

**SEMINAR IN HISTORY AND RELIGION:
HISTORY, MEMORY, AND RELIGION
(SAST 203 & 503; RELS 465)**

**Spring Semester 2005
Thursday 2-5pm
Location: Williams 326**

**Professor Christian Lee Novetzke
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“[History] aims at calming the dead who still haunt the present,
and at offering them scriptural tombs.”
Michel de Certeau

Course Synopsis: This seminar explores the academic and social debates about memory and history, highlighting the role of religion, trauma, and narrative in dividing these two modes of recollection. Why are some records of the past considered memory while others are history? What are the roles of orality and literacy in deciding these issues? How are these modes of recollection gendered? Why have some areas of the world and not other been attributed to power of “historical” thinking? What are the various pronouncements on history and memory offered by sociologists, anthropologists, and historians?

Requirements: You’re required to attend all classes, read all materials carefully and thoughtfully, and engage with the subject matter in class and in your writing. This means that during class you’re expected to participate enthusiastically and outside of class to complete your readings conscientiously. Each week you’ll be asked to compose **a short reaction** paper on the week’s readings to be emailed to me before class. In addition, for at least one class in the semester, you’ll give **an informal presentation** on the readings and assist in leading discussion for the remainder of the class. At the end of the term, **undergraduate** students will write **a twelve to fifteen (12-15) page research paper**, which should be printed and submitted; **no electronic submissions**. **Graduate** students will write an essay relevant to their dissertation projects.

Grading: Fifteen percent (15%) of your grade will depend on your attendance and the quality of your classroom participation; twenty percent (20%) will be based on the quality of your weekly reaction papers; twenty-five percent (25%) will depend on your day(s) of presentation and leading discussion; and forty percent (40%) will hinge on your final paper. An outline and good draft will be due as per the syllabus in order to allow for group discussion about one another’s work.

Materials: The books listed below are available at House of Our Own for purchase. A bulkpack will be available at the Wharton Copy Shop. In addition, all readings from the bulkpack will be available online through the course's blackboard site. All materials are also on reserve at Rosengarten.

Require books available at House of Our Own:

Amin, Shahid. 1995. *Event, Metaphor, Memory*.

de Certeau, Michel. 1988. *The Writing of History*.

Halbwachs, Maurice. 1992[1941]. *On Collective Memory*.

Hegel, G. W. F. 1837. *The Philosophy of History*.

Rushdie, Salman. 1989. *The Satanic Verses*.

Spiegelman, Art. 1986. *Maus (I & II)*

Spiegelman, Art. 2004. *In the Shadow of No Towers*.

Films Screened:

Earth (1999, Mehta, dir., 95 min)

Memento (2001, Nolan, dir.; 113 min)

Syllabus

1/13—Introduction

- Discuss the content and aims of the course. Review the syllabus.
- Read in class: “Sultan Muzaffar’s Chronicler of Events,” by Naiyer Masud, translated by Aditya Behl.

1/20—“Welcome to the Memory Industry”

- Read: Kerwin Klein, “On the Emergence of *Memory* in Historical Discourse,” *Representations*, 69, Winter 2000: 127-150.
- In class screening of “Memento” (2001, Nolan, dir., 113 min.) and discussion

1/27—Hegel, History, and the Fairy Region

- Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, entire.

2/3—History and Postmodern “Belief”

- Read Fredric Jameson, Introduction, Chapter One, and Chapter Two of *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. *Xerox and book on reserve*
- Read Hayden White, “The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Inquiry” (1988).

2/10—History of Religions and the Anthropology of the Novel

- Read the First Half of *Satanic Verses* by Salman Rushdie.
- Read Talal Asad, “Ethnography, Literature, and Politics: Some Readings and Uses of Salman Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses*” in *Genealogies of Religion*.

2/17—Prosaic History and Religion

- Finish *Satanic Verses*.
- Read: Simona Sawhney, “Satanic Choices: Poetry and Prophecy in Rushdie’s Novel.”

2/24—Memory and History

- Read Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, “Preface,” “Dreams and Memory Images,” “Language and Memory,” and “Social Classes and Their Traditions.”
- Read “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire” by Pierre Nora in *Representations*, Vol. 0, Issue 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (Spring, 1989): 7-24. [In English]

MEET WITH ME TO DISCUSS YOUR PAPER IDEAS 2/24-3/3

3/3—Memory and Religion

- Read Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, “Religious Collective Memory” and “Part II: The Legendary Topography of the Gospels in the Holy Land.”
- Read “Memory and History: Liturgical Time and Historical Time” by Gabrielle M. Spiegel in *History and Theory* 41 (May 2002): 149-162.

OUTLINE OF PAPER DUE ON 3/3

3/17—History and Religion

- Read de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, entire.

3/24—Trauma and Memory

- Read Cathy Caruth in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, “Trauma and Experience: Introduction,” “Truth and Testimony: The Process and the Struggle,” (by Dori Laub) and “Recapturing the Past: Introduction” (Caruth), and “Concerning the Accounts Given by the Residents of Hiroshima” (Georges Bataille).
- Art Spiegelman, *Maus*, entire.

3/31—History, Religion, and Nations

- Read: Selections from Carleton Hayes, *Nationalism: A Religion*.
- Read: Benedict Anderson from *Imagined Communities*, “Introduction,” “The Angel of History,” and “Memory and Forgetting.”

- In class screening of *Earth* (1999, Mehta, dir., 95 min).

4/7— Case Study: Witness, Event, and Memory

- Read: Shahid Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory*, entire.

FIRST DRAFT OF PAPER DUE 4/7

4/14—Short Presentations and Workshop of Papers

4/21—Case Study: The Memory and the History of 9/11

- Read: Art Spiegelman, *In the Shadow of No Towers*, entire.

FINAL PAPER DUE 5/6