

The History and Practice of South Asia Studies Proseminar (SARS 703, AMES 606)

Tuesday, 3-5

Location: Williams Hall 826

Professor Christian Lee Novetzke

Office: Williams Hall, 820

Office Tel: (215) 898-8431 (Direct) and 898-7475 (SASt)

Email: cln@sas.upenn.edu

Website: www.sas.upenn.edu/~cln

Course Synopsis: This course is intended to familiarize graduate students and advanced majors in South Asia studies and allied fields (such as history, art history, anthropology, archeology, comparative literature, sociology, and history of religions) with some of the debates central to the study of South Asia. Our approach will be both critical and historical, a combination meant to portray the past of the discipline, as well as engage its present deliberations. We will explore the fields of philology, comparative philosophy, missionary interaction, Orientalism, social evolution, and structuralism. We will also engage debates within postcolonial studies, subaltern studies, nationalism discourse, historiography, modernity, and representation discourse.

Goal of the Course: One special aspect of this course will be the formulation of a statement of the theoretical position each graduate student takes in his or her research and dissertation. Such a statement is vital to one's dissertation proposal, grant-writing endeavors, and ultimately to the dissertation itself. Graduate students are encouraged to examine their particular research topic through the multiple theoretical perspectives analyzed in this course.

Requirements: This is a proseminar and therefore a cooperative learning venture. It is not a lecture course, and each student will be expected to participate fully in discussion. It is also a course that will require significant writing. Each student will be expected to write a two-page response to each week's reading, to be emailed as an attachment to all seminar members on the **Monday night before class**. In addition, each student will lead one weekly meeting of the seminar, coming prepared to give a critical synopsis of the readings for five to ten minutes and lead discussion for the remainder of the course.

For your final paper, which should be between 20-30 pages in length, you can choose one of the following:

- 1) A statement of the theoretical position taken in your dissertation work. This might serve as the core of a chapter of the dissertation, a portion of a dissertation proposal, or background work for a fellowship proposal.
- 2) An analysis of the theoretical position exhibited in a particular journal or publication series over a period of time. For example, a student might look at the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* from 1858-1900 to determine what sorts of theories of culture were prevalent in its pages around a topic central to the study of South Asia.

3) A critical review essay of three or more new works in the field of the student's choice written with the intention of seeking publication.

4)

Papers, and all outstanding work, are due on **May 6th**.

Grading: One-third of your grade will be based on the quality of your in-class participation. One-third will depend on how well you lead the class on the day of your presentation and how well-formed your online postings are. The quality of your final paper will determine the last third.

Texts: The bolded books below are required readings, and are available for purchase at House of Our Own, and on reserve at Rosengarten. The unbolded books are suggested readings and are also on reserve. In addition, a bulkpack is available at Wharton copy shop, and bulkpack readings are indicated on the syllabus with a “[B]”:

- **Breckenridge, C. and Peter van der Veer. 1993. *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.**
- **Bayly, C. 1988. *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire*. New York: Cambridge University Press.**
- Cohen, B. 1996. *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- **Dumont, Louis 1980. *Homo Hierarchicus*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.**
- **Inden, R., Jonathan Walters, and Daud Ali. 2000. *Querying the Medieval*. New York: Oxford University Press.**
- Kumar, Nita, ed. 1994. *Women as Subjects: South Asian Histories*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia.
- **Loomba, Ania. 1998. *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*. New York: Routledge.**
- **Ludden, David. 2001. *Reading Subaltern Studies*. New Delhi: Permanent Black.**
- **Said, E. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books.**
- Sangari, K. and Sudesh Vaid. 1990. *Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- **Visweswaran, K. 1994. *Fictions of Feminist Ethnography*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.**

Syllabus

I. 1/14: Introduction to the course and its aims.

II. 1/21: Area Studies and Politics

- Ludden, David, “Area Studies in the Age of Globalization,” 1/25/98 [B]
- Ludden, David, “Why Area Studies?” 2/1/99 [B]
- Ford Foundation, “Crossing Borders: Revitalizing Area Studies,” 1999 [B]
- Stanley Kurtz, Speech to the House Subcommittee on Select Education, June 19, 2003 [<http://www.nationalreview.com/document/document062303.asp>] [B]
- Kurtz, Stanley, “Studying Title VI,” in *National Review*, 6/23/2003. [<http://www.nationalreview.com/kurtz/kurtz061603.asp>] [B]
- Kurtz, Stanley, “Hearing Both Sides of Title VI,” in *National Review*, 2/23/03. [B]
- Wallerstein, Immanuel. “The Unintended Consequences of Cold War Area Studies,” in *The Cold War and the University*, 1997, edited by Noam Chomsky, et al. [B]
- Malhotra, Rajiv. “Is South Asia Studies Undermining India?” in Rediff.com (December 4, 2003).
- Malhotra, Rajiv. “Repositioning India’s Brand,” in Rediff.com (December 9, 2003).

III. 1/28: Oriental Jones, Philology, and Religion in the 18th Century.

- Sections from *The British Discovery of Hinduism in the Eighteenth Century*, pages 1-44 and 196-261. [B]
- *Querying the Medieval*, “Introduction” (Ron Inden) [pages 3-28] and “Royal Eulogy as World History” (Daud Ali) [165-229].

IV. 2/4: Indo-Europa: European Indology of the 19th and early 20th Centuries.

- Readings from Wilhem Halbfass *India and Europe*, “The Missionary Approach to Indian Thought” [36-53]; “Hegel” [84-99]; “India and the Comparative Method” [419-433]; and “In Lieu of a Summary and Conclusion” [434-442]. [B]
- Sheldon Pollock’s “Deep Orientalism?” in *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament*, pages 76-133.

V. 2/11: History and Empire During the Colonial Period.

- Bernard Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, Forward by N. B. Dirks [ix-xvii], Introduction, Chapter One and Two [3-56]. [B]
- Dirks, “History as a Sign of the Modern,” in *Public Culture*, Vol. 2, No. 2, Spring, 1990. [B]

- Cohn, “Notes on the History of the Study of Indian Society and Culture,” in *Anthropologists among the Historians and Other Essays*. [136-171]

VI. 2/18: Louis Dumont and His Critics (mid 20th century).

- Selections from *Homo Hierarchicus*.
- Dirks, “Homo Hierarchicus: The Origins of an Idea” [19-42] in *Castes of Mind*.
- Arjun Appadurai, “Is Homo Hierarchicus?,” *American Ethnologist*. 13:4 (1986):745-761. [B]

VII. 2/25: The Critique of Orientalism and Its Defenders (1970s-1990s).

- Selections from Said, *Orientalism*.
- Review of Said in *JAOS* by Peter Gran of *Orientalism*, 100:3 (1980:July/Oct.) 328. [B]
- Jayant Lele, “Orientalism and the Social Sciences,” in *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament*, 45-75.
- Wendy Doniger, “Presidential Address: ‘I have Scinde’: Flogging a Dead (White Male Orientalist) Horse.” *Journal of Asian Studies*. 58:4 (1999): 940-960.

VIII. 3/3: Postcolonial Studies: Introduction

- Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, Sections I & III.
- Ronald Inden, “Orientalist Constructions of India,” *Modern Asian Studies*. Vol. 20, Is.3:401-446. [B]
- David Kopf’s review of Ronald Inden’s *Imagining India* in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. 112:4 (1992):674-677.

IX. 3/17: Postcolonial Studies: The Nation

- Benedict Anderson, “Official Nationalism and Imperialism,” in *Imagined Communities*. [B]
- Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*, “Whose Imagined Community?” and “Histories and Nations.” [3-13;95-115] [B]
- Steven Kemper, “Introduction,” and “Past Uses of the Past,” in *The Presence of the Past: Chronicles, Politics, and Culture in Sinhala Life*. [B]

X. 3/24: Subaltern Studies I

- Ranajit Guha, “On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India,” in *Selected Subaltern Studies*, edited by Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988. [B]
- 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. [On Reserve]

- Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for 'Indian' Pasts?," in *A Subaltern Studies Reader, 1986-1995*. Guha, Ranajit. 1997. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. [B]
- Gyan Prakash, "The Impossibility of Subaltern History," in *Nepantla: Views from South*. 1:2 (2000), 287-294.

XI. 3/31: Subaltern Studies II

- From David Ludden, *Reading Subaltern Studies*: Introduction, Chapters I.1, I.2, II.1, II.2, II.3, III.2, and III.3.

XII. 4/7: Postcolonial Studies: Gender and Representation

- "Recasting Women: An Introduction," and "Whatever Happened to the "Vedic Dasi? Orientalism, Nationalism and a Script for the Past," in *Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History*, Kumkum Sangari, Sudesh Vaid, eds. [B]
- "Introduction," "Gender, Violence and Power: Rajasthani Stories of Shakti," and "Others Voices, Other Rooms: The View from the Zenana," in *Women as Subjects: South Asian Histories*, Nita Kumar, ed. [B]
- Madhu Kishwar, "A Horror of 'isms': Why I do not call myself a feminist." [B]

XIII. 4/14: Against the Grain: Colonialism and Collusion

- Selections from Chris Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire*.
- Debate between Gyan Prakash, and O'Hanlon and Washbrook [B]:

Prakash, Gyan. "Writing Post-Orientalist Histories in the Third World: Perspectives from Indian Historiography," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32, 2 (April 1990) pp. 383-408.

O'Hanlon, Rosalind, and David Washbrook, "After Orientalism: Culture, Criticism, and Politics in the Third World," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34, 1 (January 1992), pp. 141-167.

Prakash, Gyan. "Can the Subaltern Ride?" A Reply to O'Hanlon and Washbrook," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34, 1 (January 1992) pp. 168-184.

XIV. 4/21: Topic: Ethnography, Fieldwork, and Homework

- Rudolph, Lloyd I. "Self Constructing Culture: Ethnography of the Amar Singh Diary," *Economic and Political Weekly* September 30, 2000, 3557-3560. [B]
- Thomas Blom Hansen, "Thane City: The Making of Political Dadaism," Chapter, 101-120. [B]

- Kamala Visweswaran, “A Feminist Fable,” “Introduction: Fictions of Feminist Ethnography,” “Defining Feminist Ethnography,” and “Refusing the Subject,” in *Fictions of Feminist Ethnography*. [xi-xii, 1-39, 60-72]
- Ann Gold, “Shared Blessings as Ethnographic Practice,” essay. [**B**]