't ride alone'. Marc A Smith & Peter Kollock (ed.). *Communities in Cyberspace*. London: Routledge.

Wilson, S.M. & L. C. Peterson. 2002, 'The Anthropology of Online Communities' in *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31. 449-67.

Week 11: Reflections and Revision

In this session we will reflect back on the readings and discussions of previous weeks in order to evaluate anthropological treatments and theories of political relations. We will ask what comprises 'power' and how it has been variously treated, as well as considering other themes – such as the role of 'place', globalisation, authenticity, social action and belonging – that we have explored through the various topics. In this session we will also think about the forthcoming exam and revision techniques, and answer 'mock' questions.