

Department of Anthropology and The Institute for Globalization and the Human
Condition
Global Futures (786)
Professor Petra Rethmann
Fall 2022

Instructor: Dr. Petra Rethmann

Email: rethman@mcmaster.ca

Seminar: synchronous; discussion-based

Time: Tuesdays, 11:30 – 14:20

Room: LRW 5001

Office Hours: 14:30 – 15:30 in LRW 2001; or by appointment

Land Acknowledgement

While meeting for this course, we recognize and acknowledge our presence on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations, and within the lands protected by the “Dish With One Spoon” Wampum agreement. This acknowledgement marks a commitment to honor treaties and work toward decolonization and establishment of just relations.

Course Description

This course seeks to address and open up the question of futurity and futures through the lens of politics, critique, ethics, and culture. In examining “the future” in particular through the lens of *Zeitenwende* (literally, turn of the times), a term that emerged in Germany in the wake of Russia’s February 2022 military invasion of Ukraine and means the ‘necessity to change.’ The course traces this ‘necessity to change’ through registers such as ‘politics,’ ‘dissent,’ ‘hope,’ ‘history,’ ‘memory,’ ‘ethics,’ and ‘energy.’ The point of exploring in some depth ‘turn of the times’ is not to examine the war in Ukraine, but to think about what it would actually take for the North Atlantic world – the world in which many of us live - to change. A related point is to explore what it means to think about creating a longer argument in terms of analysis, scholarship, and writing.

Although my disciplinary training is in anthropology, many of the texts we will read attach themselves to political, historical, and philosophical discourses. The reasons for this are twofold. First, *Global Futures* is an interdisciplinary course, and this interdisciplinarity needs to be taken into account. Second, the idea of ‘turn of the times’ is not confined to one discipline – say, anthropology - but spills over into other forms of inquiry as well.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Articulate theoretical and conceptual perspectives on issues of change, politics, memory, ethics, and energy
- Have a conceptual and an empirical understanding of significant political and cultural challenges related to questions of energy and war
- Be able to understand how political and ethnographic analysts look at politics and change

- Enter with confidence debates related to the future of our planet

Required Materials and Texts

There are no required textbooks for this class. All required readings are listed below. Most are accessible through the library catalogue; simply search for the journal, year, and name of the author. Those that are not accessible through the library catalogue will be posted on Avenue to Learn or distributed via email.

Course Format

The course will consist of synchronous discussions. Weekly sessions will run between 100 – 120 minutes. We will exceed this timeframe if need be. Otherwise, in the third hour I will be available for individual consultation.

Course Evaluation

Responses to Assigned Readings (54 %, each worth 6%)

There will be 9 (Sept. 13, 20, 27; Oct 4, 18, 25; Nov. 1, 8, 22) response papers you will have to submit for this class, with each response paper worth 6 %. After each class, I will immediately send you three questions that directly related to next week's assigned readings, and your responses should address these three questions. Response papers should be single-spaced and NOT longer than 2 pages. They are **due on Sunday nights 7:00 pm.**

The objective of the response papers is for you to consider the readings in more detail, provide you with a chance to identify key concepts and themes, to share impressions, and to identify key questions or concerns arising from the texts for the class's consideration.

Seminar Participation (30 %), ongoing

The participation grade covers class participation. You are responsible for having read the material and coming to class ready to contribute to the discussion. In the beginning and throughout class I will cold-call on some of you to get the discussion started.

Elaboration on a Reading , (16%), due November 30

The reading elaboration is worth 16%. On November 8 I will point three questions on Avenue to Learn of which you can choose one. To answer this question, I do not want to do you any additional reading (though you can), but rather delve into your answer in some detail based on our mutual readings and discussions. Your answer should not exceed 1.5 pages, single-spaced.

Please remember to keep copies of all your work in case anything goes astray.

SCHEDULE

Week 1: SEPTEMBER 6

Introduction to the Course

No readings

Suggested Readings

Appadurai, Arjun

- 2000 Grassroots Globalization and the Research Imagination. *Public Culture* 12 (1): 1-19.
- 2002 Deep Democracy: Urban Governmentality and the Horizon Politics. *Public Culture* 14: 21 – 47.
- 2006 The Right to Research. *Globalisation, Societies, and Education* 4 (2): 167 – 177.
- 2007a Hope and Democracy. *Public Culture* 19 (1): 29 – 34.
- 2007b The Capacity to Aspire: Culture and the Terms of Recognition. In *Cultural Politics in a Global Age: Uncertainty, Solidarity, and Innovation*. Edited by David Held and Henrietta L. Moore. Oxford: Oneworld Publications. Pp. 29 – 35. Available, <https://mapn-ulm.ac.id/wp-content/uploads>

Bloch, Ernst

- 1988 *The Utopian Function of Art and Literature: Selected Essays*. Translated by Jack Zipes and Frank Mecklenburg. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Castiglia, Christopher

- 2017 *The Practices of Hope: Literary Criticism in Disenchanted Times*. New York: New York University Press.

Haran, Joan

- 2010 Redefining Hope as Praxis. *Journal for Cultural Research* 14 (3): 393 – 408.

Mouffe, Chantal and Ernesto Laclau, in conversation with Mary Zournazi

- 2002 Hope, Passion, Politics. In *Hope: New Philosophies for Change*. Edited by Mary Zournazi. New York: Routledge. Pp. 122 – 148.

Myers, Ella. 2013. *Worldly Ethics: Democratic Politics and Care for the World*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Solnit, Rebecca

- 2016 *Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.

Tsiolkas, Christos, in conversation with Mary Zournazi

- 2002 On Believing. In *Hope: New Philosophies for Change*. Edited by Mary Zournazi. New York: Routledge. Pp. 98 – 121.

Week 2: SEPTEMBER 13

The Place From Which We Think I

Required Readings

Akhil, Gupta, and James Ferguson

- 1997 Discipline and Practice: “The Field” as Site, Method, and Location in Anthropology. In *Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp. 1 – 46.

TBA

Suggested Readings

Ahmed, Sara

- 2017 *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Fournier, Lauren

2021 *Autotheory as Feminist Practice in Art, Writing, and Criticism*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Lowe, Lisa

2015 *The Intimacies of Four Continents*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Week 3: SEPTEMBER 20

The Place From Which We Think II

Required Readings

Masco, Joseph

2017 The Crisis in Crisis. *Current Anthropology* 58 (S15): S65 – 76.

Arundhati Roy

2020 The pandemic is a portal. Financial Times, accessed at

<https://www.ft.com/content/10d8f5e8-74eb-11ea-95fe-fcd274e920ca>

TBA

Suggested Readings

Brown, Wendy

2019 *In the Ruins of Neoliberalism: The Rise of Antidemocratic Politics in the West*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Dean, Jodi

2009 *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies; Communicative Capitalism and Left Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Mbembe, Achille

2001 *On the Postcoloniality*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Stuelke, Patricia

2021 *The Ruse of Repair: US Neoliberal Empire and the Turn From Critique*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Week 4: SEPTEMBER 27

The Times About Which We Think I

Required Readings

Appadurai, Arjun

2021 The Scarcity of Social Futures in the Digital Age. In *Futures*. Edited by Sandra Kemp and Jenny Andersson. London: Oxford University Press. Pp. 280 –295.

2017 Democracy Fatigue. In *The Great Transgression*. Edited by Heinrich Geiselberger. Cambridge: Polity Press. Pp. 1-12.

Mishra, Pankaj

2017 Politics in the Age of Resentment: The Dark Legacy of the Enlightenment. In *The Great Transgression*. Edited by Heinrich Geiselberger. Cambridge: Polity Press. Pp. 104 – 116.

Suggested Readings

Brown, Wendy

- 2019 *The Rise of Antidemocratic Politics in the West*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- 2017 *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution.
- 2006 American Nightmare: Neoliberalism, Neoconservatism, and De-Democratization. *Political Theory* 34 (6): 690 – 714.
- 1995 Wounded Attachments. In *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Pp. 52 – 76.
- Cramer, Katherine J.
- 2016 *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Misik, Robert
- 2017 The Courage to be Audacious. In *The Great Transgression*. Edited by Heinrich Geiselberger. Cambridge: Polity Press. Pp. 117 - 129.
- Müller, Jan-Werner
- 2016 *What is Populism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Rendueles, César
- 2017 From Global Regression to Post-capitalist Counter-movements. In *The Great Transgression*. Edited by Heinrich Geiselberger. Cambridge: Polity Press. Pp. 143 - 156.
- Snyder, Timothy
- 2017 *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*. New York: Tim Duggan Books.

Week 5: OCTOBER 4

The Times About Which We Think II

Required Readings

Allen, Jennifer

- 2019 National Commemoration in an Age of Transnationalism. *The Journal of Modern History* 91 (March): 109-148.

Rothberg, Michael

- 2018 Memory Studies in a Moment of Danger: Fascism, post-fascism, and the Contemporary Political Imaginary. *Memory Studies* 11 (3): 355 – 367.

- 2022 Learning and Unlearning with Taring Padi; Reflections on Documenta. In *The New Fascism Syllabus: Exploring the New Right through Scholarship and Civic Engagement*. Accessed at newfascismsyllabus.com

Week 6: OCTOBER 11

Mid-term Recess; No Class

Week 7 : OCTOBER 18

All Power to the Imagination (!?)

Required Readings

Marsili, Lorenzo, and Niccolo Milanese
2018 *Citizens of Nowhere: How Europe Can Be Saved from Itself*. London: Zed Books.
Excerpts.

Rethmann, Petra

n.d. Reading for Change in Russia.

Suggested Readings

Bardawil, Fadi

2020 *Revolution and Disenchantment: Arab Marxism and the Bonds of Emancipation*.
Durham: Duke University Press.

Lim, Jie-Hyun

2019 Mnemonic Solidarity in the Global Memory Space. *Global-e*.

Moeller, Robert G.

2005 Germans as Victims?: Thoughts on a Post-Cold War History of World War II's
Legacies. *History and Memory* 17 (1-2): 147-94.

Moses, Dirk

2021 Who Counts as a Victim? *Aeon*.

Rothberg, Michael

2009 Introduction: Theorizing Multidirectional Memory in a Transnational Age. In
*Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in an Age of
Decolonization*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Pp. 1 – 29.

Scott, David

2014 The Temporality of Generations: Dialogue, Tradition, Criticism. *New Literary
History* 45 (2): 157 – 181.

Young, James

1992 The Counter-Monument: Memory Against Itself in Germany Today. *Critical
Inquiry* 18: 267-296

Antze, Paul, and Michael Lambek, eds.

1996 *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory*. New York: Routledge.

Yoneyama, Lisa

2016 *Cold War Ruins: Transpacific Critique of American Justice and Japanese War
Crimes*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Hirschkind, Charles

2021 *The Feeling of History: Islam, Romanticism, and Andalusia*. Chicago: University
of Chicago Press.

Week 8: OCTOBER 25

Life Matters

Required Readings

De la Cadena, Marisol

2010 Indigenous Cosmopolitics in the Andes: Conceptual Reflections Beyond
“Politics.” *Cultural Anthropology* 25 (2): 334 – 370.

Bennett, Jane

2010 *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Excerpts.

Week 9: NOVEMBER 1

Energy I

Required Readings

McDermott Hughes, David. 2021. *Who Owns the Wind?: Climate Crisis and the Hope of Renewable Energy*. London: Verso. Excerpts.

Suggested Readings

Brown, Kate

2019 Learning to Read the Great Chernobyl Acceleration. *Current Anthropology* 60 (20): 198 – 208.

Klein, Naomi

2014 *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate*. New York: Knopf.

Latour, Bruno

2018 *Down to Earth: Politics in the New Climatic Regime*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

2017 *Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

McDermott, Hughes

2017 *Energy Without Conscience: Oil, Climate Change, and Complicity*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Nixon, Rob

2011 *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Petryna, Adriana

2018 Wildfires at the Edges of Science: Horizons Work amid Runaway Change. *Cultural Anthropology* 339 (4): 570 – 595.

Week 10: NOVEMBER 8

Energy II

Required Readings

Soper, Kate. 2020. *Post-Growth Living: For an Alternative Hedonism*. London: Verso. Excerpts.

Week 11: NOVEMBER 15

Self-Directed Work

Week 12: NOVEMBER 22

Ethics

Required Readings

Graeber, David, and David Wengrow

2021 *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart. Excerpts.

The Salvage Collective

- 2021 *Towards the Proletarocene*. London: Verso. Excerpts.
Myers, Ella
2017 The Non-Scandal of American Oligarchy. *Theory & Event* 20 (2): 296 – 328.

Suggested Readings

- Myers, Ella
2013 *Worldly Ethics: Democratic Politics and Care for the World*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Week 13: November 29

It's Up to You!

COURSE POLICIES

Submission of Assignments

Unless otherwise noted below, all assignments will be submitted through folders that will be available on the Avenue to Learn site for this course.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale as illustrated below.

<u>Mark</u>	<u>Grade</u>
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

For the research proposal and research paper all students have the option of an extension of up to one week of the deadline specified in the course outline above. All requests for deadline extensions longer than one week must be made in advance of the assignment's original deadline, and must be accompanied by a documented justification for why a deadline extension of longer than a week is needed. Challenges such as assignments or final presentations in other courses that were announced earlier in the term should be anticipated and planned for. It is your responsibility to make contingency plans for unforeseen

problems such as computer failures. Assignments that are completed after the extended deadline, if accepted, will be penalized by one grade point per day including Saturday and Sunday (a grade point is a the interval between A+ and A, A and A-, etc.).

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Please inform me of any absences or problems with the course,

Courses with an On-Line Element

This course will be using online technologies, including Avenue to Learn, e-mail, and Zoom. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster email accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required before the text/exam begins.

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, Appendix 3, www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac_integrity.html

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- a) Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own for which other credit has been obtained. (Insert specific course information, e.g., style guide).
- b) Improper collaboration in group work.
- c) Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning, and

working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Students Rights & Responsibilities (the “Code”; <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Code-of-Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities>). All students share responsibilities of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of the McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning rooms. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviors that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue2Learn, WebEx, or Zoom for delivery) will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restrictions or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

Faculty of Social Sciences Email Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Etiquette

In this course we value integrity, inclusiveness, and teamwork. As all of us make the transition to on-line course delivery and teaching, I would like for us all to emphasize the values of mutual respect, dignity, and responsibility. Sometimes issues, glitches in electronic systems, and other concerns can feel overwhelming. Please be kind to each other, and patient. I am always happy to assist you in, and to make this the experience as I can.

Course Communication

If you wish to communicate with me, please try to be as clear and concise as possible. If you are unsure about your message, read it out aloud. I do this often before I send a message, since it helps me to better understand how the message might “land” on the other end. And/or review your written message. Not only will this let you review your questions, concerns, and/or ideas, but also make sure that the tone is appropriate. I will answer e-mails on weekdays between 9:00 am and 4:30 pm. Given the volume of messages I receive, you may have to wait up to 48 hrs for a reply.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the students to check her or his McMaster

e-mail and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labor disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L, and/or McMaster email.