ASIAN/RELST 4462/6662
Religion, Colonialism, & Nationalism
Fall 2012

Class Meetings
TR 2.55-4.10
Goldwin-Smith 181

Prof. Anne M. Blackburn
Rockefeller 346
amb242@cornell.edu

Office Hours
TBA by 27 August

Description
Taught as a seminar, the course engages recent theoretical work, and historical and ethnographic studies, on the relations between religion, colonialism and nation formation in South and Southeast Asian contexts. We will identify and evaluate the central claims and arguments made by some influential scholars working in this area. Opportunities will be made for students to explore research of interest to them in the light of the materials read and discussed for the seminar.

Readings
The following books have been ordered for purchase at The Cornell Store. These books will also be on reserve at Uris Library Reserve, on a 2-hour basis.

Partha Chatterjee, Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World
Dipesh Chakrabarty, Provincializing Europe
Penny Edwards, Cambodge
Engseng Ho, The Graves of Tarim
Tamara Loos, Subject Siam
Saurabh Dube, Stitches on Time

Mark Whitaker’s Amiable Incoherence is an important book, but out of print. We will have to make do with a copy on reserve in the library.

Readings marked with * are available on electronic reserve through Blackboard.

University Policy Statements
Together with all members of this department, I respect and uphold University policies and regulations pertaining to racial or ethnic discrimination, sexual harassment, assistance available to handicapped, visually and/or hearing impaired students, the observation of religious holidays, and plagiarism. All students are advised to become familiar with the respective University regulations and are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns to my attention.

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit
will be the student’s own work. (See information on academic integrity at: http://www.cornell.edu/UniversityFaculty/docs/main.html).

**Requirements**

1. **Regular attendance and participation (10 points).** A successful seminar requires your physical and mental presence. Missing more than two meetings is inadvisable, barring extraordinary circumstances or religious holidays. If you will need to reschedule an assignment, or to miss a class meeting, because of a religious holiday, please advise Prof. Blackburn as soon as possible.

2. **Précis papers/discussant (30 points).** Twice in the semester, you will prepare a 2-3 page (double-spaced) paper summarizing what you take to be the main points and key topics for discussion in the readings assigned for class. This paper will be circulated electronically to seminar members by **12 noon the day before the class at which those readings are to be discussed.** You will *briefly* remind the class of the main points in précis paper at the start of class the next day, and help to facilitate the discussion.

3. **Book review assignment (20 points).** Select one of the required books and read the book reviews (in the major professional journals) written for the book you have selected. The reference librarian will help you navigate the electronic databases if you are not familiar with them—you will need to look at book reviews in the major journals of the humanities and social sciences. Write a 5-page (double-spaced) essay that (a) summarizes the main elements for which the book has been praised and criticized and (b) presents your own evaluation of the work, taking into account these reviews.

4. **Major research assignment (40 points).**

   **Graduate Students:** Choose one of the following. (1) In consultation with Prof. Blackburn, identify a topic related to this seminar and to your developing research. Conduct a review of the literature on this topic and prepare an annotated bibliography of approximately 40 items (based on preliminary investigation/reading—you are not expected to have read and digested completely all of the items) suitable for use in a subsequent paper or comprehensive exam. **Or** (2) In consultation with Prof. Blackburn, select a research paper on a topic related to the seminar that you have completed for another course. Prepare a revision of this paper, developing further the sources used and the analytical reach and precision of the argument. You will submit **both** the original and revised papers.

   **Undergraduate Students:** In consultation with Prof. Blackburn, identify a research problem related to this seminar that interests you. Working independently, and with Prof. Blackburn, determine the method that you would use in order to pursue this problem. How do you delineate a manageable problem for research? What are your key questions and what
kinds of evidence would be necessary to answer them? What scholarly fields/topics of inquiry will help you frame and answer these questions?

This phase of the assignment requires that you keep a journal of your reflections and discussions as you move towards selection of the research problem and approach to it. Once you have clarified your approach to the research problem, you will prepare an annotated bibliography of materials that you could use to discuss this problem. This bibliography will be annotated based on preliminary investigation/reading—you are not expected to have read and digested completely all the items. The bibliography will contain at least 20 major items. In most cases, web-based material will not be suitable for inclusion on the bibliography. You will submit the journal and the bibliography.

Preliminary Schedule of Readings and Assignments
(The schedule may be changed if necessary.)

23 Aug.       Introduction to the course


30 Aug.       Partha Chatterjee, Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World, Chs. 1
(one Section IV of Ch. 1 required) -3

4 Sept.       Partha Chatterjee, Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World, Chs. 4-6

6 Sept.       *Sumit Sarkar, “The Many Worlds of Indian History,” in Writing Social History

11 Sept.      *Thongchai Winichakul, Siam Mapped, Ch. 2


John D. Rogers, “Early British Rule and Social Classification in Lanka,” <journals.cambridge.org/article_S0026749X03001136>
18 Sept.  Saurabh Dube, *Stitches on Time*, chapters TBA
20 Sept.  Saurabh Dube, *Stitches on Time*, chapters TBA
25 Sept.  *Prasenjit Duara, Rescuing History from the Nation*, Ch. 2, Ch. 7
2 Oct.    Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, Ch. 5, Ch. 7 req’d.
4 Oct.    Mark Whitaker, *Amiable Incoherence*, Preface, Chs. 1, 2, 10 req’d.
9 Oct.    No class. Fall Break.
11 Oct.   No class. Prof. Blackburn is attending/presenting at the South Asia Conference, Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison.
16 Oct.   Tamara Loos, *Subject Siam*
23 Oct.   *Penny Edwards, Cambodge*, Intro., Ch. 1, Ch. 10
1 Nov.    *Thomas Blom Hansen, sections TBA*
6 Nov.    Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*, 3-32, 59-90
8 Nov.    *Anne M. Blackburn, Locations of Buddhism*, Chs. 5-6

*Book review assignment due at the start of class in hard copy*

13 Nov.   *Discussion of major research assignments*
15 Nov.   *Discussion of major research assignments*
20 Nov.   No class. Prof. Blackburn attends American Academy of Religion meeting.
22 Nov.   No class. Thanksgiving Break.
27 Nov.  Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim*, Preface and Ch. 1-5

29 Nov.  Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim*, Ch. 6-10

11 Dec.  Major research assignments due by 4 p.m. in hard copy to Prof. Blackburn’s mailbox in Rockefeller 381. You may submit the assignment earlier if you wish, anytime during the exam period.