# **Decolonised reading list for Cambridge Social Anthropology course**

*[Compiled by graduates in September 2018]*

The introductory social anthropology course at Cambridge aims to provide students with an introduction to the subject of social anthropology. It is comprised of three parts: the study of two core ethnographies, the comparative study of social institutions, and a historical overview of the discipline.

Decolonising social anthropology is a curious endeavour. On the one hand, the discipline is quite literally a product of Europe’s colonial expansion. On the other hand, the discipline has developed into one that is deeply reflexive and capable of questioning its own methods and theoretical traditions. Decolonisation is as much about processes and methods as it is about content - it is heartening to see more diverse voices being incorporated in the SAN1 curriculum over the past year, but how we choose to use the many available ethnographic texts in each of our own essays is also a part of the project.

The list below does not encompass even an overview of decolonial works. It simply provides some entry points through which you may begin exploring how one can study anthropology in ways that are attentive of its colonial roots while being constructive in shaping a more inclusive and truthful disciplinary future.

**General readings:**

* Faye V. Harrison, 1997, *Decolonizing Anthropology: Moving Further Toward an Anthropology for Liberation*
* Maria Lugones, 2007, [“Heterosexualism and the Colonial / Modern Gender System”](https://hamtramckfreeschool.files.wordpress.com/2014/05/lugones-maria-heterosexualism-and-the-colonial-modern-gender-system.pdf)
* Edward Said, 1978, *Orientalism*
	+ Dennis Porter, 1983 ‘Orientalism and its Problems’
	+ Meyda Yegenoglu, 1998, *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism*
* Patrick Wolfe, 1999, *Settler-Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Events*
* [“Decolonizing Anthropology”](https://savageminds.org/2016/04/19/decolonizing-anthropology/) on Savage Minds
* Nyamnjoh, Francis B. [‘Blinded by Sight: Divining the Future of Anthropology in Africa’](https://journals.sub.uni-hamburg.de/giga/afsp/article/view/551/549), Africa Spectrum 47, no. 2-3 (2012): 63-92
* Anderson, K. & Jack, D. 1991. Learning to listen. In S. Gluck & D. Patai, eds. Women’s Words. London: Routledge, pp. 11–26.
* Lewis, D. 2010. Discursive Challenges for African Feminisms. In A. A. Ampofo & S. Arnfred, eds. African Feminist Politics of Knowledge: Tensions, Challenges, Possibilities. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
* Ribeiro, G.L. & Escobar, A. eds. 2006. World Anthropologies: Disciplinary Transformations Within Systems of Power. Oxford: Berg.
* Shepherd, N. 2003. “When the Hand that Holds the Trowel is Black...”: Disciplinary Practices of Self-Representation and the Issue of “Native” Labour in Archaeology. Journal of Social Archaeology, 3(3): 334–352.

**Theoretical texts:**

* Alcoff, Linda Martín. "Towards a phenomenology of racial embodiment." *Radical Philosophy* 95(1999): 15-26.
* Asad
	+ Asad, Talal. *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter*. Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1973.
	+ Asad, Talal. *Formations of the secular: Christianity, Islam, modernity*. Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2003.
* Comaroffs
	+ Comaroff, John L., and Jean Comaroff, eds. *Civil society and the political imagination in Africa: Critical perspectives*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999.
	+ Comaroff, Jean and John Comaroff. "Ethnography on an awkward scale: Postcolonial anthropology and the violence of abstraction." *Ethnography* 4.2 (2003): 147-179.
	+ Comaroff, Jean, and John L. Comaroff, eds. *Law and Disorder in the Postcolony*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008.
	+ Comaroff, Jean, and John L. Comaroff. "Occult economies and the violence of abstraction: notes from the South African postcolony." *American ethnologist* 26.2 (1999): 279-303.
* Comaroff, Jean, and John L. Comaroff. *Theory from the South: Or, how Euro-America is evolving toward Africa*. London: Routledge, 2015.
	+ [Journal of Ethnographic Theory, Vol 7, No 1 (2017)](https://www.haujournal.org/index.php/hau/issue/view/hau7.1) - *Debate Collection*
* Kuehnast, K. (1992). [“Visual imperialism and the export of prejudice: an exploration of ethnographic film”](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303552953_Visual_Imperialism_and_the_Export_of_Prejudice_An_Exploration_of_Ethnographic_Film). *Film as Ethnography.* Eds. Crawford, P. & Turton, D. Manchester: Manchester University Press
* Timothy Mitchell, “Society, Economy, and the State Effect.” *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader.* Ed. Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta. Malden: Blackwell, 2006. 169-86.
* MacGaffey, Wyatt. "Concepts of race in the historicography of Northeast Africa." *The Journal of African History* 7.1 (1966):1-17.
* Mafeje
	+ Mafeje, Archie. "On the articulation of modes of production." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 8.1 (1981): 123-138.
	+ Mafeje, Archie. "The ideology of ‘tribalism’." *The journal of modern African studies* 9.2 (1971): 253-261.
	+ Mafeje, Archie. "The problem of anthropology in historical perspective: An inquiry into the growth of the social sciences." *Canadian Journal of African Studies/La Revue canadienne des études africaines* 10.2 (1976): 307-333.
	+ Mafeje, Archie. *The Theory and Ethnography of African Social Formations: The Case of the Interlacustrine Kingdoms*. Dakar: CODESRIA, 1991.
	+ Mafeje, Archie. "Who are the Makers and Objects of Anthropology? A critical comment on Sally Falk Moore’s Anthropology and Africa." *African Sociological Review/Revue Africaine de Sociologie* (1997): 1-15.
* Pierre
	+ Pierre, Jemima. "Black immigrants in the United States and the ‘cultural narratives’ of ethnicity." *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 11.2 (2004): 141-170.
	+ Pierre, Jemima. "Interrogating ‘Blackness’: Race and Identity‐formation in the African Diaspora." *Transforming Anthropology* 11.1 (2002): 51-53.
	+ Pierre, Jemima. *Race across the Atlantic: mapping racialization in Africa and the African diaspora.* Diss. University of Texas, 2002. Repositories.lib.utexas.edu.
	+ Pierre, Jemima. *The Predicament of Blackness: Postcolonial Ghana and the Politics of Race*. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago, 2013.
* Scott, David. "Colonial Governmentality." *Social Text* 43.43 (1995): 191-220.
* Vincent Crapanzano, 1986, “Hermes’ Dilemma: The Masking of Subversion in Ethnographic Description” in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (eds. Clifford and Marcus). [“All too often, the ethnographer forgets that the native cannot abide someone reading over his shoulder. If he does not close his book, he will cast his shadow over it.” - on Clifford Geertz]
* Viveiros de Castro - Amerindian perspectivism

**Ethnographic texts:**

* Abu-Lughod
	+ Lila Abu-Lughod, 2002, “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others”
	+ Lila Abu-Lughod, 1986, *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society.*
* Apter, A. (2002) [“On Imperial Spectacle: The Dialectics of Seeing in Colonial Nigeria”](https://www.jstor.org/stable/3879380?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents). *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44(3), pp. 564-596.
* Campbell, H. (2015). Escaping identity: border zones as places of evasion and cultural reinvention. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, *21*(2), 296-312.
* Flynn, D. K. (1997). “We are the border”: identity, exchange, and the state along the Bénin‐Nigeria border. *American Ethnologist*, *24*(2), 311-330.
* Mahmood, S. (2011). [*Politics of piety: The Islamic revival and the feminist subject*.](https://books.google.ch/books/about/Politics_of_Piety.html?id=B2K1QgAACAAJ&source=kp_book_description&redir_esc=y) Princeton University Press.
* Jaffe, R. (2013). The hybrid state: Crime and citizenship in urban Jamaica. *American Ethnologist*, *40*(4), 734-748.
* Jones, R. (2009). Agents of exception: border security and the marginalization of Muslims in India. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *27*(5), 879-897.
* Poole, D. (1997) [*Vision, Race, and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean World.*](https://books.google.co.uk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=GGd85kLZma0C)Princeton: Princeton University Press.
* Salter, M. B. (2006). The global visa regime and the political technologies of the international self: Borders, bodies, biopolitics. *Alternatives*, *31*(2), 167-189.
* Sigona, N. (2015). Campzenship: Reimagining the camp as a social and political space. *Citizenship Studies*, *19*(1), 1-15.