

SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION 158R
 POSTCOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT
 WINTER 2009

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Recommended Books:

The Holy Bible, NRSV, with Apocrypha. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
 [ISBN 0-19-528380-5] *You need a Bible for this class, but if you have one already, don't buy this version.* [\$30.00/\$22.50]
 R. S. Sugirtharajah. *The Bible and Empire: Postcolonial Explorations.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. [ISBN 0-521-53191-8] [\$32.99/\$24.75]

Required Books:

Alexander Lyon Macfie, ed. *Orientalism: A Reader.* New York: New York University Press, 2000. [ISBN 0-814756654] [\$25.00/\$18.75]
 Robert J. C. Young. *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction, Very Short Introductions.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. [ISBN 0-19-280182-1] [\$11.95/\$8.95]
 Warren Carter. *Matthew and Empire: Initial Explorations.* Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 2001. [ISBN 1-56338-342-X] [\$34.95/\$26.20]
 Musa W. Dube. *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible.* St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000. [ISBN 0-8272-2963-1] [\$32.99/\$24.75]
 Catherine Keller. *God and Power: Counter-Apocalyptic Journeys.* Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005. [ISBN 1-8006-3727-5] [\$23.00/\$17.25]
 Articles on ERes *[no cost, unless you decide to print them]*

Course Description

This course explores postcolonial theory and its applications to the interpretation of the New Testament. Post-colonial theory is a critical discourse that grew out of the dissolution of empires in the 19th and 20th centuries and the emergence of independent nations. This transition created a growing awareness of the ways that dominant empires had defined "the other," that is the subject peoples, so as to justify their subjugation.

The Christian scriptures were generated in a similar imperial context, and new research is indicating that New Testament theology, ethics and ideology both oppose and conform to imperial values in sometimes surprising ways. Once Christianity became the dominant religion of the Roman Empire, the situation became more complex: now those in power inherited a scriptural canon that privileged the marginalized, but they used it during the colonial period to justify and maintain their superior position. This created some interesting historical paradoxes particularly in Europe's and the United States' imperial adventures of the 16th-21st centuries, as the New Testament language of kingdom, mission and new world were transformed into tools of empire, and as tools to *critique* empire. As colonies gained political independence in the mid-20th century, the New Testament was transformed yet again. New critical voices have arisen to challenge the dominant ways of reading the tradition and to offer new readings to take their place. Such colonial and postcolonial encounters, and the theoretical insights they've engendered, will be the subject of the course.

Purpose of the Core Course in Religious Studies

At Santa Clara University, the study of religious belief and practice in various cultural contexts (including your own) is one of the central features of the Core Curriculum. This has always been important in Jesuit Catholic education, which is why those of you who aren't majors and minors will end up with three Religious Studies courses with us. But the purpose of these Core courses isn't to make you believe certain teachings or to limit your inquiry to one tradition. Religious Studies at Santa Clara is broader, deeper, and more analytical than that, particularly in seminars and honors courses such as this. In this third course, we want you to think deeply and critically about contemporary, open-ended questions using some contemporary critical discourse—in our case, postcolonial theory applied to religious texts and their interpretation. We hope to raise significant ethical

questions and provide you with more sophisticated tools for your own ethical inquiry and reflection in the diverse and complex worlds we inhabit.

This course satisfies the University's **Third Writing** requirement. It includes regular opportunities for in-class writing, periodic discussions of the writing process, and two papers (including the research paper) that you have the chance to draft and rewrite. You will receive feedback on your writing from fellow students and the professor. It also satisfies the College of Arts & Sciences' **Women's & Gender Studies** Core requirement, given its focus on transnational feminism and the intersections of race, economic class, ethnicity, religion, and gender.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Identify diverse perspectives on the relationship of scripture to past and present constructions of power
- Evaluate ethical positions on orientalism and colonial dynamics
- Evaluate and apply insights from the study of New Testament texts to contemporary questions about religious belief and its political uses
- Analyze the intersections of multiple factors (e.g., race, class, ethnicity, gender, ability, religious affiliation) in the construction of colonial and postcolonial power structures
- Improve skills in advanced research and writing

Assessment and Grading

Grade Components and Scale

| | |
|---|-----|
| Class Engagement (oral remarks and written impressions 20%, in-class writing 5%, attendance 5%) | 30% |
| Seminar Leadership (2 occasions @ 10% each) | 20% |
| Critical Analysis Papers (2 submissions @ 10% each) | 20% |
| Research Paper | 30% |

Scale

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------|----|-----------|----|-----------|----|-----------|----|
| 93.5–100 | A | 86.7–89.9 | B+ | 76.7–79.9 | C+ | 66.7–69.9 | D+ |
| 90.0–93.4 | A- | 83.3–86.6 | B | 73.3–76.6 | C | 63.3–66.6 | D |
| | | 80.0–83.2 | B- | 70.0–73.2 | C- | 60.0–63.2 | D- |

Oral Participation & Attendance

Class engagement is a critical part of any seminar. You will type up a one-page impression from the readings for ten of our twenty class days, including one or more insights or ideas that struck you in the reading and one question you have from *each* of the readings. These will be collected daily and graded as a group at the end of the quarter. Classes will typically begin with either a written reflection on a question related to the day's readings or a brief discussion based on your impressions and questions. The professor will provide background information to orient the discussion, particularly during the first four weeks of the course. Beginning in the fourth week, student teams will take turns leading the seminar discussion, posting questions for discussion the night before; review these to prepare for class. Everyone will be expected to participate in the discussion by articulating perspectives, raising questions, analyzing the biblical text, and imagining the ethical implications of our reading. 30% of grade.

Seminar Leadership

Working with one or two other people, you will be responsible for presenting a critical analysis of the primary and secondary readings for two separate meetings during the quarter. You will select your group and topics in the second week of class. Your task will be to introduce the secondary reading briefly (5 minutes max), and then to guide a class discussion that explores the biblical text, the secondary author's analysis of the biblical text, and the relevance of postcolonial theoretical concepts and prior course readings to the day's topic. You will prepare a handout (2 sides of one page) that lists your topic and the days readings, and presents your questions and sub-questions to stimulate class discussion. Plan to send a copy to the professor by email by 5:00 p.m. the night before your presentation. She will post it on the course syllabus so that the class can review it in advance, and she will bring hard copies to class as well. Since the other class members will each have prepared the readings and an impression page, you should spend no more than five minutes on summarizing the readings; just refresh our memory about the thesis of each secondary author. Leave some time after your discussion to field questions "from the floor" – questions that others in the class might have had from the reading. Your group is exempt from the

impression page on each of your presentation dates (if your presentation date coincides with a day when no written assignment is due, you may take your exemption any other day during that course unit). For the grading rubric, see the "Assignments" tab online. 20% of grade total (10% each occasion).

Critical Inquiry

Writing Focus

This course satisfies the Third Writing requirement in the College of Arts & Sciences, not only because it includes regular writing and rewriting, but because it strategically uses writing as a method of engaging the course material more fully. The course includes periodic discussions of good writing practices relevant to the critical analysis and research papers.

Two Critical Analysis Papers

The course is organized into four major sections exploring the origins of postcolonial theory, some of its chief theoretical concepts, the light these shed on the origins of the New Testament, and the ways the concepts inform new readings of the Bible today. Because the first two units are foundational for our work in the rest of the course, you will write a paper at the end of each of those units presenting and critically analyzing the material read and discussed in class. It will be your responsibility to shape your presentation of each topic: you will need to discern the chief points about each and organize your discussion of each so that ideas are clearly articulated. Further directions are available at the "Assignments" tab of the course Web site. Each of these two papers is due on the first class day after the unit has ended. Plan also to submit an electronic copy of each to TurnItIn.com by midnight on the due date. A rewrite is required for one of these papers (your choice which). 20% of grade total.

Research Paper

Each student will prepare a 15-20-page research paper on postcolonial interpretation of the New Testament. The topic should differ from those you and your partners chose for your in-class presentations. Some of the various types of papers you might write are offered at the "Research" tab online. This paper will be due in the stages listed below. The final paper will be submitted with all prior stages in a folder. 30% of grade total.

| | | |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|
| Topic statement and sources | 4th week | Tuesday, January 27 |
| Annotated Bibliography | 6th week | Tuesday, February 10 |
| Application of theoretical concept & Outline | 7th week | Thursday, February 19 |
| Required draft of entire paper | 9th week | Tuesday, March 3 |
| Final Research Paper and all prior stages of it in a folder; you will also turn in an electronic copy of your research paper to TurnItIn.com by midnight | Exam week | Wednesday, March 18 |

Examinations

There are no examinations in this course.

Extra Credit

Extra credit opportunities will be posted online at the "Extra Credit" tab periodically throughout the quarter. To receive extra credit, attend the event, write a 2-3 page summary and evaluation, and turn it in within one week of the event. Extra credit can only be counted if all regular assignments have been submitted. Each assignment is worth at most 2 points, so students usually do 2 to get the maximum grade. Directions for the paper can be found at the "Extra Credit" tab also. No extra credit can be turned in after the last day of class. 3% of grade max.

Policies

Attendance

If you're sick or something comes up, please notify the professor in advance or within a week of the missed class. *Remember: You're not doing yourself or anyone else any favors if you come to class sick—you can always make up the work.* Notifying the prof means that the absence is excused; it's unexcused and counts more against your grade if you don't let the prof know. After the first excused absence, and for all unexcused absences, your attendance and class participation grades will be affected. At two or more unexcused absences (10+% of the course) your entire grade for the course begins to drop. Five unexcused absences (25% of course) will result in a failing grade. Daily roll will be taken. 5% of grade +.

Academic Integrity

You are expected to collaborate to share ideas, resources, and questions, particularly in small-group work, group presentations and exam preparation. This sharing becomes cheating or plagiarism when you present as original the insights or work of another. It thus includes copying someone else's work without attribution, whether the source is a friend, a book, or the Web. Work on extra credit, exams and your research paper is expected to be original to you. That does not mean that every idea and insight you write about will be your own. What it does mean is that your assignments should be guided by your insights and, when you do rely on an authority other than yourself, you note that reliance through standard footnotes and bibliography (see the online "Research Tips" and "Style Sheet" at the course Web site). If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing on a required assignment, you will receive an "F" on the assignment and in the course, and the matter will be forwarded for further action to the Office of Student Leadership.

Disability Accommodation Policy

To request academic accommodations for a disability, students must contact Disability Resources at the outset of the quarter. The Disability Resources Office is located in Benson Center, (408) 554-4111; TTY (408) 554-5445.

| Wk | Date | Pages of Reading | Topic of Lecture & Discussion |
|---|------|------------------|--|
| 1 | 1/6 | | COURSE OVERVIEW |
| TOPIC 1. | | | |
| THE CASE FOR POSTCOLONIAL THEORY: EMPIRE & ORIENTALISM | | | |
| | 1/8 | [50] | AN HISTORICAL & THEORETICAL INTRODUCTION; ORIENTALISM <u>Secondary Material:</u> Macfie, ed., <i>Orientalism: A Reader</i> 1-19, 26-30, 37-85 <i>Impression Page #1 due</i> |
| 2 | 1/13 | [50] | ORIENTALISM <u>Secondary:</u> Macfie, ed., <i>Orientalism: A Reader</i> 87-114, 208-238 <u>Writing Focus:</u> Writing as a Reading Strategy <i>Impression Page #2 due</i> |
| | 1/15 | [61] | ORIENTALISM <u>Secondary:</u> Macfie, ed., <i>Orientalism: A Reader</i> 249-71, 285-323, 365-74 <i>Impression Page #3 due</i> |
| TOPIC 2. | | | |
| POSTCOLONIAL THEORY: KEY CONCEPTS | | | |
| 3 | 1/20 | [51] | POWER, SPACE, LAND, GENDER <u>Secondary:</u> Young, <i>Postcolonialism</i> 32-68, 93-120 <u>Writing Focus:</u> Selecting a research topic and locating sources <i>Critical Analysis Paper #1: Orientalism due in class; bring 2 copies, 1 for professor and 1 for peer reviewer; electronic copy due at TurnItIn.com by midnight</i> <i>Sign-ups for Seminar Leadership in class</i> |
| | 1/22 | [40] | HEGEMONY & ALTERITY Young, <i>Postcolonialism</i> 1-25; JanMohamed, "The Economy of Manichean Allegory" from <i>The Post-colonial Studies Reader</i> ; Taussig excerpt from <i>Mimesis and Alterity</i> (ERes) <i>Impression Page #4 due</i> <i>Bring peer review of partner's paper to class</i> |

| Wk | Date | Pages of Reading | Topic of Lecture & Discussion |
|--|------|------------------|--|
| 4 | 1/27 | [41] | <p>AMBIVALENCE & HYBRIDITY</p> <p><u>Secondary</u>: Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man" and "Signs Taken for Wonders," from <i>The Location of Culture</i> (ERes)</p> <p><u>Optional</u>: Young, <i>Postcolonialism</i> 69-92</p> <p>Impression Page #5 due</p> <p>Topic Statement and initial plan for source for Research Paper due in class</p> |
| TOPIC 3. | | | |
| THE NEW TESTAMENT AND ITS ROMAN IMPERIAL FOREGROUND | | | |
| 4 | 1/29 | [55] | <p>EMPIRE IN THE ANCIENT WORLD & ITS IMPACTS ON THE BIBLE</p> <p><u>Primary</u>: Exodus 1-20; Joshua 1-8; Isaiah 7; 45</p> <p><u>Secondary</u>: Dube, <i>Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible</i> 3-21, 57-70; Sugirtharajah, "Convergent Trajectories?" (essay on ERes)</p> <p><u>Writing Focus</u>: Feedback on first paper; also identifying a thesis, annotating sources</p> <p>Impression Page #6 due</p> |
| 5 | 2/3 | [54] | <p>ROMAN HEGEMONY</p> <p><u>Secondary</u>: Carter, <i>Matthew and Empire</i> 9-34; Brunt and Price essays in <i>Paul and Empire</i> (both on ERes; read only pages 47-56 and 61-71 in the Price piece)</p> <p>Critical Analysis Paper #2: Postcolonial Theory: Key Concepts due; bring 2 copies, 1 for professor and 1 for peer reviewer; electronic copy due at TurnItIn.com by midnight</p> |
| | 2/5 | [52] | <p>THE NEW TESTAMENT AS SUBALTERN DISCOURSE</p> <p><u>Primary</u>: Gospel of Matthew</p> <p><u>Secondary</u>: Carter, <i>Matthew and Empire</i> 35-42, 50-74</p> <p>Impression Page #7 due</p> <p>Bring peer review of partner's paper to class</p> |
| 6 | 2/10 | [43] | <p>THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: MATTHEW</p> <p><u>Primary</u>: Review the Gospel of Matthew</p> <p><u>Secondary</u>: Carter, <i>Matthew and Empire</i> 108-129, 145-68</p> <p>Annotated Bibliography for Research Paper due in class</p> |
| | 2/12 | [46] | <p>JUSTICE & ESCHATOLOGY: 1 THESSALONIANS</p> <p><u>Primary</u>: 1-2 Thessalonians</p> <p><u>Secondary</u>: Georgi, Koester and Donfried essays in <i>Paul and Empire</i> 36-46, 148-66, 215-23 (ERes)</p> <p><u>Writing Focus</u>: Moving from other sources to your thesis and argument</p> <p>Impression Page #8 due</p> |
| 7 | 2/17 | [46] | <p>ACCOMMODATIONIST POSITIONS</p> <p><u>Primary</u>: 1-2 Timothy</p> <p><u>Secondary</u>: Zanker essay from <i>Paul and Empire</i> (read first); D'Angelo, "Eusebeia: Roman Imperial Family Values..." (ERes; focus on the Pastorals, not 4 Maccabees)</p> <p>Impression Page #9 due</p> |
| | 2/19 | [34] | <p>REVELATION</p> <p><u>Primary</u>: Revelation</p> <p><u>Secondary</u>: Frilingos, "As If Slain," in <i>Spectacles of Empire</i> (ERes)</p> <p>In-class Exercise: Intersectional Analysis of Revelation & the Roman Imperial Context</p> <p>Application of theoretical concept & Research Paper Outline due in class</p> |

| Wk | Date | Pages of Reading | Topic of Lecture & Discussion |
|---|---------|------------------|---|
| TOPIC 4. | | | |
| THE IMPERIAL DEPLOYMENT OF THE BIBLE & POSTCOLONIAL REFORMULATIONS | | | |
| 8 | 2/24 | [50] | <p>THE NEW TESTAMENT AS A TOOL OF EMPIRE <u>Secondary:</u> Sugirtharajah, "Textually Conjoined Twins," pp. 9-59 in <i>Bible & Empire</i> (ERes) <i>Impression Page #10 due</i></p> |
| | 2/26 | [48] | <p>THE COLLUSION OF BIBLICAL READING WITH EMPIRE TODAY <u>Primary:</u> Raney Aronson, Director, "The Jesus Factor," <i>Frontline</i>, PBS (9 April 2004; online-see class prep) <u>Secondary:</u> Chapman, "Imperial Exegesis," from <i>Anxious about Empire: Theological Essays on the New Global Realities</i>; Sugirtharajah, "Salvos from the Victorian Pulpit," pp. 60-97 in <i>Bible & Empire</i> (both on ERes) <i>Impression Page #11 due: Contrapuntal Reading Exercise: For today's impression page, read Sugirtharajah's essay against the use of the Bible in the lead-up to the war in Iraq. Compare and contrast the rhetoric of the Victorian preachers and the U.S. politicians. 3 page limit.</i></p> |
| 9 | 3/3 | [28] | <p>A POSTCOLONIAL METHOD OF READING THE BIBLE: MUSA DUBE <u>Secondary:</u> Dube, <i>Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible</i> review 57-70; read 97-124 <i>Required Draft of Research Paper due in class</i></p> |
| | 3/5 | [58] | <p>A POSTCOLONIAL METHOD OF READING THE BIBLE: MUSA DUBE <u>Secondary:</u> Dube, <i>Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible</i> 127-84 <i>In-class Exercise: Intersectional Analysis of the Canaanite Woman Story (Matt 15:21-28)</i> <i>Impression Page #12 due</i></p> |
| 10 | 3/10 | [62] | <p>POSTCOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES ON APOCALYPTIC POLITICS <u>Primary:</u> Review Revelation <u>Secondary:</u> Keller, <i>God and Power</i> 3-65 <u>Optional:</u> Kim, "'Uncovering Her Wickedness': An Inter(con)textual Reading of Revelation 17 from a Postcolonial Feminist Perspective" (ERes) <i>Bring peer review of partner's paper to class</i></p> |
| | 3/12 | [55] | <p>POSTCOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES ON APOCALYPTIC POLITICS <u>Primary:</u> Review Revelation <u>Secondary:</u> Keller, <i>God and Power</i> 97-152 <u>Writing Focus:</u> Presenting a finished piece of writing</p> |
| 11 | 3/15-17 | | <p>⇒ PLEASE NOTE: <i>The professor will be in Ohio for a conference on "Women in the Religious and Intellectual Activity of the Ancient Mediterranean World" from March 15-17, returning to campus on Wednesday, March 18. She'll be unavailable by email during this time. Please plan accordingly.</i></p> |
| | 3/18 | | <p>⇒ Submit your Research paper today by 2:00 p.m. in a folder with all its prior stages. Bring it to Prof. Murphy's office, Kenna 323B, or her box in the Religious Studies Department office, Kenna 323; remember to submit the assignment to TurnItIn.com as well by midnight tonight. The assignment will not be evaluated until both forms are submitted.</p> |