

Islamophobia

REL 101-6-20 | Brannon Ingram



Tuesday/Thursday

2:40-4:00 pm

Remote/Synchronous

This course concerns the history, politics, culture and economy of how Islam and Muslims have been represented in the north Atlantic world (the 'West'). It begins with a brief overview of Western representations of Muslims during the medieval era, then examines how colonialism shaped the modern history and politics of contemporary Islamophobia. The bulk of the course will focus in depth on aspects of Islamophobia in the United States, aiming to empower students to understand and navigate the contemporary context. We will also critically discuss the utility of the term 'Islamophobia'. The course gives particular attention to ways that Muslims have sought to challenge, complicate and subvert how they are represented. The course, finally, also serves as an introduction to the academic study of religion. We will explore several themes in Religious Studies throughout the course, particularly religion and race, religion and politics, religion and law, and religion and media.

Paying Attention

REL 101-6-21 / Kevin Buckelew

Monday/Wednesday 2:40-4:00 pm



**Remote/
Synchronous**

What does it mean to “pay attention”? What is the history of attention as a concept, and what is at stake when we talk about paying attention? What are the ethical implications of attention and distraction? How have economic conditions, social norms, religious practices, and technological change helped shape ideas about attention and distraction that inform our lives today? In the age of the “attention economy”—when digital technology is blamed for giving rise to a culture of distraction, and collaborations between neuroscientists and Buddhist meditators are credited with heralding the attentional key to happiness—this seminar provides an opportunity to reflect on attention as a key term in history and contemporary life.

Intro to Hinduism



REL 200-20
Mark McClish

**Remote/
Asynchronous**

One of the largest and most ancient of all religions, 'Hinduism' is actually a family of related traditions. Over the last 4000 years or more, the Hindu traditions of South Asia have developed an astonishing diversity of rituals, beliefs, and spiritual practices and a pantheon of hundreds of gods and goddesses, from the elephant-headed Ganesha to the fierce goddess Kali. This course will examine the breadth of the Hindu traditions as they developed over time, highlighting the shared features that make them a family, such as ritual sacrifice, world renunciation, law, spiritual discipline, devotion, worship, and theology.

Intro to Hebrew Bible

**Remote/
Synchronous**

REL 220-20

Barry Wimpfheimer

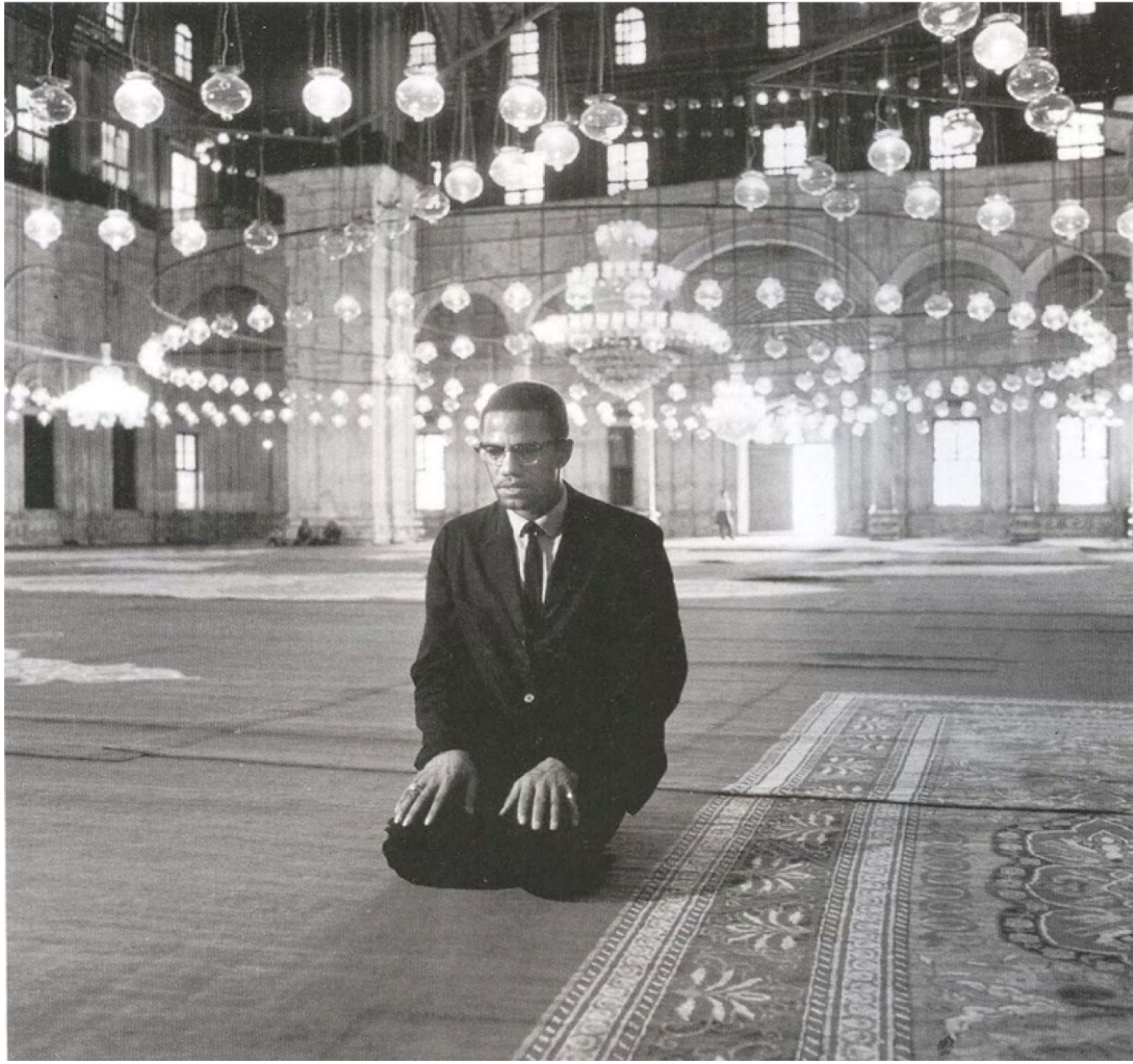
Monday/Wednesday

9:40-11:00am



There is no understating the significance of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament in Western Culture. The Bible is a text that has been repeatedly turned to for spiritual guidance, for explanations of mankind's origins and as the basis of both classical art and contemporary cinema. English idiom is peppered with phrases that originate in the Hebrew Bible and many a modern political clash can be understood as a conflict over what the Bible's messages and their implications. This course introduces students to the Hebrew Bible by reading sections of most of the Bible's books. But reading is itself a complicated enterprise. The Bible has been put to many different uses; even within the world of academic scholarship, the Bible is sometimes a source of history, sometimes a religious manual, sometimes a primitive legal code and sometimes a work of classical literature. This course will introduce students to the various challenges that present themselves within the study of the Hebrew Bible and the varied approaches scholars take when reading the Hebrew Bible. This course is a critical introduction to the Hebrew Bible.

Intro to Islam



REL 250-20

Brannon Ingram

Remote/

Asynchronous

This course introduces Islam, one of the major religious traditions of world history, developing a framework for understanding how Muslims in varying times and places have engaged with Islamic scripture and the prophetic message of the Prophet Muhammad through diverse sources: theological, philosophical, legal, political, mystical, literary and artistic. While we aim to grasp broad currents and narrative of Islamic history, we will especially concentrate on the origins and development of the religion in its formative period (the prophetic career of the Prophet Muhammad, the Qur'an, Islamic belief and ritual, Islamic law, and popular spirituality) and debates surrounding Islam in the contemporary world (the impact of European colonialism on the Muslim world, the rise of the modern Muslim state, and discourses on gender, politics and violence).

Chan/Zen Buddhism

REL 319-22/Asian_LG 390-22

Kevin Beckelew



Remote/
Synchronous

Monday/
Wednesday

9:40-11:00am

The Chinese Chan (Japanese Zen) Buddhist tradition is one of the most famous branches of Buddhism in the world, but also one of the most widely misunderstood. This course explores the history, literature, philosophy, visual culture, and monastic practices of Chan/Zen Buddhism in East Asia. We pay special attention to the ways Chan/Zen innovated within the Buddhist tradition to establish a uniquely East Asian school of Buddhism. Along the way we consider the changing place of meditation in Chan/Zen practice, closely read Chan/Zen sermons and koans, analyze the role of women and gender in Chan and Zen, and conclude by considering the modern reception of Zen in the West.

Gender and Sexuality in Judaism



REL 339-20/
GNDR_ST 390-21

Claire Sufrin

Remote/Synchronous

Tuesday/Thursday

9:40-11:00am

From its most traditional to its most liberal forms, contemporary Judaism has been deeply influenced by feminism and its call to pay attention to the way gender and sexuality shape and are shaped by religious experiences and ideas. In this course, we will use gender and sexuality as lenses for analyzing the sacred texts, rituals, and theology of Judaism. Along the way, we will also consider how attention to gender and sexuality sheds light on the lives of Jewish men and women of the past and present. The course is divided into three sections, each organized around a central category of Jewish thought: Torah, Israel, and God. The first section, Torah, considers two stories from the biblical book of Genesis: first the creation of the world and then the sisters Leah and Rachel, both married to the patriarch Jacob. The second section, Israel, turns our focus to the rituals of Niddah, women's monthly immersion in the mikveh, ritual bath, following menstruation, and brit milah, circumcision. How have these rituals been adapted for use by individuals who are transgender? The third section, God, examines examples of feminist and queer Jewish theology and, in particular, the use of marriage as a metaphor for the relationship between God and the Jewish people in biblical, rabbinic, and contemporary contexts.

Christianity and the Fall of Rome

REL 349-21/Matthew Chalmers



Monday/
Wednesday
11:20-12:40pm

Remote/
Synchronous

Over the first six centuries CE, an assortment of texts from the eastern Mediterranean – eventually known as the New Testament – were written, composed, collected and became authoritative for communicating a religious identity: Christian. In this course we will explore some of our earliest and richest opportunities for understanding how Christianity became global phenomena. We focus on vibrant local and trans-local narratives: martyrs, magic, the Holy Land, law, magicians, and heretics. We travel not only the traditional hunting grounds of this period (Italy, Gaul, and what became northern Europe) but also late Roman Syria, Egypt, Palestine, and Ethiopia. How were the important events in the period relived and rewritten by those who followed, including Iraqi clerics and the first women playwright of the Middle Ages? And what can we learn by rethinking the big questions we ask of this period – of decline, fall, rise, conquest, and religious competition?

Media, Earth, & Making a Difference

REL 369-20/ENV_POL 390-24 Sarah Taylor



Friday 2:40-5:10 pm Remote/Synchronous

The central question of this course is: What Makes a Difference? Analyzing a variety of works of media addressing environmental themes, including works drawn from advertising and marketing, we will consider different types of environmental messaging and attempts to mobilize public moral engagement.

*For Undergraduates Only & by Instructor Permission

Theories of Religion

REL 395-20 / Sarah Taylor



Remote/
Synchronous

Thursday
2:40-5:10 pm

What is "theory"? What does it mean to have a theory about something? How are theories helpful? What do theories do? What is "religion"? How do things get excluded or included in this category? What counts as "religious" and why? Who gets to decide? This course is an introduction to foundational theories of religion and to the history of the construction of the category of "religion" over time. Throughout the term, you will be working on formulating your own theory of religion, which you will articulate and defend in your final seminar paper. In this course, you will gain (as ritual theorist Catherine Bell says) "the skills and tools to make sure that very complicated situations and ideas can be put into words, thereby making it possible to have discussions about issues that can only be discussed if there is language for reflexivity, nuance, counter-evidence, and doubt." In the process, you will be asked to make theory translatable to your peers by actively engaging theoretical concepts in creative ways

Tibetan Buddhist Tantra

REL 473-20

Sarah Jacoby

Hybrid/
Remote&InPerson



Wednesday / 11:30-2:00 pm

Not a how-to course, this class will explore the significance of tantra in Tibetan history, doxography, and scholarship. The course will pay particular attention to placing tantra within its broader religious and social context(s) in Tibet, as well as to a range of issues pertaining to the ethics and politics of translating tantric texts into non-Tibetan cultural and linguistic spaces, such as varying understandings of secrecy, initiation, the guru-disciple relationship, the roles and representations of women, the body as a site of spiritual realization, consort practices, and interpretations of antinomian rhetoric.

Asian Languages and Cultures

East Asian Classics

This course explores some of the most influential texts of the major East Asian religious and philosophical traditions including Confucianism, Daoism, Chan/Zen Buddhism, and Tibetan Buddhism still prominent in China, Japan, Tibet, and several other Asian societies today. The goal is to understand the significance and the place that they have in East Asian cultures. This course will probe the following questions: What are the preoccupations these texts address? How can humans achieve contentment in the world? What are the moral values these texts instill? Beyond this historical focus, this course will also reflect on ways that these literary and religious texts have been appropriated and adapted in the modern context. Each period dedicated to a specific text will be preceded by an introduction to the tradition it represents offering a historical background together with biographical and/or content outlines.

Fall 2020

ASIAN_LC 390

Combined with REL 319-0-23

TTh 11:20am-12:40pm
Synchronous

Antonio Terrone



Antonio Terrone is a scholar of East Asian cultures, politics, and religions. He joins Northwestern after serving as an East Asia Analyst in Chicago, IL. Previously he was an Assistant Professor of Tibetan Buddhist Studies in the Graduate Institute of Religious Studies at National Chengchi University in Taipei, Taiwan. His research spans politics, policies and religion in modern and contemporary China and its borderlands, with a concentration on religious culture, literature, violence, and ethno-religious politics (Tibetans and Uyghurs).

Quarter/Year	Course Number	Day/Time	Instructor
Fall 2020	ART-HIST 340-1	MWF 11:30-12:20	Escobar
Course Title			Degree/Distro Fulfillment
Baroque Art: Italy and Spain, 1600 to 1750			1400-1800



This course surveys painting and sculpture, plus some architecture and urbanism, of the Baroque era (ca. 1580 to 1750) in Italy and Spain. Examining works of art in their social and cultural contexts, the course touches upon major themes of the historical period including the impact of religious reform on the visual arts; the notion of classicism as an aesthetic ideal; the intersection of art and science; and cultural exchange between Italian and Spanish places. Artistic centers such as Rome, Naples, Madrid, and Seville feature prominently, but the course will also consider artistic developments in cities such as Bologna, Milan, Valencia, Mexico City, and Cuzco. Along the way, we will study works by a range of artists including Gianlorenzo Bernini, Caravaggio, Annibale Carracci, Artemisia Gentileschi, Peter Paul Rubens, Jusepe Ribera, Luisa Roldán, Diego Velázquez, and Cristóbal de Villalpando.

The course will be taught remotely and synchronously. Pending developments, one class meeting will take place at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Required Textbooks

Howard Hibbard. *Bernini*. New York: Penguin, 1991. ISBN: 0140135987

Most readings will be available on Canvas.

Assessments

Regular attendance and active participation in discussions.
Research paper, including prospectus. Midterm and final exams.