What is the nature of human freedom? And what conditions are most conducive to its cultivation? How has the Islamic reform movement affected Indonesian conceptions of personal ambition, romantic intimacy and political participation? To what extent have local conceptions of sexuality, gender and social class been shaped by more global trends? And, more specifically, how have ideals of human flourishing and collective life been transformed by developments in new media, international travel and the rise of transnational capital and consumerism? These are some of the questions informing the current anthropological study of Indonesia. But they are also questions that lie at the center of several recent Indonesian films. This seminar puts anthropological scholarship in conversation with Indonesian cinema to explore their respective styles of enquiry, and compare their responses. All films will be presented with English subtitles.

Course Requirements
- Read the syllabus.
- Complete and careful reading/viewing of all required course material. All reading materials are available on the Moodle website.
- Attendance at all sessions and active participation in seminar discussion are mandatory.
- A written essay of 3000 words. The essay is due Friday, February 9. Please plan accordingly. The essay question is included below; further details will be distributed in class.
- All work must be completed on time; no extensions will be granted for this course, except on grounds of major life disruption.
- Bring pen or pencil and paper to every session for taking notes and other in-class work.
- No screens. Laptops, tablets & cellphones are not to be used in class. Seminar sessions are carefully designed to develop critical thinking skills. Screens interfere with this process. Exceptions will be made for learning disabilities or special needs evidenced by doctor’s note.

Course Objectives
- A working familiarity with the current literature on Indonesian cinema;
- A representative knowledge of central themes and issues depicted in recent Indonesian films;
- A comparative understanding of anthropological and filmic depictions of Indonesian history, culture and society;
- A critical awareness of key theoretical questions that closer attention to cinema – and popular culture – may raise for anthropology, and vice versa.

The Essay
*How does Indonesian cinema address current social and political issues?* With specific reference to one or more filmic genres (e.g. horror, action, romance), argue convincingly for an answer to this question. Support your argument with evidence from the course readings and films—including both (a) the required materials and (b) selected background reading. Although it is not mandatory, you may also use additional materials—found either online or through the bibliographies for the course readings. Please do not forget the “Additional Background Materials” provided on the Moodle site. Further details will be distributed in class.
Thinking Anthropologically through Indonesian Cinema

A Course in Six Conversations
As a ‘block seminar’, this course is organized around a series of six conversations, five of which will focus in detail on a recent Indonesian film viewed during class time. The final session will be devoted to reflecting on what we have learned to date, and preparing for the final essay. For each of the five initial conversations, you will be provided with both a list of required readings and background materials. The required texts must be read before the class meeting in question. (In one case, there is also a film to be viewed before the class meeting.) The background materials are there for further reading, and especially to help you in writing the final essay (as above).

Contextual Reading: Indonesia and Indonesian Cinema
These books, articles and websites may be consulted for additional background on Indonesia and Indonesian cinema—particularly for context as you prepare to write your essay. Several of these items are directly available online, as indicated.

For general background on the history and cultures of Indonesia, the following works are recommended:

- Pramoedya Ananta Toer (1991) This Earth of Mankind. New York: Morrow. [This is the first book in the author’s Buru quartet, which also includes Child of all nations, Footsteps and House of glass.]

Three commonly cited ‘classics’ in the study of Indonesian cinema include the following:


As Paramaditha (2017, below) has noted in her review of the current literature, more recent scholarship has moved beyond these earlier works—both to ask new questions, and to engage a body of post-1998 films that differ markedly from their Soeharto-era predecessors. Some important examples include the following:


**Additional Resources on Film in Contemporary Indonesia**

The following websites include articles, reviews and commentary on current films. Some material may be in Indonesian. While Google Translate (translate.google.com/) does not provide reliable translation for scholarly purposes (e.g., for use in your essay), it can often give you a general sense of the topics and questions under discussion—and potentially point you to additional materials.

• A simple Google search is often extremely helpful for finding details on specific films, directors, production houses, etc. It may also turn up full movies (e.g., on YouTube, dailymotion.com, Vimeo, etc.), some of which are subtitled in English.
• Recent trailers and some movies can also be streamed on the IndoXXI website. The English interface is accessible at en.indoxxi.net/nonton-film-indonesia-terbaru
• The Film Indonesia site offers box office numbers (filmindonesia.or.id/movie/viewer#.WdcbWNuB2uo) and film synopses. It is a commonly cited source in the current scholarship. The primary interface is in Indonesian. But, if you search for a film title, you can then click “English version” for many of the film summaries.
• The Indonesian Film Censorship Board (www.lsf.go.id) is also an important resource for recent statistics. Google translate can help you navigate the site.
• CinemaPoetica (cinemapoetica.com/) describes itself as ‘a collective of film critics, journalists, researchers, and activists in Indonesia’. The site offers critical analyses and essays on contemporary Indonesian film. It is an excellent resource.
• As its name suggests, Sinopsis Film Baru (sinopsisfilmbaru.com) provides synopses of current films. The text is in Indonesian. Again, Google translate may be helpful.
• For those interested in going further, a reliable online Indonesian-English dictionary can be accessed here: sealang.net/indonesia/dictionary.htm
• A discussion of other current sites may be found in Paramaditha 2017 (see above).
Thinking Anthropologically through Indonesian Cinema

Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday, October 20. 2017</td>
<td>13-16:00 c.t.</td>
<td>Introductory Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, October 27. 2017</td>
<td>13-17:00 c.t.</td>
<td>Film + discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, October 28. 2017</td>
<td>13-17:00 c.t.</td>
<td>Film + discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, November 3. 2017</td>
<td>13-17:00 c.t.</td>
<td>Film + discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, November 4. 2017</td>
<td>13-17:00 c.t.</td>
<td>Film + discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, November 10. 2017</td>
<td>13-17:00 c.t.</td>
<td>Film + discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, November 11. 2017</td>
<td>13-17:00 c.t.</td>
<td>Film + discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, February 9. 2018</td>
<td>no meeting</td>
<td>Final essays due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Introduction
Friday, October 20. 2017

There is no preparatory reading or viewing required for this session.

Islam Today: Steering a Straight Path
Friday, October 27. 2017

In-class viewing
• *Hijrah Cinta* (Indra Gunawan, 2014)

Required reading

Background reading
Thinking Anthropologically through Indonesian Cinema


Middle Class Cinta: How Deep Is Your Love?
Saturday, October 28. 2017

In-class viewing
- Ada Apa dengan Cinta 2 (Riri Riza, 2016)

Required reading

Background reading
Thinking Anthropologically through Indonesian Cinema


Sex and the City: We ‘Other’ Jakartans
Friday, November 3, 2017

In-class viewing
- Lovely Man (Teddy Soeriaatmadja, 2012)

Required reading

Background reading
## Thinking Anthropologically through Indonesian Cinema

### Horror as Return of the Repressed
Saturday, November 4, 2017

**In-class viewing**
- *Mall Klender* (David Poernomo, 2014)

**Required reading**

**Background reading**

### Histories of Violence and Forgetting
Friday, November 10, 2017

**In-class viewing**
- *Headshot* (Timo Tjahjanto & Kimo Stamboel, 2016)

*NB: The required reading is on the next page…*
**Thinking Anthropologically through Indonesian Cinema**

**Required reading/viewing**

**Background reading**

**Tying the Whole Room Together**
Saturday, November 11. 2017

There are no formal reading requirements for the final session, in which we will have an open discussion of key themes and questions, followed by a detailed overview of what is expected in the final essay.