

MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY  
DEPT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
FALL 2004  
IR 484: CRITICAL THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
THURSDAY, 14:40-17:30  
INSTRUCTOR: N. POLAT

International Relations (IR) is often understood as the study of politics premised on inter-governmental relations. Therefore, mainstream theoretical accounts tend to privilege interaction among states as the paramount, if not the only or exclusive, site of thematization. As a result, the global context is reduced in mainstream treatments to security, diplomacy and aspects of inter-governmental association. That this approach is fundamentally flawed has been the linchpin of recent critical thinking in the field. Yet, paradoxically, the bulk of the critical theories advanced by scholars *within IR* in the last two decades or so appear (a) not only greatly to continue the mainstream preoccupations, even if only to engage and refute those, deemed to be a prerequisite for emerging, new ideas in the discipline, (b) but also remain conspicuously aloof to insights in disciplines bordering IR.

This course, which does not necessarily require a prior knowledge of IR theory, seeks to remedy this gap, and explores the trans-national, trans-local, inter-ethnic traces and bonds in the wider global context, as researched and reflected on in a variety of disciplines beside IR, such as history, postcolonial studies, anthropology, and social theory. The course does not purport to exhaust the numerous themes and varieties of critical international thinking in these disciplines. Rather, the modest aim the course serves is to introduce the student to the most outstanding or prominent work produced in these fields, with a view to developing an awareness, for the fourth year student, of the broader setting in global theory.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Following a lecture by the instructor, the weekly sessions will take the form of open-ended discussions on the course material assigned for the week. Students are expected to do brief reviews (about 800 words) of the reading material each week, to be submitted to the instructor. The final grade will be formed by an evaluation of participation in the discussions (50 percent) and the weekly reviews (50 percent).

## THE ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE AND THE READING MATERIAL

Arabic numerals indicate the weeks. The reading material is supplied by the instructor.

### *Introduction*

## 1

Discussion on the course and the course material

### *Historiography*

## 2

Beverly Southgate, *History: What and Why?* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 1-12

Alun Munslow, *Deconstructing History* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 1-16

## 3

Southgate, pp. 115-118

Munslow, pp. 140-162

Hayden White, 'The Historical Text as Literary Artifact,' in G. Roberts (ed), *The History and Narrative Reader* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 221-236

## 4

Keith Jenkins, *Why History?* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 1-33, 115-132

### *Postcoloniality*

## 5

Benedict Anderson, 'The Nation and the Origins of National Consciousness,' in M. Guibernau and J. Rex (eds), *The Ethnicity Reader* (Cambridge: Polity, 1997), pp. 43-51

Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 3-13

## 6

Gyan Prakash, 'Orientalism Now,' *History and Theory* (Vol. 34, No. 3, 1995), pp. 199-212

Gyan Prakash, 'Subaltern Studies and Postcolonial Criticism,' *The American Historical Review* (Vol. 99, No. 5, 1994), pp. 1475-1490

## 7

Albert J. Paolini, *Navigating Modernity: Postcolonialism, Identity, and International Relations* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1999), pp. 91-126

Homi K. Bhabha, 'Postcolonial Authority and Postmodern Guilt,' in L. Grossberg *et al* (eds), *Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 56-68

### *Religion*

## 8

Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), pp. 27-54

Talal Asad, 'Muslims and European Identity: Can Europe Represent Islam?' in E. Hallam and B.V. Street (eds), *Cultural Encounters: Representing 'Otherness'* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 11-27

**9**

- Robert J. Baird, 'Late Secularism,' *Social Text* (Vol. 18, No. 3, 2000), pp. 123-136
- Shampa Biswas, 'The "New Cold War": Secularism, Orientalism, and Postcoloniality,' in G. Chowdhry and S. Nair (eds), *Power, Postcolonialism, and International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 184-208

***Ethnography*****10**

- Paul Rabinow, 'Representations are Social Facts: Modernity and Post-Modernity in Anthropology,' in J. Clifford and G.E. Marcus (eds), *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), pp. 234-261
- Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, 'Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference,' in J.X. Inda and R. Rosaldo (eds), *The Anthropology of Globalization: A Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 65-80

***Society*****11**

- Peter Beilharz, 'Reading Zygmunt Bauman,' in P. Beilharz (ed), *The Bauman Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 1-17
- Zygmunt Bauman, 'Sociology After the Holocaust,' *ibid.*, pp. 230-259

***Race*****12**

- Colette Guillaumin, 'The Changing Face of "Race",' in M. Bulmer and J. Solomos (eds), *Racism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 355-362
- David Theo Goldberg, 'The Semantics of Race,' *ibid.*, pp. 362-377

***Rights*****13**

- Costas Douzinas, 'Human Rights and Postmodern Utopia,' *Law and Critique* (Vol. 11, 2000), pp. 219-240
- Slavoj Žižek, 'Human Rights and its Discontents,' a lecture, 1999, 15 pp.

***Cyberspace*****14**

- Timothy W. Luke, 'Simulated Sovereignty, Telematic Territoriality: The Political Economy of Cyberspace,' in M. Featherstone and S. Lash (eds), *Spaces of Culture* (London: Sage, 1999), pp. 27-48
- Saskia Sassen, 'Digital Networks and Power,' *ibid.*, pp. 49-63