



# ANTH703

## Special Topics in Anthropology I

S1 Day 2015

*Dept of Anthropology*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Jaap Timmer

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Contact via [jaap.timmer@mq.edu.au](mailto:jaap.timmer@mq.edu.au)

W6A, 603

Thursday, 2-4pm

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

The unit is the first of two units in the Department of Anthropology's Master of Research program that provides a foundation in core specialisations of contemporary anthropology research. The specialisations covered will vary from year to year according to contemporary developments in anthropology and the emergent interests of the department. In recent years staff interests have included psychological anthropology, ethnographic media, human-animal relationships, and religion.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Gain an understanding of long-standing debates surrounding fieldwork, ethnography, anthropology and representation

Familiarise themselves with anthropological perspectives on embodiment, the emotions and senses.

Acquire insight into cutting edge anthropological concerns such as ontology and human-environment relations

Enhance their communication and interpersonal skills through oral discussion and written work that focuses on conveying understanding, argument and information in a clear and concise fashion

Cement critical analysis and creative thinking skills through research assignments.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<a href="#"><u>Seminar participation</u></a>	20%	Weekly
<a href="#"><u>Report on discussion</u></a>	30%	One week after discussion
<a href="#"><u>Major essay</u></a>	50%	Monday 8 June

### Seminar participation

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **20%**

Seminar attendance and participation are mandatory. Active engagement in our discussions is vital: please come to class well prepared, willing to contribute your ideas, and ready to listen to others' contributions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Gain an understanding of long-standing debates surrounding fieldwork, ethnography, anthropology and representation
- Familiarise themselves with anthropological perspectives on embodiment, the emotions and senses.
- Acquire insight into cutting edge anthropological concerns such as ontology and human-environment relations
- Enhance their communication and interpersonal skills through oral discussion and written work that focuses on conveying understanding, argument and information in a clear and concise fashion

### Report on discussion

Due: **One week after discussion**

Weighting: **30%**

Students will be responsible for facilitating one seminar discussion over the course of the session. You should prepare for the discussion by: carefully reading the week's required and extended readings; identifying central arguments *and* areas of potential confusion; generating starting points for class discussion. You will assume responsibility for introducing and guiding a

respectful, well-informed discussion of the weekly topic. Creativity is encouraged.

One week after the discussion you will submit a 1,000-1,200 word report on the weekly discussion topic. The report should incorporate your preparation for the discussion and any insights on the topic that came out of the discussion. Your final mark for this assessment task will incorporate both a mark for the facilitation and a mark for the written report.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Gain an understanding of long-standing debates surrounding fieldwork, ethnography, anthropology and representation
- Familiarise themselves with anthropological perspectives on embodiment, the emotions and senses.
- Acquire insight into cutting edge anthropological concerns such as ontology and human-environment relations
- Enhance their communication and interpersonal skills through oral discussion and written work that focuses on conveying understanding, argument and information in a clear and concise fashion

## Major essay

Due: **Monday 8 June**

Weighting: **50%**

Students will submit a 3,000 word research essay devoted to one of the issues canvassed over the course of the session.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Cement critical analysis and creative thinking skills through research assignments.

## Delivery and Resources

All required readings for this unit are available via iLearn.

iLearn login is via: <https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/> Students are required to have regular access to a computer and the internet. Mobile devices alone are not sufficient. For technical support go to: [http://mq.edu.au/about\\_us/offices\\_and\\_units/informatics/help](http://mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/informatics/help) For student quick guides on the use of iLearn go to: [http://mq.edu.au/iLearn/student\\_info/guides.htm](http://mq.edu.au/iLearn/student_info/guides.htm)

## Unit Schedule

### Religion and Ontology: Different Ways of Knowing?

The Anthropology of Religion has been burgeoning over the last 15 years and at the same time

the word 'ontology' is increasingly used in conference panels and in titles of books and articles. In many ways religion and ontology are at the forefront of Anthropology but what do anthropologists mean by these categories? Classically, ontology is a major branch of philosophical study concerning the nature of being, becoming, existence, or reality, as well as the categories of being and their relations. The advent of ontology in anthropology is relatively new and as yet it does not come with a cohesive theoretical framework. At the same time, approaches to the study of what might be termed 'religion' also vary significantly, and the concept 'religion' itself is highly contested. Even when analysing many of the classic loci of the anthropology of religion – such as myth, ritual, and cosmology in small scale societies – many anthropologists avoid the term 'religion' altogether. Often writing instead in terms of 'ontology', they analyse diverse practices, especially the ways in which humans interact with and conceptualise non-humans as agents, as expressions of different modes and models of being and relatedness. This MRes unit provides an orientation to the different approaches and different analytical vocabularies used for varieties of ways of knowing within the emerging fields of 'religion' and 'ontology'.

## **PART 1 – The Anthropology of Religion**

### **Week One, Tuesday 24 February**

#### *Introduction and Holy Hustling*

· Werbner, Richard, 2011, 'Introduction' and 'Holy Hustling' in *Holy Hustlers, Schism, and Prophecy: Apostolic Reformation in Botswana*, pp. 1-18 and 21-42. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Film: *Holy Hustling*

### **Week Two, Tuesday 3 March**

#### *Missionary Encounters with Pagan Souls*

- Viveiros de Castro, Eduardo, 2011, *The Inconstancy of the Indian Soul: The Encounter of Catholics and Cannibals in 16<sup>th</sup> Century Brazil*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2011.

### Week Three, Tuesday 10 March

#### *Missionary Encounters with Modern Souls*

- Matt Tomlinson, 2014, 'The Holy Ghost is About to Fall', in *Ritual Textuality: Pattern and Motion in Performance*, pp. 22-47. Oxford Ritual Studies. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

### Week Four, Tuesday 17 March

#### *The Anthropology of Religion*

- Lambek, Michael, 2013, What Is "Religion" for Anthropology? And What Has Anthropology Brought to "Religion"?
- Cannell, Fenella, 2006, 'The Anthropology of Christianity', in Fenella Cannell (ed.), *The Anthropology of Christianity*, pp. 1-50. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

### Week Five, 24 March

#### *The Anthropology of Secularism*

- Cannell, Fenella, 2010, The Anthropology of Secularism, *Annual Review of Anthropology* 39: 85-100

### Week Six, 31 March

#### *Transcendence*

- Robbins, Joel, 2012, Transcendence and the Anthropology of Christianity: Language, Change, and Individualism. Edward Westermarck Memorial Lecture, October 2011. *Suomen Antropologi: Journal of the Finnish Anthropological Society* 37(2): 5-23.

## SEMESTER BREAK

### Part 2 – The Anthropology of Ontology

#### Week Seven, 21 April

##### *Science and Religion*

- Latour, Bruno, 2010, 'On the Cult of the Factish Gods', in *On the Modern Cult of the Factish Gods*, pp. 1-66. Durham London: Duke University Press.
- Miller, Adam, 2013, 'Science and Religion', in *Speculative Grace: Bruno Latour and Object-Oriented Theology*, pp. 118-122. Perspectives in Continental Philosophy. New York: Fordham University Press.

#### Week Eight, 28 April

##### *Ontology or Science of Religion?*

- Michael W. Scott, 2013, What I'm reading: The anthropology of ontology (religious science?). *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (N.S.) 19: 859-872.

#### Week Nine, 5 May

##### *Beyond Nature and Culture – The Schemas of Practice*

- Descola, Philippe, 2013, 'The Schemas of Practice' and 'Relations with the Self and Relations with Others', in *Beyond Nature and Culture*, pp. 91-111 and 112-125. Translated from the French *Par-delà nature et culture* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2005) by Janet Lloyd. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

### **Week Ten, 12 May**

#### *Beyond Nature and Culture – Animism Restored and Totemism as an Ontology*

- Descola, Philippe, 2013, 'Animism Restored' and 'Totemism as an Ontology', in *Beyond Nature and Culture*, pp. 129-143 and 144-171. Translated from the French *Par-delà nature et culture* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2005) by Janet Lloyd. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

### **Week Eleven, 19 May**

#### *Spirit Worlds and Political Lives*

- Pedersen, Morten Axel, 2011, 'Introduction' and 'Shamanic States', in: *Not Quite Shamans: Spirit Worlds and Political Lives in Northern Mongolia*, pp. 1-41 and 42-80. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

### **Week Twelve, 26 May**

#### *The Politics of Ontology*

- All papers presented at the roundtable discussion held at the 2013 annual meeting of the American Anthropological Society in Chicago. The purpose of the roundtable was to explore the theoretical positions and methodological projects pursued under the banner of ontology, focusing particularly on the political implications of the "turn," including its potential pitfalls. The papers are available at <http://culanth.org/fieldsights/461-the-politics-of-ontology>

### **Week Thirteen, 2 June**

#### *Evaluation*



## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance\\_management/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html) *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide

appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

## Graduate Capabilities

### PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

#### Learning outcomes

- Gain an understanding of long-standing debates surrounding fieldwork, ethnography, anthropology and representation
- Enhance their communication and interpersonal skills through oral discussion and written work that focuses on conveying understanding, argument and information in a clear and concise fashion

#### Assessment tasks

- Seminar participation
- Report on discussion

### PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

#### Learning outcomes

- Gain an understanding of long-standing debates surrounding fieldwork, ethnography, anthropology and representation

- Familiarise themselves with anthropological perspectives on embodiment, the emotions and senses.
- Acquire insight into cutting edge anthropological concerns such as ontology and human-environment relations
- Cement critical analysis and creative thinking skills through research assignments.

## **Assessment task**

- Major essay

## **PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking**

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- Familiarise themselves with anthropological perspectives on embodiment, the emotions and senses.
- Acquire insight into cutting edge anthropological concerns such as ontology and human-environment relations
- Cement critical analysis and creative thinking skills through research assignments.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Report on discussion
- Major essay

## **PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability**

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcome**

- Cement critical analysis and creative thinking skills through research assignments.

## **Assessment task**

- Major essay

## PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Enhance their communication and interpersonal skills through oral discussion and written work that focuses on conveying understanding, argument and information in a clear and concise fashion
- Cement critical analysis and creative thinking skills through research assignments.

### Assessment tasks

- Seminar participation
- Report on discussion
- Major essay

## PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcome

- Gain an understanding of long-standing debates surrounding fieldwork, ethnography, anthropology and representation

### Assessment tasks

- Seminar participation
- Report on discussion