

**Anthropology 146 Fall 2008**  
**Culture and Conflict**  
**(T & Th 4:30-5:45 pm)**

**Dr. Soo H. Choi**

**Office: DMH 238B Tel 924-5752**

**Office Hours: 9:30-11:30 am T & Th & by appointment**

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**Course Description**

Anthropologists have long studied social change brought about in pre-industrial or small scale societies through ongoing interactions with the nation states of the industrialized world. Often this kind of change has been conceptualized as “culture contact” or “acculturation,” even when the term “catastrophic change” is perhaps more accurate. Anthropologists now recognize that in order to understand change, we must pay attention to the very real issues of dominance, subordination, and dependence that characterize the colonial experience, and the many situations of encounter by two or more cultures.

Drawing on a survey of contemporary cultures (with some historic examples for a comparative perspective), this course will examine situations of culture and conflict that have arisen in the processes of modernization and development, globalization, and war. The two case studies we will study in depth come from very different traditional societies: 1) the Somalis, pastoralists in Africa, and 2) the Hmong, swidden agriculturalists from Laos who now live in diasporic communities throughout the United States. Our goal is to develop a theoretical framework for understanding these case studies and the issues they raise, and analyze how anthropologists and world citizens can positively affect the issues affecting small-scale societies.

**Prerequisites**

Students must have passed the Writing Skills Test (WST) and have taken or be enrolled in a 100W course. NO EXCEPTIONS!

**Course Learning Objectives**

\*\*An understanding of theoretical frameworks and anthropological perspectives on change, conflict, and development.

\*\*A grasp of several key ethnographic case studies of societies experiencing conflict and change

\*\*Ability to write about a particular culture and its experience of change and conflict, including a recommendation for how policy makers should deal with the problems with which this group is faced

\*\*Reflect critically on the processes of, and theories about, culture and conflict

**SJSU Studies Objective (Advanced GE, Area V)**

Students should receive an appreciation for human expression in cultures outside the U.S. and an understanding of how that expression has developed over time. Additionally, students should understand how traditions of cultures outside the U.S. have influenced American culture and society.

**Goals of the Anthropology Department**

**Knowledge**

\*\*Understanding culture as the distinguishing phenomenon of human life, and the relationship of human biology and evolution

- \*\*Awareness of human diversity and the ways humans have categorized diversity
- \*\*Knowledge of the significant findings of archaeology, cultural anthropology, and physical anthropology, and familiarity of the important issues in each sub-discipline
- \*\*Knowledge of the history of anthropological thought and its place in modern intellectual history
- \*\*Comprehension of migration, colonialism, and economic integration as significant phenomenon shaping global society

**Skills**

Ability to access various forms of anthropological data and literature  
 Awareness of importance and value of anthropological knowledge in contemporary society, and the ability to apply it to social issues.  
 Knowledge of the research methods of the sub-disciplines of anthropology and the ability to apply appropriate research methods in at least one-sub-discipline.  
 Ability to present and communicate anthropological knowledge and the result of anthropological research to different audiences.

**Professional values**

Knowledge of political and ethnical implications of social research

**Required Reading**

Maybury-Lewis, David, 1997 Indigenous Peoples, Ethnic Groups and the State. Allyn and Bacon.  
 Lee Barnes, Virginia and Janice Boddy, 1994. Aman: The Story of a Somali Girl. Vintage  
 Fadiman, Anne, 1997 The Sprint Catches You and You Fall Down; A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors and the Collisions of Two Cultures. Noonday Press

**Course Assignments and Evaluation**

Midterms (2@ 50 points each)	100 points	
2 essays on “Aman” and “The Sprit...”	50 point each	100 points
Final Exam	50 points	
Class participation	50 points	Total 300 points

- A- to A+ =270-300 points
- B- to B+ =240-269 points
- C- to C+ =210-239 points
- D- to D+ =180-209 points
- F = below 209 points

Participation points based on attendance, class discussion, participations in peer review editing, and possible in class writing responses

**General Policies**

Format of Papers: Papers should be typed, double-spaced, and pages numbered. Please staple together pages, and do not use folders, covers, or a cover sheet (put your name and section number in the top right hand corner of the first page). Please write clearly and correctly and seek help if you need it. Please proofread your papers carefully. Reading your work aloud often reveals mistakes in syntax and spelling.

Plagiarism: plagiarism occurs when you use the words of another author – a phrase, sentences, or paragraphs – without giving credit to that author with quotation marks and a citation. This practice misrepresents your writing. SJSU policy forbids plagiarism. It will be punished. If found plagiarizing, you will receive a zero you’re your assignment and I will report you.

Please read the statement on Academic Integrity and consult me if you have questions on this issue.

Late paper will be accepted with permission. 2 points subtracted for each day the paper is late.

**Exams:** All exams will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions. Questions will cover class lectures, readings, and films. I will provide a study guide for each exam.

**Special Arrangements:** If you need course adaptations of accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.

**Classroom Etiquette:** If you come late to class or leave early, please enter and exit quietly. Cell phones must be turned off and put away – text messaging in class. Computers may be used only for note-taking – if I find you surfing the web in class, you will have to leave.

### Course Schedule

**(DML:** David Maybury-Lewis's Indigenous People's, Ethnic Groups, and the State, **Fadiman:** Anne Fadiman's The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down, **Aman:** Girginia Lee Barnes's Aman) Depending upon the availability, some video might be replaced by other similar anthropological ones.

Introduction of anthropology and Culture and Conflict

Concepts, Issues, and Theoretical Frameworks; How do anthropologist comprehend conflict ridden societies?

8/26, 28

Indigenous Peoples: Cross cultural analysis

Mexico, Brazil, India, Southeast Asia, Indonesia, and some areas in Africa

DML 1-46

9/2, 4

The Tightrope of Power (video, Ojibwa-Cree, Mohawk v. Canadian government, Different views of Power Sharing and Democracy)

Who are the indigenous people? What are the relationships between the indigenous peoples and the conquerors?

9/9

Ethnic Groups, Multiethnic Society, and Ethnicity and the System

DML 47-80

Frederick Barth's Concept of Ethnicity from his Pakistan ethnography

How ethnicity is formed? What motivates people to maintain their ethnicity?

9/11, 16

Genocide, State, and Ethnic Cleansing

DML 81-136

The Shock of the Other (video, Tribal Wisdom, What can we learn from "tribal" societies?)

What are the relationships between ethnicity and state power?

9/18, 23

The First Phase of Aman's life story

Aman 1-96

9/25, 30

Maasai Women (video, 52 min)

The general overview of Muslim society, particularly of Muslim women

10/2, 7

### **Midterm Exam I**

10/9

The Second Phase of Aman's life history

"Cultural brutality," female circumcision, Bridewealth, and marriage

Aman 97-197

10/14, 16

Somalia: Good Intention Deadly Results (video) or Strange Relations (video, Nyinba couple in Nepal, Wodaabe of Niger, Tribal Wisdom)

Muslim women's resistance against mail dominated society in Somalia

10/21

The Third Phase of Aman's life history

Aman 198-283

Discrepancy between cultural rule and reality in Muslim society in Somalia

10/23, 28

Three Maasai women have their say (video, 30 min) or At the Threshold (video, Xavante Tribe in Brazil, Navajo, France, Sense Belongingness)

10/30

The Fourth Phase of Aman's life history

Aman 284-336

11/4, 6

Talk Mogadishu (video) or An Ecology of Mind (video, Gabra of Kenya, Makuna of Columbia, myth and ecological awareness)

How does a larger society or international event shape the lives of local peoples including Aman?

11/13

The First Phase of Hmong child story

The General Overview of Hmong culture, society and gender relationship

Fadiman 1-92

11/18, 20

### **Midterm Exam II**

11/25

The Second Phase of Hmong Child

Fadiman 93-180

Culture Conflict between Western concept and Hmong concept on human identity, life, death, parenthood, etc

12/2

The Third Phase of Hmong Child  
Fadiman 181-287  
12/4

Becoming an American (video) and Conclusion  
12/9

**Final Exam**  
12/15 2:45-5:00 pm