Graduate Seminar on
Religions, Cultures, and Civilizations
JSIS 596
Winter 2016 / Tuesdays 1:30–4:20 / Raitt Hall 109

From *The Book of the Games*, c. 1285, in Old Spanish showing a Muslim and a Christian playing Chess, the original game of political conquest that originated in India and was transmitted to Europe through the medieval Islamic world.

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Goals of the Seminar

This seminar will expose graduate students from across the University to a selection of key works across the social sciences and critical humanities in the general areas of "religions, cultures, and civilizations" or RCC. The RCC field engages the diversity of cultural and religious life throughout the world, anchored by concrete studies of world areas, histories, cultural and political movements, and religious institutions and practices. This field exposes students to theoretical and international debates about religions, cultures, and power. Through a survey of the major concepts, theories, and controversies in these debates, the seminar will help both masters and doctoral students gain a solid appreciation of the fundamental approaches to RCC-related works. This syllabus is the work of a collective of faculty who serve the Religions, Cultures, and Civilizations (RCC) field of the JSIS PhD Program, though each iteration is unique to the instructor's interests. This seminar is open to any interested graduate student at the University of Washington.

Course Goals:

- To create producers of knowledge rather than consumers of knowledge.
- To produce comparative approaches to the study of religions, cultures and civilizations.
- To add to, deepen and strengthen each student's areas of research.
- To prepare students to take on the role as scholars in the study of religions, cultures and civilizations.

Teaching Goals:

- To create an environment where questions and dialogue are expected.
- To logically unfold theoretical and empirical approaches to research.
- To be a resource for the student's critical and creative thinking.

Assignments: Your grade for this course will be distributed evenly among three components:

- **Participation**—As a graduate seminar, discussion is the core of our meeting. This is not a lecture class! Class participation is measured by active engagement with the readings and with each other's ideas, and generally positive investment in the learning environment of the class. An **online discussion board** will be set up for each week on Canvas. You are free to use this board to discuss the readings and related topics for the week ahead, as well as respond to one another's posts. This is an *optional* venue for your thoughts on the reading. ***Actively and verbally engaging in class with the course material is essential for passing this class. Participation counts for a third of your grade.***

- **Writing During the Course—Weekly In-Class Critical Writing and One Short Initial Paper**
    - We will begin each class with a **short in-class writing exercise**. This is usually, but not always, drawn from the readings. These are hand written and may be used in class for class discussion. The weekly in-class writing provides an opportunity for you to "think on your feet" and be creative. I will collect these after class each week. JSIS PhD students please note that these weekly critical writings and your paper-presentation will need to be typed up and logged with your PhD portfolio.
    - In addition, each student will be assigned a given week in which they will help begin discussion by **writing a short analysis of the reading (between 750-1000 words), and posting this paper to the week's discussion board by Sunday night**. The paper should succinctly review the reading, position the readings within the aims of the class, within a field of literature, and an intellectual milieu. In order to prepare this paper, you will be expected to do a little extra research and reading on

and around the subject of our week. The "Supplementary Readings" and the "Readings Reservoir" may be helpful to you. JSIS PhD students please note that this paper will be logged with your PhD portfolio.

- ***The in-class writing and the short paper together will account for a third of your grade.***

- **A Final Paper—** You will write a **final paper**, of 12-20 pages (double spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins). The subject of this paper is up to you, but you must consult with me about your paper topic before beginning work on the paper. If you are struggling to find a subject, I will give you several options. All graduate students should use this opportunity to reflect on their proposed thesis topics in light of the readings and extended bibliographies of this course. JSIS PhD students must log this paper with their PhD portfolios. Please email this paper to me on March 15, 2016, to be delivered in hard copy into my faculty mailbox (Thomson Hall, 4th Floor) by noon, and emailed by noon to me in electronic format. Please note that these two copies—hard copy and emailed copy—must be identical. ***This final paper counts for a third of your grade.***

Grading: I use the standard 4.0 grading system in use at the University of Washington.

Syllabus: I reserve the right to change this syllabus at any point, including the readings and assignments, as required.

Etiquette: Please do not use computers, iphones, mobile phones, ipods, gameboys, PS-whatevers, or other devices in class; use pen/pencil and paper to take notes and exams; do not read other materials, like books, newspapers, magazines, letters, etc., in class; do not eat in class. Please come on time and stay for the entire class.

Academic Conduct: I will strictly enforce the University of Washington Student Conduct code, including the policy on plagiarism. For your reference, the entire code can be found at http://www.washington.edu/students/handbook/conduct.html. If you are unsure of what plagiarism is, it is your responsibility to understand plagiarism. Ignorance of the definition of plagiarism will not excuse plagiarism in this class.

Disability Resource Policy: If you would like to request accommodations due to a disability, please conduct Disabled Student Services, 448 Schmitz Hall, 543-8924 (V/TDD). If you have a letter from Disabled Student Services indicating you require accommodations, please present the letter to me as soon as possible so that I can make necessary arrangements.

Specific Criteria for Evaluating Papers:
1) The writing is articulate; including grammar, sentence structure and language.

2) The student has understood the text well enough to be critical and analytical.
3) The student approaches the subject in an engaging and creative way.

Required Books: You are responsible for acquiring all required readings. I will place the three books below on reserve and order them from the UW bookstore.

- *Discipline and Punish* by Michel Foucault.
- *The Empire of Love* by Elizabeth Povinelli
- *Orientalism* by Edward Said [Recommended purchase]

Required Course Pack: Please note that all readings not in the required texts above are marked on syllabus with a "[cp]". A coursepack is available at Ram Copy Center on the Ave.
Address: 4144 University Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105
Phone:(206) 632-6630

Be sure to bring readings to class.

Syllabus

1.5: WEEK ONE: Introduction

Reading: None

1.12: WEEK TWO: KEY CONCEPTS IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION, CULTURE AND POWER—Structures of Power

Reading: *Discipline and Punish* by Michel Foucault, entire.

1.19: WEEK THREE: CULTURAL INTERACTIONS—COLONIALISM, EMPIRE, AND A GLOBALIZED WORLD

Reading:
1. *Orientalism*, by Edward Said, Introduction and Chapter One.[1] [cp]
2. Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In *Marxism & The Interpretation of Culture*. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds. London: Macmillan, 1988. pp. 271-313. [cp]
3. Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 1992. "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for "Indian" Pasts?"*Representations.* (37): 1-26 [cp]

1.26: WEEK FOUR: COMMUNITY, NATION, AND STATE

Reading:
1. "What is a nation?" by Ernest Renan. [cp]
2. "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State," by Philip Abrams. [cp]
3. Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. "Introduction," "Cultural Roots," "The Origins of National Consciousness" (pgs 1-48). [cp]
4. From *State/Culture*:

[1] This book is also available at the bookstore. I suggest you read the entire thing, but selections are in the course pack.

a. “Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field,” by Pierre Bourdieu [cp]
b. “Society, Economy, and the State Effect,” by Timothy Mitchell [cp]
c. “Culture in Rational-Choice Theories of State-Formation,” by Julia Adams. [cp]
d. “The Changing Cultural Content of the Nation-State: A Worldly Society Perspective,” by John W. Meyer. [cp]

2.2: WEEK FIVE: CULTURES, RELIGIONS, AND POLITICAL ECONOMY: SECULARISMS AND PUBLICS

Reading: 1. “The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article” by Jurgen Habermas. [cp]
3. Selections from *Modern Social Imaginaries*, “Introduction,” “The Modern Moral Order,” “What is a ‘Social Imaginary’?”, “The Public Sphere,” “Public and Private,” “The Meaning of Secularity,” and “Provincializing Europe.” [cp]
4. Selections from *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere*, essays by Habermas and Taylor, and “Dialogue: Jurgen Habermas and Charles Taylor.” [cp]

2.9: WEEK SIX: IDENTITIES & ALTERITIES—CLASS, ETHNICITY, GENDER, SEXUALITY, RACE, RELIGION

Reading: 1. Elizabeth Povinelli, *The Empire of Love*, 2006, Duke University Press, entire.
2. Robinson, Cabeiri. "Protective Migration and Armed Struggle: Political Violence and the Limits of Victimization in Islam" 67-96. From *Body of Victim, Body of Warrior*, 2013 (University of California Press). [cp]

2.16: WEEK SEVEN: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, RESISTANCE, AND WORLD HISTORY

Reading: 1. Hegel, selections from *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (1821), “Preface” and “Introduction”, 9-64 [also included are editor’s introduction and translator’s preface; read if you want a little extra

guidance]. [cp]
2. Selections from the writings of Marx and Engels:
   a) Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, 1844.
   b) The *Grundrisee*, 1939, Introduction.
   c) The Manifesto of the Communist Party, 1848.
3. *The Wretched of the Earth* by Frantz Fanon, "On Violence." [cp]
4. "Friction, Conversion, and Contention" by Jose Antonio Lucero, 2014. [cp]

2.23: WEEK EIGHT: CIVILIZATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Reading: 1. *The Future of an Illusion*, Sigmund Freud [cp]
2. Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History" (1989) [cp]
3. Huntington, Samuel. "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (1993): 22-49. [cp]
4. Amartya Sen, "Civilizational Confinement," *Identity and Violence*, 40-58. [cp]
5. Thompson, S.R. and James K. Wellman, Jr. 2011. "From the Social Gospel to Neoconservativism: Religion and U.S. Foreign Policy." *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion.* Volume 7, Article 6: pp. 1–41. [cp]

3.1: WEEK NINE: RELIGION, CULTURE, AND DEVELOPMENT—POLITICAL THEORIES OF RELIGION AND CULTURE

Reading:
1. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History* (1837), 1-54. [cp]
2. Carl Schmitt, "Definition of Sovereignty," "The Problem of Sovereignty," and "Political Theology" (1922); "The Concept of the Political"
(1932). [cp]
3. Talal Asad. "The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category," 27–54, from *Genealogies of Religion*. [cp]
4. Sunila S. Kale and Christian Lee Novetzke, "The Political Theology of Modern Yoga." [to be distributed later]

3.8: WEEK TEN: RELIGION, CULTURE, AND SECURITY—THE POLITICS OF HUMANISM AND BEYOND HUMANISM

Reading: 1. “The Climate of History: Four Theses,” by Dipesh Chakrabarty, 2009 [cp]
2. “Witness: Humans, Animals, and the Politics of Becoming,” by Naisargi Dave, *Cultural Anthropology,* Vol. 29, Issue 3, pp. 433–456. [cp]
3. Kohn, Eduardo. 2007. "How dog dream: Amazonian natures and the politics of transpecies engagement". *American Ethnologist.* 34 (1). [cp]
4. “Culture *as* Disability,” by Ray McDermott and Herve Varenne. [cp]
5. Maria Elena Garcia, “The Taste of Conquest,” *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, Vol 18, No 3, 505-524. [cp]