Postcoloniality and the Subject
Anthropology 289B
Course Code 22640 (Spring 2013)

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Meets Tuesdays, noon-2:50pm, SBSG 3323 (colloquium room)
First Meeting: Tuesday, April 2, noon. NOTE: there are readings for this day!

Course Description
This course is designed to work productively within the limits of the ten-week quarter system by employing a relatively focused set of readings to address a relatively focused set of key issues regarding postcoloniality. The theoretical focus is on conceptions of the subject, and more specifically the historicity of differential occupation of subject positions in the context of varied forms of colonial and state power. In particular, we will explore how technology and desire intersect with these questions of subjectification.

While a range of conceptual questions will thus animate the course, the discussion will be grounded in a critical empiricism. Once again to work productively within the limits of the ten-week quarter system, we will focus on Indonesia (the former Netherlands East Indies). The most dominant work on coloniality and postcoloniality engages with South Asia and British colonialism; there are also strong literatures in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa—engaging with Spanish, French, and American colonialisms, among others. However, there is a longstanding and rich scholarly community of work on colonialism in Indonesia; the specificities of (primarily) Dutch colonialism and the Southeast Asian context provide a circumscribed empirical site of discussion with broad implications. Significantly, this scholarly community has had a strong presence of anthropologists, but with many of them conducting some (or even most) of their research in a historical mode. Engaging with this work will thus provide us with the opportunity to engage in area studies as an interdisciplinary formation, and engage as well with a set of theoretical and substantive conversations that can be linked to a wide range of interests.

You do not need to be an Indonesia specialist, plan on conducting research in Indonesia, or even have an interest in Indonesia to take this course! The course is designed to demonstrate the value of engaging with a focused body of work around a set of linked questions, which can then be applied to your own research interests. It is likely that your papers for the course will not address Indonesia, as you draw from the materials to advance your own research.
Note: I will not allow any student to take an incomplete for this course under any circumstances. The seminar discussions will follow three basic guidelines:

**Generosity.** With a ten-week course there simply is not time for substandard texts. All selected readings are insightful and theoretically innovative. Critiquing aspects of the readings is fine, but if you find yourself rejecting an argument in toto, this indicates your reading is insufficiently generous.

**Provisionality.** You are allowed (indeed, encouraged) to think out loud, say something and then take it back, and generally speak in a provisional manner, knowing that others will be patient, supportive, and slow to take offense.

**Community.** Some individuals are quite comfortable speaking at length: this is desirable, but the instructor reserves the right to ask persons to wrap up their comments, or to solicit comments from persons who have not yet participated in any particular course meeting.

**Course Requirements**

1) **Class participation (20%)**: You must attend all class sessions and participate actively in class discussions. Part of your participation grade will consist of serving as a note-taker via an online document that we will collectively author as a record of our discussions during the quarter.

2) **Discussion questions (10%)**: You will prepare a set of questions for discussion for one class session. It is also expected that you will raise these questions with the group and prod us to respond!

3) **Four one-page précises (40%)**
   You must do four (4) one-page précises on the assigned reading for the class. You choose which class meetings for which you will write a précis. Each précis should take the form of a *one page only* (12 point font) generous, engaged commentary on the reading for that week. I discourage negative critiques; you should focus on generous engagement, linking the readings to our discussions. A précis must be turned in within the first five (5) minutes of class in triplicate. They can *never* be turned in at a later date. You must be in attendance for any day in which you turn in a précis (someone else can not turn it in for you). If you leave class early on the day you turn in a précis, that précis will not be counted. Each précis counts for 10 percent of your overall grade.
4) The final paper (30%)
A final paper on a topic of your choice related to the course readings is required, and must be emailed by the deadline as a single Word document (not pdf). It should be 4,000-5,000 words long, inclusive of title, endnotes, and references (I will use the word count function of Word to confirm this). The paper can be on any topic that relates to the course, so long as you obtain my approval and so long as you cite and draw upon course texts and discussions. I encourage you to engage in some way with your own research interests, and it is not expected that the paper address Indonesia (though it can). You may use either American Anthropological Association formatting (see http://www.aaanet.org/publications/guidelines.cfm) or some other style you prefer (e.g., MLA style), so long as you are consistent. You must include full bibliographic references to course texts as they are used. You may bring in outside readings, but it is not necessary and they should not overwhelm or substitute for course readings.

Students with disabilities: it is the policy of the University of California, Irvine to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students, however, are responsible for registering with the Disabilities Services Center, in addition to making requests known to me in a timely manner. If you require accommodations in this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, so that appropriate arrangements can be made. The procedures for registering with Disabilities Services Center can be found at http://www.disability.uci.edu/.

**Course Texts: Books**
The following books will be available at the bookstore, online, or on reserve.


Course Texts: Articles and Book Chapters

These course readings are accessible online, unless marked with ⚫, in which case they will be made available as PDF files. I will make the Week 1 readings available ahead of time, so please email me to obtain and read these texts for our first meeting, even if you are not 100% sure you will take the course.


**Course Schedule**

week one.

1) W. Anderson—Introduction: Postcolonial Technoscience.
2) Hall—When Was “The Post-colonial?”

week two.

1) Siegel—Fetish, Recognition, Revolution.
2) B. Anderson—Old State, New Society.
3) W. Anderson and Pols—Scientific Patriotism.

week three.

1) Mrázek—Engineers of Happy Land.
2) Barker—Engineers and Political Dreams.
week four.
   1) Stoler—Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power.
   2) Nordholt—Modernity and Cultural Citizenship.

week five.
   1) Boellstorff—The Gay Archipelago.
   2) Pemberton—On the Subject of “Java.”

week six.
   1) Geertz—Negara.
   2) Rutherford—Frontiers of the Lingua Franca.

week eight (note: no week 7 meeting).
   1) Steedly—Hanging without a Rope.
   2) Suryakusuma—The State and Sexuality in New Order Indonesia.

week nine.
   1) Li—The Will to Improve.

week ten.
   1) Strassler—Refracted Visions.
   2) Lowe—Making the Monkey.

finals week.
   1) Rudnyckyj—Spiritual Economies.
   2) Jones—Better Women.
   3) Keane—On Spirit Writing.

tuesday, June 18, 5pm: final paper due (via email)