

**Graduate Seminar: Southeast Asian Culture and Society**  
**東南亞社會與文化**  
**Thursday 9:00AM – 12:00PM**

**Instructor: Dr. Brendan A. Galipeau, 助理教授 Assistant Professor**

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**研究室：人社院 C617 室**

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**Course Description:**

This is a graduate seminar dedicated to the exploration of classic and contemporary ethnographic texts about Southeast Asian societies. Designed for graduate students whose area focus is Southeast Asia, or whose theoretical concerns merit a close reading of key texts on the syllabus, the course will engage with canonical work, such as the writings of Clifford Geertz, Edmund Leach, James C. Scott, Benedict Anderson, Anna Tsing, and others, as well as with emerging voices in Southeast Asian studies such as Erik Harms and Andrew Johnson. The course is particularly well suited to students in Anthropology and Asian Studies interested in writing ethnographically about the region, and in gaining a sense for the particularities of Southeast Asia through intimate ethnographic narratives. Students will engage not only with the theoretical insights advanced by core texts, but also with the relationship between ethnographic research and the production of “theory”, and with questions of tone, voice and style in ethnographic writing. Finally, the course provides students with the opportunity to write their own theoretical and/or ethnographic texts, and will include writing workshops for course participants.

The course will follow a seminar format of in-class discussions in conjunction with assigned readings. Readings should be completed *before* the unit in which they are listed. It’s crucial to keep up on readings, since they form the basis of the core concepts of this course, and since you will be asked to take part in class discussions on the readings each week.

**Course Outcomes and Skills:**

Upon completing this course students should be able to:

- Identify and describe various theoretical perspectives and ethnographic particularities found in Southeast Asian ethnography;
- Participate in in-class discussions and debates about the current “state of the field” in Southeast Asian Anthropology
- Produce a 15-20 page ethnographic research paper on a topic related to Southeast Asian Ethnography and Anthropology

**For any books below with Chinese translations, you are welcome to read the Chinese version!**

**Required Texts:**

Anderson, Benedict ROG. 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Second Edition. London: Verso. (Chinese Translation Available)

Herzfeld, Michael. 2016. *Siege of the Spirits: Community and Polity in Bangkok*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Johnson, Andrew Alan. 2020. *Mekong Dreaming: Life and Death Along a Changing River*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Leach, Edmund. 1954. *Political Systems of Highland Burma: A Study of Kachin Social Structure*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. (Chinese Translation Available)

Padwe, Jonathan. 2020. *Disturbed Forests, Fragmented Memories: Jarai and Other Lives in the Cambodian Highlands*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Scott, James C. 1987. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (Chinese Translation Available)

Scott, James C. 2009. *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (Chinese Translation Available)

Tsing, Anna. 2005. *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

**Course Requirements and Grading:**

Grade items for the class include the following:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Points</i>
Attendance and Participation	Attendance in course meetings and active participation in discussions	20
Book Reviews	Three book reviews on assigned readings	30 (10 x 3)
Final Paper	Final 10-15 page double-spaced paper on topic chosen in consultation with instructor with a presentation given to class mates during the last week of class.	50 (40 points for paper, 10 for presentation)
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

**Participation and Attendance:** You will be allowed two excused absences that won't affect your grade. After two missed courses points will be deducted for each class session missed without prior approval or due to documented emergency. This is a seminar, so all students are required to regularly attend class and have completed the

assigned readings ahead of time. Participation in class discussion is also a critical component of the course. Please be present, involved, and engaged.

When you are reading and preparing for our weekly session, you should be preparing your own thoughts as notes to bring to share with the class. Please prepare discussion questions each week as well as clarifying questions regarding the readings that you wish to inquire about with the instructor. As part of participation, when films are occasionally shown in class, please write up short a reflective piece (1-2 pages 1.5 spacing) about how the film informs or contributes to your understanding of the relevant reading. Please email me your review of the film before the following week's class.

**Book Reviews:** You are responsible for submitting three reviews out of the assigned ethnographies in this course. Each review should be between 1,500 – 3,000 words, following the Taiwan Journal of Anthropology “book review” style guide. Please email me the book review a week after the book you choose is discussed in class.

**Final Paper:** The primary assignments for this course will be a research paper on a subject of your choosing related to the course. Please consult with me before the end of Week 3 to finalize and confirm your topic. Papers should be anywhere between 15-20 double-spaced pages in length and should bridge the course topics and your own areas of interest or ideally allow you to work on one of your own dissertation or thesis chapters. Twice through the semester we will engage in writing workshops to discuss and provide feedback on people's papers. During the last week of class everyone will also give a 10–15-minute presentation on their final papers. In lieu of a final paper you may also choose to write an annotated bibliography on a chosen theme or topic. For annotated bibliographies on a specific topic 12-15 references/sources should be utilized.

**Grading Scale:**

The class is not graded on a curve. The following grading scale will be used:

Percent	Grade
90-100	A+
85-89	A
84-80	A-
79-77	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
50-59	D
<50	F

**Class Schedule:**

Due dates for graded items are marked with **yellow highlights** below.

WEEK	TOPICS	READINGS/FILMS/ASSIGNMENTS
1 2/22	Introduction and course overview  Classic ethnographic texts	Leach, Edmund. 1954. <i>Political Systems of Highland Burma: A Study of Kachin Social Structure</i> . Cambridge: Harvard University Press. (optional to skim)
2 2/29	Peasant and resistance studies	Scott, James C. 1987. <i>Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance</i> . New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapters 1-4.
3 3/7		Scott, James C. 1987. <i>Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance</i> . New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapters 5-8.  <b>Deadline for consultation for final project topic</b>
4 3/14	Nationalism	Anderson, Benedict ROG. 1991. <i>Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism</i> . Second Edition. London: Verso.
5 3/21	Highlanders, lowlanders, and the state	Scott, James C. 2009. <i>The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia</i> . New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapters 1-5.
6 3/28		Scott, James C. 2009. <i>The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia</i> . New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapters 6-9.
7 4/4	Tomb Sweeping Festival, no class	
8 4/11	Frontiers and Borders	Padwe, Jonathan. 2020. <i>Disturbed Forests, Fragmented Memories: Jarai and Other Lives in the Cambodian Highlands</i> . Seattle: University of Washington Press. Introduction and Chapters 1-4.  <b>Draft, outline, or partial final paper due for writing workshop.</b>

9 4/18		Padwe, Jonathan. 2020. <i>Disturbed Forests, Fragmented Memories: Jarai and Other Lives in the Cambodian Highlands</i> . Seattle: University of Washington Press. Chapters 5-7 and Conclusion.
10 4/25	Globalization and Capitalism	Tsing, Anna. 2005. <i>Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection</i> . Princeton: Princeton University Press. Introduction and Chapters 1-3.
11 5/2		Tsing, Anna. 2005. <i>Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection</i> . Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 4-7.
12 5/9	The Mekong	Johnson, Andrew Alan. 2020. <i>Mekong Dreaming: Life and Death Along a Changing River</i> . Durham: Duke University Press. Introduction and Chapters 1-2.
13 5/16		Johnson, Andrew Alan. 2020. <i>Mekong Dreaming: Life and Death Along a Changing River</i> . Durham: Duke University Press. Chapters 3-5.
14 5/23	Urban Life	Herzfeld, Michael. 2016. <i>Siege of the Spirits: Community and Polity in Bangkok</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Preface and Chapters 1-4.
15 5/30	Final presentations	Herzfeld, Michael. 2016. <i>Siege of the Spirits: Community and Polity in Bangkok</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 5-8.  <b>Complete draft of final paper due for ethnographic writing workshop</b>  <b>Final Presentations and meal together!</b>
16	Final exam week	<b>Final papers due by email at midnight Friday June 28</b>