

Department of History  
Dalhousie University  
Winter, 2009

## HIST 4550 Orientalism and Occidentalism



### Course Syllabus

**Location:** McCain 1198

**Time:** Thursdays, 2:35-5:25

**Instructor:** Prof. C. Mitchell

**Office:** #2169, McCain Arts and Social Sciences Building

**Office Phone Number:** 494-2788

**Email:** c.mitchell@dal.ca

**Office Hours:** Fridays, 1:30 -3:30 p.m.

**Drop-off Box Number:** 90

### ***I. DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVE***

This class is dedicated to exploring the varying ways and means with which the 'West' has framed and presented the Orient, namely the Middle East and South Asia. The cultural discourse of 'othering', however, is a two-way process, and this class is also focused on understanding the 'gaze in reverse' and how Occidentalism emerged against the backdrop of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century imperialism and colonialism. This class begins

with debates about the theoretical paradigm of Orientalism – popularized and systemized by Edward Said in the 1970s – and the extent to which it can be readily applied to periods of antiquity, medieval, and early modern history. The second half of the class contextualizes various debates about Occidentalism and how they inform intellectual and scholarly debates taking place in the Middle East and South Asia with respect to emerging patterns of nationalism, postcolonialism and Islamism.

## **II. EVALUATION**

### **a) Book Review (value: 15%)**

Students provide a succinct summary of the assigned book, and analyze the effectiveness and success of the authors' methodology and overall argument. Sample book reviews will be distributed at the beginning of class.

The assigned book for this semester is Robert Irwin, *For Lust of Knowing*. Overlook Press, 2006.

Length: 1,500 words (ca. 6 pages).

Due Date: Jan. 29, 2009 (**Late penalty in effect!**)

### **b) Cluster Presentations (10% @ presentation, total value: 20-30%)**

#### Preparation

1. Students will be organized into clusters of three, and depending on enrolment, a cluster will be responsible for a group presentation at least twice in the semester.
2. Seminar cluster assignments will be arranged in the first week of class.
3. In every group presentation, there will be a cluster leader – this will rotate within the group for each presentation.
4. There are three articles assigned per class, and each student in that cluster will – in 5-10 minutes – summarize one article as an individual presenter. This is not necessarily meant as a critical analysis, but more of a précis, or summary.
5. In the week before their presentation, the cluster will meet at least once outside of class, and discuss, compare and contrast the three assigned articles, and in doing so, coordinate their group presentation.
6. The cluster will officially rank these articles on the basis of readability, impact, innovation, development of argument, and general effectiveness.

#### Execution

1. Each student in the cluster will present his/her assigned article.
2. Total time for a group presentation should be no longer than 30 minutes.
3. The cluster leader for that particular week will lead a classroom discussion – with support from his/her team – which will discuss and debate the accuracy of the rankings, and the general effectiveness of the readings.

4. The cluster leader will be responsible for compiling the summaries of the assigned articles and preparing a 3-4 page document which paraphrases the general consensus of the class discussion.

Each student will be evaluated on the basis of their individual presentation for 10% of their overall grade. Depending on the number of presentations, this will total 20-30% of the final grade.

**c) Cluster Leading and Presentation Summary (10%)**

The cluster leader on any given week will also be evaluated on their ability to lead the seminar discussion as well as their prepared summary/analysis of the articles and their criticism by the seminar.

**d) Research Paper/Document Study (value: 25%)**

Length: 3,500-4,000 words

Due date: April 2, 2009 (**Late penalty in effect!**)

Research topics will be distributed in the first month of classes. One student per topic – suggestions are encouraged.

**e) Seminar Participation (value: 20%)**

Students will be expected to attend and participate fully in seminar discussions. Part of this grade will be based on your defense of your ranking of the articles, and your willingness to engage the opinions and viewpoints of others in the classroom. Absenteeism or lack of preparation will certainly jeopardize this portion of the grade.

**\*\*\*Note\*\*\*: Students must fulfill every portion of this course (presentation, paper, cluster report) to receive a grade. Non-completion of any major assignment for this course will result in an "incomplete", or INC.**

***Note on submissions and plagiarism:***

Written assignments **must** be submitted on time. A late penalty of 3% a day and 5% per weekend will be levied for late papers. Medical documentation – if appropriate – may be considered. If students are having difficulty with an assignment, they are encouraged to approach the instructor **as soon as possible**. Students are expected to keep all research notes for their essays, and to retain a photocopy of their essay. Assignments and essays will be marked for clarity of writing, grammar, organization – in addition to content and analysis.

Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence **which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even the revocation of a degree.**

If there is any confusion regarding what constitutes plagiarism, consult p. 25 of the Dalhousie University Undergraduate Calendar, or visit the following website for the Department of History:

[http://www.dal.ca/~histwww/style\\_guide.htm](http://www.dal.ca/~histwww/style_guide.htm)

The Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and computer readable format, and to submit any paper to an Internet check. **You must therefore keep an electronic copy** of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand.

**Note on disabilities:**

Students with disabilities should register as quickly as possible at Student Accessibility Services if they want to receive academic accommodations. To do so please phone 494-2836, e-mail <disabilities@dal.ca>, or drop in at the Killam, G28.

**III. TEXTS**

*Available at Outside the Lines Bookstore*

6297 Quinpool Road

422-3544

*Web address: [www.outsidethelinesbooks.com](http://www.outsidethelinesbooks.com)*

**Required:**

1. Course reader - available in Dept. of History.
2. Edward Said, *Orientalism*. Vintage Books, 1978.
3. Zachary Lochman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism* (Cambridge University Press, Paperback, 2004).
4. Robert Irwin, *For Lust of Knowing: The Orientalists and Their Enemies* (Penguin, Paperback, 2007)

**Suggested:**

1. A.L. Macfie, *Orientalism*, (London: Longman, Paperback, 2002).

**IV. SEMINAR SCHEDULE**

**Week 1 (Jan. 8) - Introduction & Orientation**

-Organization of cluster groups.

**Week 2 (Jan. 15) – Defining Orientalism**

**Text Readings:** Lockman, pp. 182-201

**Articles:**

- a) Edward Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 1-110, 201-328.
- b) Edward Said, Bernard Lewis, Oleg Grabar, "Orientalism – An Exchange," *The New York Review of Books*, Vol. 23 (1982), No. 13. (BLS)

**Week 3 (Jan. 22) – Locating Orientalism in Antiquity**

**Text Readings:** Lockman, pp. 8-22

**Articles:**

- a) Wilfried Nippel, "The Construction of the 'Other'", *Greeks and Barbarians*, ed. T. Harrison (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 278-310. (READER)
- b) Robert Browning, "Greeks and Others: From Antiquity to the Renaissance," *History, Language and Literacy in the Byzantine World*, ed. R. Browning (Northampton: Varorium, 1989), pp. 1-26. (READER)
- c) Pierre Briant, "History and Ideology: The Greeks and 'Persian Decadence'", *Greeks and Barbarians*, ed. T. Harrison (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 193-210. (DEPARTMENT COPY)

**Week 4 (Jan. 29) – Literature and Orientalism in the Medieval and Early Modern Eras**

**Text Readings:** Lockman, pp. 22-37

**Articles:**

- a) Jeffrey Cohen, "On Saracen Enjoyment: Some Fantasies of Race in Late Medieval France and England," in *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, Vol. 31 (2001), pp. 113-46. (BLS)
- b) I.M. Higgins, "Shades of the East: Orientalism, Religion and Nation in Late Medieval Scotland" in *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, Vol. 38 (2008), pp. 197-228 (BLS)
- c) Nancy Bisaha, "'New Barbarian' or Worthy Adversary? Humanist Constructs of the Ottoman Turks in Fifteenth-century Italy," *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, eds. D. Blanks and M. Frassetto (New York: 1999), pp. 185-205. (READER)

**GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTATION**

**Week 5 (Feb. 5) – Enlightenment Orientalism**

**Text Readings:** Lockman, pp. 38-78

**Articles:**

- a) Jyoti Mohan, "La civilization la plus antique: Voltaire's Image of India," *Journal of World History*, Vol. 16 (2005), No. 2, pp. 173-185 (BLS)
- b) Asli Cirakman, "From Tyranny to Despotism: The Enlightenment's Unenlightened Image of the Turks," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 33 (2001), pp. 49-68 (BLS)

c) Rebecca Joubin, "Islam and Arabs Through the Eyes of the *Encyclopedie*" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 32 (2000), pp. 197-217. (BLS)

#### GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTATION

#### **Week 6 (Feb. 12) – Anglo-Indian Orientalism**

**Text Readings:** Lockman, pp. 78-98

##### **Articles:**

- a) "Tod's Rajast'han and the Boundaries of Imperial Rule in Nineteenth-Century India" *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 30 (1996), No. 1, pp. 185-220. (BLS)
- b) A.L. Macfie, "Thuggee – An Orientalist Construction?," *Rethinking History*, vol. 12 (2008), no. 3, pp. 383-397. (BLS)
- c) Jenny Sharpe, "The Violence of Light in the Land of Desire, or, How William Jones Discovered India," *Boundary*, Vol. 20 (1993), pp. 26-46. (BLS)

#### **Week 7 (Feb. 19) –Orientalism and the Age of Empire**

**Text Readings:**

##### **Articles:**

- a) Trumbull, "Au Coin des Rues Diderot et Moise: Religious Politics and the Ethnography of Sufism in Colonial Algeria," *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 30 (2007), No. 3, pp. 451-483 (BLS)
- b) Hala Halim, "Forster in Alexandria: Gender and Genre in Narrating Colonial Cosmopolitanism," *Hawwa*, Vol. 4 (2006), Nos.2-3, pp. 237-73 (BLS)
- c) Suzanne Marchand, "Popularizing the Orient in Fin de Siecle Germany," *Intellectual History Review*, Vol. 17 (2007), No. 2, pp. 175-202 (BLS)

#### **Week 8 (March 5) Defining Occidentalism (Guest Seminar Leader: Dr. Amal Ghazal)**

##### **Articles:**

- a) Wang Ning, "Orientalism versus Occidentalism," in *New Literary History* 28:1 (Winter 1997), 57-67. (Project Muse)
- b) Akeel Bilgrami, "Occidentalism – the Very Idea," *Critical Encounters*, Vol. 32 (2006), No. 3, pp. 381-411. (BLS)
- c) Sadik Jalal al-'Azm, "Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse," *Khamsin*, no.8 (1981), 5-26. (READER)

#### **Week 9 (March 12) - Extending Orientalism beyond the Orient**

##### **Articles:**

- a) Willliam Cummings, "Orientalism's Corporeal Dimension: "Tattooed Bodies and Eighteenth-Century Oceans" *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, Vol. 4 (2003), No. 2. (Project Muse)

b) Adamovsky, "Euro-Orientalism and the Making of the Concept of Eastern Europe in France, 1810-1880," *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 77 (2007), pp. 591-628.

c) Nicholas Mirzoeff, "Disorientalism: Minority and Visuality in Imperial London," *The Dramatic Review*, Vol. 50 (2006), No. 2, pp. 52-69. (BLS)

#### GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTATION

#### **Week 10 (March 19) – Early Occidentalism – “The Gaze in Reverse”**

**Text Readings:** Lockman, pp. 99-129

a) Halim Kara, "Narratives of Self-Assertion: Representations of Western Other in the works of the Uzbek author Abdulhamid Sulaymon Cholpan, 1897-1938," *Middle Eastern Literatures* Vol 10 (2007), No. 1, pp. 57-74. (BLS)\_

b) Mohamad Tavakolu-Targhi, "Persianate Europology" and "Imagining European Women," in *Refashioning Iran: Orientalism, Occidentalism and Historiography* (London: 2001), pp. 35-76. (READER)\_

c) Alastair Wright, "The Work of Translation: Turkish Modernism and 'the Generation of 1914'," *Edges of Empire: Orientalism and Visual Culture* ed. Hackforth-Jones (London: 2005), pp. 139-161. (DEPARTMENT COPY)

#### GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTATION

#### **Week 11 (March 26) – Occidentosis and the Iranian Revolution**

**Text Readings:** Lockman, pp. 129-171

#### **Articles:**

a) Mehrzad Boroujerdi, "The Other-ing of the West," in *Iranian Intellectuals and the West: The Tormented Triumph of Nativism* (Syracuse University Press, 1996), 52-76, 156-59.

(READER)

b) Assef Bayat, "Shariati and Marx: A Critique of an 'Islamic' Critique of Marxism," *Alef*, Vol. 10 (1990), pp. 19-41. (BLS)

c) Haggay Ram, "Mythology of Rage: Representations of the "Self" and the "Other" in Revolutionary Iran," *History & Memory*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 67-87, spring 1996. (BLS)

#### GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTATION

#### **Week 12 (April 2) – Post-Colonialism and Occidentalism**

**Text Readings:** Lockman, pp. 201-214

#### **Articles:**

a) Jonathan Spencer, "Occidentalism in the East: The Uses of the West in the Politics and Anthropology of South Asia," in *Occidentalism: Images of the West*, ed. James Carrier (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 234-257. (READER)

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

c) Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for

Indian Pasts?" *Representations* 37 (Winter 1992), 1-26. **(BLS)**

**GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTATION**

**Week 13 (April 9) – Occidentalism and the Islamist Paradigm**

**Text Readings:** Lockman, pp. 172-77; 215-267

**Articles:**

- a) Larbi Sadiki, "Islam and Democracy: Between Orientalism and Occidentalism," *The Maghreb Review*, Vol. 22 (1997), pp. 172-92. **(READER)**
- b) James J. Napoli, "Desperately seeking Satan: Occidentalism and the Egyptian press," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* (2001), 1-12. **(READER)**
- c) Cemil Aydin, "Between Occidentalism and the Global Left: Islamist Critiques of the West in Turkey" *Comparative Studies in South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, vol. 26 (2006), pp. 446-61. **(Project Muse)**