

SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION 158R
POSTCOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT
SPRING 2008

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SCTR 158.41086
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Recommended Text:

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.* [\$29.99/\$22.50]

Required Texts:

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] [\$9.95/\$7.45]
Warren Carter. *Matthew and Empire: Initial Explorations.* Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 2001. [ISBN 1-56338-342-X] [\$31.95/\$23.95]
R. S. Sugirtharajah. *The Bible and Empire: Postcolonial Explorations.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. [ISBN 0-521-53191-8] [\$29.99/\$22.50]
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] [\$22.00/\$16.50]
Articles on ERes [no cost, unless you decide to print them]

Course Description and Objectives

This course explores postcolonial theory and its applications to the interpretation of the New Testament. Postcolonial 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. 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.

At the end of this course, you will improve your ability to

- express your ideas in writing and in oral presentation with greater clarity and confidence
- articulate postcolonial theoretical concepts and discuss their connection to human experience
- identify the imprint of Roman imperial propaganda and practices on New Testament texts
- analyze the goals and methods of contemporary postcolonial approaches to the New Testament
- produce an intersectional analysis of oppression
- accomplish advanced research in biblical studies

The Religious Studies and Core Requirements

The Religious Studies Department at Santa Clara University offers courses in three major areas: 1) Scripture and Tradition, 2) Theology, Ethics and Spirituality, and 3) Religion and Society. This course is in **Area 1, Scripture and Tradition**, which means that it focuses on sacred texts and the interpretation of them. And because it is an advanced-level course, its goal is critical engagement with current, open-ended issues in religion—in our case, the critique of New Testament interpretation offered by postcolonial criticism.

This advanced-level course is part of the **University core**, whose theme at this level is “Leadership.” This course will enhance your leadership in the community as you develop competence in understanding the political and conceptual role of religion in the formation of ideology and identity.

This course also 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.

Finally, this course meets the **Women’s & Gender Studies** requirement for students in the College of Arts and Sciences, given its focus on transnational feminism and the intersections of race, economic class, ethnicity, religion, and gender.

Course Requirements

Attendance

You are expected to be present and on time to class. Daily roll is taken. 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.* Notice renders the absence excused. Lack of notice constitutes an unexcused absence, and these absences impact your grade more quickly. 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 (+).

Class Engagement & Seminar Leadership

General Engagement

Class engagement is a critical part of any seminar. You will type up a one-page impression from the readings for most 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 each day 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. 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 third week of class. Your task will be to introduce the secondary reading briefly, 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 for that analysis. You will prepare a handout (2 sides of one page) that covers the material you would like to present (if you can get a hard copy to the professor before 1:00 on the day of your presentation, she will take care of duplicating it for the class; otherwise, please prepare 14 copies). Since the other class members will each have prepared the readings and an impression page, you should spend very little time on summary and include an open period for questions “from the floor.” Your group is exempt from the précis 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 topic). The grading rubric for this oral assignment is available at 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. 20% of grade total.

Research Paper

Each student will prepare a 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. 15-20 pages, 30% of grade total.

Topic statement and sources	4th week	Tuesday, April 22
Annotated Bibliography	6th week	Tuesday, May 6
Outline	7th week	Thursday, May 15
Required draft of entire paper	9th week	Tuesday, May 27
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	Exam week	Thursday, June 12, Noon

Examinations

There are no examinations in this course.

Extra Credit

Campus Events

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. 3% of grade max.

U-Tube: Video Clips on the Research Process

You can also prepare a 2-4 minute voice-over slideshow or video on the research and writing process. Videos judged to be of superior quality (and good humor!) will be posted on the Religious Studies Department's Web site to serve as research guides for future students. There are several steps in the research process; the following topics are available on a first-come, first-served basis to student teams of 2 people:

- Picking a research question
- Finding professional sources (in databases, professional journals/books; also: where NOT to look)
- Collecting your materials (using our library, Link+, Bronco Express, other local libraries)
- Reading and developing your thesis
- Outlining your paper and keeping track of your sources
- Writing the paper

Videos should be produced with iMovie and "shared" as a QuickTime file. Help with iMovie is available at "Extra Credit" online. Files are due by Thursday, May 29; send yours by email to the professor.

Grading

Grade Breakdown

Class Engagement (oral remarks & 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%

Grade 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-

Academic Integrity

You are expected to collaborate to share ideas, resources, and questions, particularly for group work and in the initial discussion of ideas for papers. This sharing becomes cheating or plagiarism when you present as your own work 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, as well as misrepresenting the attribution of an idea. Work on your papers 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"). 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 Life.

Wk	Date	Pages of Reading	Topic of Lecture & Discussion
1	4/1		COURSE OVERVIEW
			TOPIC 1.
			THE CASE FOR POSTCOLONIAL THEORY: EMPIRE & ORIENTALISM
	4/3	[50]	AN HISTORICAL & THEORETICAL INTRODUCTION; ORIENTALISM <u>Secondary Material:</u> Macfie, ed., <i>Orientalism: A Reader</i> 1-19, 26-30, 37-85
2	4/8	[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
	4/10	[61]	ORIENTALISM <u>Secondary:</u> Macfie, ed., <i>Orientalism: A Reader</i> 249-71, 285-323, 365-74
			TOPIC 2.
			POSTCOLONIAL THEORY: KEY CONCEPTS
3	4/15	[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 Critical Analysis Paper #1: <i>Orientalism</i> due in class; bring 2 copies, 1 for professor and 1 for peer reviewer; submit electronic copy to TurnItIn.com by midnight tonight; no impression page due Sign-ups for Seminar Leadership in class

Wk	Date	Pages of Reading	Topic of Lecture & Discussion
3	4/17	[40]	<p>HEGEMONY & ALTERITY</p> <p>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)</p> <p><i>Bring peer review of partner's paper to class</i></p>
4	4/22	[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><i>Topic Statement and Initial Plan for Sources for Research Paper due in class; impression page IS due</i></p>
<p>TOPIC 3.</p> <p>THE NEW TESTAMENT AND ITS ROMAN IMPERIAL FOREGROUND</p>			
4	4/24	[55]	<p>IMPERIALISM IN THE LAW & THE PROPHETS</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>
5	4/29	[54]	<p>ROMAN HEGEMONY</p> <p><u>Secondary</u>: Carter, <i>Matthew and Empire</i> 9-34; Brunt, "Laus Imperii" from <i>Paul and Empire</i> (ERes); Price, "Rituals and Power," from <i>Paul and Empire</i> (ERes; read only pages 47-56 and 61-71)</p> <p><i>Critical Analysis Paper #2: Postcolonial Theory: Key Concepts due; bring 2 copies, 1 for professor and 1 for peer reviewer; submit electronic copy to TurnItIn.com by midnight tonight; no impression page due</i></p>
	5/1	[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><i>Bring peer review of partner's paper to class</i></p>
6	5/6	[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><i>Annotated Bibliography for Research Paper due in class; no impression page due</i></p>
	5/8	[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>

Wk	Date	Pages of Reading	Topic of Lecture & Discussion
7	5/13	[46]	ACCOMMODATIONIST POSITIONS <u>Primary:</u> 1-2 Timothy <u>Secondary:</u> Zanker essay from <i>Paul and Empire</i> (read first); D'Angelo, "Eusebeia: Roman Imperial Family Values and the Sexual Politics of 4 Maccabees and the Pastorals" (ERes)
	5/15	[20]	REVELATION <u>Primary:</u> Revelation <u>Secondary:</u> Kim, "'Uncovering Her Wickedness': An Inter(con)textual Reading of Revelation 17 from a Postcolonial Feminist Perspective" (both on ERes) <i>In-class Exercise: Intersectional Analysis of Revelation & the Roman Imperial Context</i> <i>Outline for Research Paper due in class; no impression page due</i>
TOPIC 4.			
THE IMPERIAL DEPLOYMENT OF THE BIBLE & POSTCOLONIAL REFORMULATIONS			
8	5/20	[50]	THE NEW TESTAMENT AS A TOOL OF EMPIRE <u>Secondary:</u> Sugirtharajah, <i>Bible & Empire</i> 9-59
	5/22	[48]	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, <i>Bible & Empire</i> 60-97 <i>Contrapuntal Reading Exercise: Instead of a précis, read Sugirtharajah's essay, "Salvos from the Victorian Pulpit" (B&E 60-97) 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>
9	5/27	[28]	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; no impression page due</i>
	5/29	[58]	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 Matthew & the Modern Postcolonial Context</i>
10	6/3	[62]	POSTCOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES ON APOCALYPTIC POLITICS <u>Primary:</u> Review Revelation <u>Secondary:</u> Keller, <i>God and Power</i> 3-65 <i>Bring peer review of partner's paper to class</i>
	6/5	[55]	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
11	6/12		⇒ <i>Submit your Research paper today by NOON in a folder with all its prior stages. Bring it to Prof. Murphy's office, Bannan 338, or her box in the Religious Studies Department office, Bannan 344; remember to submit the assignment to TurnItIn.com as well by midnight tonight. The assignment will not be evaluated until both forms are submitted.</i>