

HISTORY _____
SEMINAR IN COMPARATIVE MODERNITIES:
MEXICO, INDIA, JAPAN

Instructor: Dr. Stephanie Ballenger
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class will consider the politics, culture and economics of modernity as expressed in the emergence of the nation states of Mexico, India and Japan from (roughly) 1800 to the present.

Broad topics and themes to be considered will include the nature and multiple definitions of modernity, the forging of distinct national identities, the relationship between nationalism, colonialism and imperialism, social re-ordering in late-industrializing societies, and the politics of catastrophe. An intense focus on these three distinct world regions will allow us to more fully understand the concept of alternative modernities, alternative development strategies and the social and political origins of national identities. Working within a comparative

framework will provide all participants with a chance to explore what these regions have in common while cultivating an appreciation of their distinctive traditions and how certain symbols, rituals and experiences were mobilized and memorialized to help shape a sense of national belonging.

Beginning with a consideration of key theoretical issues and frameworks for understanding concepts such as modernity and modernization, the emergence of the nation-state as the *sine qua non* of political modernity and industrialization as a defining characteristic of economic modernity, we will work within a loosely chronological framework to better understand both broader patterns and regional specificities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES This course has been designed to help students:

- 1) Cultivate a comparative historical perspective;
- 2) Analyze important differences and commonalities in the three regions under consideration and explain their causes and effects;
- 3) Understand global and regional connections, and the processes of selective adoption and incorporation that shape distinctive national cultures;
- 4) Isolate and understand different perspectives and discern their operation in primary and secondary sources;
- 5) Distinguish between narration and analysis, fact and interpretation;
- 6) Express themselves clearly and concisely in discussions and writing assignments.

REQUIRED READING (Available at CWU Bookstore)

1. Takashi Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan*.
2. William H. Beezley, William French and Cheryl English Martin, ed. *Rituals of Rule, Rituals of Resistance: Public Celebrations and Popular Culture in Mexico*
3. Nicholas B. Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India*

Provisional Syllabus: Upper Division Reading Seminar

4. Stephen Vlastos, ed. *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*
5. Junichiro Tanizaki, *Naomi: A Novel*
6. Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*
7. Rosario Castellanos, *The Book of Lamentations*
8. Keiji Nakazawa, *Barefoot Gen Volume 3: Life After The Bomb.*
9. Vasant Moon, *Growing Up Untouchable in India*
10. Course Reader. (All readings in Course Reader are marked with an * in the Course Schedule.)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS Your final course grade will be determined as follows:

Weekly response papers (10)	20%
Film Essay	20%
Final Comparative Essay	40%
Participation (Including discussion leadership)	20%

Notwithstanding the foregoing, you MUST complete each of the requirements listed above to earn a passing grade in the course.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Writing Assignments. Writing requirements for this class consist of the following: 1) weekly 1-2 page responses to the readings; 2) a 5-7 page reflective essay comparing three of the assigned four films; and 3) a final, comprehensive essay of between 10-12 pages on a thematic topic of your choice, in consultation with the instructor. Detailed descriptions of each assignment and specific guidelines will be posted to the Blackboard Site under the "Assignments" Tab. Due dates for each assignment are noted in the Course Schedule.

Class Participation. Given the challenging nature of the material, consistent attendance and constructive participation are essential to your success in this course. I use a variety of methods to assess the quality of your participation and you are expected to make significant contributions to all discussions. Student-led discussions will begin in the third week of

class. [A description of how I assess your participation for the purposes of assigning a grade can be found on Blackboard under the "Assignments" Tab.]

ADA Statement: Students with disabilities who require academic adjustments in this class need to 1) ensure that I receive, **electronically**, notification of your "Confirmation of Eligibility for Academic Adjustments" from the Center for Disability Services and 2) meet with me immediately to discuss how the approved adjustments will be implemented. Students with disabilities who have not yet arranged to have the form sent electronically must contact the Center for Disability Services immediately. The address is Bouillon 205, email: dssrecept@cwu.edu, phone: 963-2171, web site <http://www.cwu.edu/~dss>



Lagaan

Schedule of Discussion Topics, Readings and Assignments

[The following is a statement of my current intentions; I reserve the right to make alterations as necessary.]

WEEK 1 Introduction and Theoretical Contours

Discussion: Defining modernity; state formation and the nature of the modern state.

READ: *Michael Saler, "Modernity and Enchantment: A Historiographic Review" *The American Historical Review* 111:3 (June, 2006); Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniel Nugent "Popular Culture and State Formation in Revolutionary Mexico," and Alan Knight "Weapons and Arches in the Mexican Revolutionary Landscape," in *Everyday Forms of State Formation*; Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Adda, Calcutta: Dwelling in Modernity," in *Alternative Modernities*; and "Introduction" to Kenneth Ruoff's, *The People's Emperor: Democracy and the Japanese Monarchy, 1945-1995*.

WEEK 2 National Identity and Colonialism

Discussion: Problems of Periodization; the "long" nineteenth-century in Mexico, Japan and India; social structures, religion and foreign intervention.

READ: *Introduction to William Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*; Irwin Scheiner, "Benevolent Lords and Honorable Peasants: Rebellion and Peasant Consciousness in Tokugawa Japan," and Florencia Mallon, Introduction to *Peasant and Nation*.
Film: *Lagaan* (2001)

WEEK 3 National Identity in Context: Japan

Discussion: National Identity and The Invention of Tradition in Japan: the Meiji Restoration, 1868-1912

READ: Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy*

WEEK 4 National Identity in Context: Mexico

Discussion: Power, identity and tradition in Mexico: The French Intervention and Porfirian modernization

READ: Beezley, et al, *Rituals of Rule, Rituals of Resistance*

WEEK 5 Gendering modernity

Discussion: Race, gender and modern identity

READ: Tanizaki, *Naomi, A Novel*, Castellanos, *The Book of Lamentations* and * Miriam Silverberg, "The Café Waitress Serving Modern Japan," in *Mirror of Modernity*

Film: *María Candelaria*

WEEK 6 Colonialism and Nation Building; internal and external

Discussion: Caste in India and Mexico, Japanese imperial expansion (Manchuria, 1931)

READ: Dirks, *Castes of Mind*, Moon, *Growing Up Untouchable* and *Louise Young, "Colonizing Manchuria: The Making of an Imperial Myth," in *Mirror of Modernity*.

WEEK 7 Painful Births

Discussion: India from 1857 to 1947, Rushdie's vision of Indian independence, partition

READ: Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*

WEEK 8 The Politics of Catastrophe

Discussion: Disaster, dissent and national self-fashioning in the popular imagination

READ: *Elena Poniatowska, "After the Earthquake," and selections from *Nothing, Nobody*; selections from Suroopa Mukherjee, *Surviving Bhopal*; Keiji Nakazawa, *Barefoot Gen Volume 3: Life After The Bomb*.
Film: *Black Rain* 黒い雨; *kuroi ame* (dir. Imamura Shohei).



WEEK 9 Economic Nationalism and Modernity

Discussion: The Global Economy and National Identity

READ: Andrew Barshay, "'Doubly Cruel': Marxism and the Presence of the Past in Japanese Capitalism," Jennifer Robertson, "It Takes a Village: Internationalization and Nostalgia in Postwar Japan," Irwin Scheiner, "The Japanese Village: Imagined, Real, Contested," in *Mirror of Modernity*; *Carlos Marichal, "Obstacles to the Development of Capital Markets in Nineteenth-Century Mexico," *How Latin America Fell Behind: Essays on the Economic Histories of Brazil and Mexico*.

WEEK 10 Postmodern Identities: Playfulness and the "sovereign self" or dystopia.

Discussion: National Identities/Global Identities

READ: * Selections from Melissa Wright, *Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism*; Claudio Lomnitz, "Modes of Citizenship in Mexico," in *Alternative Modernities*.

Film: *Sleep Dealer* (dir. Alex Rivera)

COURSE POLICIES

1) Plagiarism. Ironically, the Internet has led to an increase in the incidence of plagiarism while making it much easier to detect. Plagiarism is a serious offence. It is intellectual theft and ranges from using the words or ideas of others without proper attribution (i.e. failing to cite the source and give credit where credit is due) to wholesale copying and turning in work that is not your own. If you are confused about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please come see me. Please **do not consider it**. Sanctions range from receiving a grade of "F" in the course to being dismissed from the University.

2) Please do not bring your computer to class. This class is a seminar and the use of laptop computers and other electronic devices impairs your ability to contribute to discussion and interact with other members of the seminar. Please turn OFF all other electronics before class begins. This extends to PDAs, cell phones, camera phones, Blackberries, iPhones, iPods, iPads, MP3 players, gaming devices, recording devices and whatever else the industry invents between now and the final day of class. [NB: This policy does not apply to students with CDS accommodations who require assistive learning devices nor to students working as paid note-takers for said students.

3) Grades. My grading policies, a detailed description of the standards I use to assess your work and the method I use to calculate your grades are available in the folder titled "Assignments and Assessments" on the Blackboard site for this course.

4) Blackboard (Bb). I will be using the Blackboard system to communicate with you via email and to post documents and announcements throughout the term. **Check your cwu email account daily!** I will notify you when new items have been posted to the site. Items currently available include:

- A. Course Syllabus
- B. Tips for Success
- C. Assignments and Assessments (Grading Criteria)
- D. Composition Guidelines
- E. Discussion Participation Guidelines
- F. Writing Advice
- G. Assignment Guidelines
 - 1. Film Essay
 - 2. Final Comparative Essay

5) Reading. History is a reading-intensive discipline. This is an advanced reading seminar and the reading load is commensurately demanding. How you manage the assigned reading over the course of any given week is up to you, but you need to be aware that your questions, comments and written work reveal quite starkly whether you have done the reading carefully and thoughtfully.

6) Writing. History is a writing-intensive discipline. This is an advanced class and the assumption is that you have demonstrated competence, if not mastery of the basic elements of expository writing. This includes knowing how to cite your sources properly using "Chicago-style" footnotes in every essay. If you do not own Kate Turabian's *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* BUY IT NOW. If you struggle with writing clear prose, start work on every assignment well in advance, make the time to see me early in the term and be prepared to **work** on your writing. If you need help with writing mechanics (sentence and paragraph structure, coherence, formulating a thesis, grammar, syntax, etc.) please make an appointment at the Writing Center. See their website at www.cwu.edu/~writingcenter/ for more information.

GUIDELINES FOR FILM ESSAY

This is a short (5-7 page) essay in which you reflect on how three of the assigned films illustrate one or more of the broad themes that structure the course. This is a “think-piece” in which you will address the issues of representation as well as how films can be used as sources. Students who wish to view additional films and substitute one or more of them for the assigned films are encouraged to do so. You must use at least ONE of the assigned films, however. This essay should include a bibliography with full bibliographic citations for the films as well as the reading.

GUIDELINES FOR FINAL COMPARATIVE ESSAY

Working with one or two of the broad topics that have structured this course, write an essay that compares and contrasts the modernization and “paths” to modernity of India, Japan and Mexico. What qualities did these regions have in common? (Think in terms of social and economic structures, political systems, state-directed industrialization, culture, including language, religion, ethnic complexity, the intersection of ethnic and class identity, etc). In what ways were they different (aside from the obvious). Be specific and make reference to concrete evidence derived from readings and discussions as well as relevant films and websites.

