

HIS 697: Independent study Fall 2023

Postcoloniality and Transregional Histories

Students: Chandler Jameson and Austin Kerr Instructor: Sanjay Joshi

Tentative Meeting Schedule (Tuesday 3:30 to 4:30? 4:00 to 5:00?) Alternating over zoom and in person, I would like us to have at least four face-to face-meetings over the semester.

Requirements:

- 2 short papers, 8-10 pages max. linking at least TWO readings you are planning to include in your exam list **from outside of this course**, to themes we discuss here.
- 7 Summary and comment (response paper) of Weeks 2-5 and 8-10 Due Sunday by 5 pm before meeting.
- All Submissions via email.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Aug 29 th Week 1: Introduction. In person meeting. Discuss Course, Outcomes, Schedule and any changes you would like to see (we have flexibility)
<u>PART I UNDERSTANDING SUBALTERNITY AND RESISTANCE</u>
Sept 12 Week 2: Foundational Text? Ranajit Guha. <i>Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in India</i>. Durham: Duke University Press, reprint, 1999. Focus of Discussion: How is Guha’s approach different from or overlap with Scott’s in <i>Domination and Arts of Resistance</i> ; Where/how does Chakrabarty (<i>Provincializing Europe</i>) use Guha? Do you now agree with Chakrabarty’s readings of Guha?
Sept 19 Week 3: Subaltern Studies 1. Edward Said, “ Foreword .” (<i>Selected Subaltern Studies</i>). 2. David Ludden, <i>Reading Subaltern Studies</i> , “Introduction.” http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~sj6/LuddenIntroduction.pdf 3. Sanjay Seth et. al. “Postcolonial Studies: a beginning.” <i>Postcolonial Studies</i> , (Vol. 1, No. 1, (1998) pp. 7 - 11. http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~sj6/sanjaysethetcpostcolonialintro.pdf 4. Gyan Prakash, "Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism." <i>American Historical Review</i> 99, 5 (December 1994). http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~sj6/prakashpostcolonialAHA.pdf 5. Sumit Sarkar, “The Decline of the Subaltern in Subaltern Studies” in his <i>Writing Social History</i> . Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1997 pp. 82 -108. http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~sj6/SarkarDeclineofSubalternStudies.pdf Focus of Discussion: What is/was <i>Subaltern Studies</i> ? How is it different from other ways of writing “history from below”? Annales school or E.P. Thompson for example? How do the SS approaches help retrieve or otherwise retell subordinated pasts in ways different from other “histories from below”?

Sept 26 Week 4: **Gendering History: Subaltern Studies and Beyond**

1. Gayatri Chakrabarti Spivak, "[Can the Subaltern Speak](#)" originally from, Cary Nelson and L. Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Macmillan Education: Basingstoke, 1988, pp. 271-313.
2. Saba Mahmood, "[Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival.](#)" *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 16, No.2 (May 2001), 202-236.
3. Mrinalini Sinha "[A Global Perspective on Gender: What's South Asia Got to Do with It?](#)" in *South Asian Feminisms*. Ania Loomba and Ritty Lukose eds. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 356-74. (might change this one)

Focus of Discussion: Despite Spivak's presence as a founder-member of the collective, the SS group has rightly been accused of not taking gender seriously as a category of historical analysis or power relations. Guha's essay "Chandra's Death" is an exception to the rule. However, Spivak's essay is widely cited and a very important intervention and provocation to action for all historians, especially feminist ones.

Recommended

1. Spivak's essay "[Deconstructing Historiography](#)" originally published in the series in 1985 (SS Vol. IV)
2. Some summaries/commentaries on Spivak's essay from my HIS 600 page

[Shmoop.Com on Spivak](#) Particularly look at the first two, on "[Quotes](#)" (strongly recommend)

Ragini Tharoor Srinivasan, "[Can the Subaltern Speak? to My Students?](#)"

Mashrabbiya.Com "[Can the Subaltern Speak?: Gayatri Spivak and Post-Colonialism](#)" (nice summary)

Leon De Kock, "[Interview with Gayatri Spivak](#)" (1991)

Oct 3 Week 5: **Writing Postcolonial Subalternity**

Shahid Amin. *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922-1992.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Saidiya Hartman, "[Venus in Two Acts](#)" *Small Axe*, Number 26, Volume 12, Number 2, (June 2008): pp. 1-14.

Focus of Discussion: Is it possible to write histories of subaltern groups without "making the subaltern speak"? How successful is Amin in his efforts to do that? Does "theory" have to made front and center of writing postcolonial histories?

Oct 10 Week 6 No readings

Focus of Discussion: Discuss ongoing work on your papers. What texts are you planning to bring in? How do you think they connect?

<p>Oct 17 Week 7</p> <p>No Meeting. Work on your first paper (two from your content readings from other syllabi, and how you think they might relate to, learn from, or contribute to furthering arguments of the above four readings).</p> <p>Due next week</p> <p><u>PART II GLOBAL CONNECTIONS</u></p>
<p>Oct 24 Week 8 Globalizing History</p> <p>Sebastian Conrad, <i>What Is Global History?</i> Princeton University Press, 2016.</p> <p>Focus of Discussion: Can the Global help provincialize Europe? Advantages and Drawbacks. Is provincializing Europe necessary for doing global histories?</p> <p>First Paper Due</p>
<p>Oct 31 Week 9 A World Shaped by Colonialism?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cooper and Stoler, "Between Metropole and Colony" Introduction to <i>Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World</i>. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997. 2. Partha Chatterjee. <i>The Black Hole of Empire: History of a Global Practice of Power</i>. (Princeton University Press, 2012). <p>Focus of Discussion: The essay and book take very different approaches to the study of imperial power. How do we make them speak to each other? Or do we prefer one approach to another? If so, why? Additionally, let's bring in a discussion of Mrinalini Sinha, <i>Specters of Mother India: The Global Restructuring of an Empire</i> to the discussion. How does her approach differ from both the above authors'?</p>
<p>Nov 7 Week 10 Globalizing Postcolonial Histories: A Different Approach?</p> <p>Amitav Ghosh, <i>In an Antique Land: History in the Guise of a Traveler's Tale</i>. Vintage; Reprint edition (1994)</p> <p>Focus of Discussion: Ghosh is best known a novelist today (though his work on climate change in more recent years is garnering a lot of academic attention too) This, though, was his third book. A work of non-fiction, the book brings together two histories: Ghosh's search for an 12th century Indian slave of a Jewish merchant and his experiences of fieldwork in an Egyptian village while doing his Ph.D. in Social Anthropology. The two intersecting histories tell of global connections and how they transformed under colonialism and modernity.</p> <p>Our focus will really be on how a search for subaltern pasts can be narrated in ways that bring together postcolonial concerns and global histories.</p>
<p>Nov 14 Week 11 Bring your own texts to work day</p>

Focus of Discussion: Discuss ongoing work on your papers. What texts are you planning to bring in?
How do you think they connect?

Nov 21 Week 12 No meeting work on second paper

Nov 28 Week 13 **Discuss Ongoing Work on papers and Course**

Dec 5 Week 14 No Class Meeting
Second Paper Due