

Anth. 702

Term 2, 2017

The Politics of Desire: Thinking the Present through various sites of sociopolitical and economic protestations

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Course Descriptions and Objectives:

This interdisciplinary course explores the politics of desire during turbulent times in the current global neoliberal economic onslaught, witnessed by the proliferation of politics and protestations in various places that promise change in contexts that resist it. Taking "desire" as an open conceptual domain that brings together the affective and the (ir)rational, the philosophical and the psychological, the personal and the public, the present and the future, or in Reinhard Kosseleck's grim but still felicitous phrase, their desires are now futures past." The course will explore the construction of human conditions of what people want, what they imagine as beneficial, and what they strive for through the fields of politics, economy, and the philosophical. We will analyze the politics of desire as manufactured by the state and transnational institutions; and the politics of desire as mediated through quotidian expressions and other grass root social movements represented or unrepresented in the public sphere. A major concern of this course is the relationship among political power, the production of subject(ivities), and the potential horizons of imaginative futures, if any.

Requirements:

All reading is required and must be completed before the week in which a given topic(s) is being discussed. Class participation requires your bodily presence in class and intellectual engagement with the material. My evaluation of your participation will take into account how well you complete formal tasks such as turning in discussion questions, leading discussion or presenting a reading as assigned, and your willingness to participate in class discussion in general.

Participations and discussions	40%
Final Paper	60%

Class discussions: Each student will be expected to prepare analytical questions and to discuss and summarize the reading in order to prepare for class discussions. In addition, students will take turn each week for leading class discussion, outlining the main arguments of the text(s), provide some supporting examples for these arguments from the text(s), and evaluate those arguments in terms of supporting or opposed scholarship.