

SOCI 633 GLOBAL SOCIAL THOUGHT

Syllabus Draft

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Global Social Thought is an experimental investigation into alternatives to classical Western social theory, an exploration of "The Great Books of the Nonwestern World" and some contemporary Nonwestern intellectuals. One major assumption underlies the organization of this course: our knowledge is so profoundly influenced by the social context in which it is constructed that our theories should not be based exclusively on reflections of the Euro-American experience.

We will explore a proposition that grows out of that assumption: whereas most Western social theory is a response to the European Enlightenment, French and Industrial Revolutions, and subsequent developments, recent non-Western theory is a reaction to the fundamental phenomena of colonialism (and neocolonialism), racism, capitalism/industrialism, and other forms of oppression (e.g., patriarchy) and efforts to escape them. Pre-modern nonwestern theory is generally closer to nature and tends to grow out of collective social efforts to thrive collaboratively in various ecological contexts.

A secondary assumption of the course is that although our primary paradigms of inquiry come, from the sciences, social theory should also draw upon the insights of the humanities. This is especially true of Nonwestern social theory, which is not everywhere as institutionalized -- nor as "scientized" -- as in the West; after all, early Western theory was derived largely from the religious traditions of the West, translated into philosophical and then scientific rhetoric. (Freud, for example, borrowed liberally from ancient Greek mythology, Durkheim from the rabbinical tradition, and Comte from Catholic Christianity.) Consequently, we will draw not only upon the nonwestern social sciences (which are heavily influenced by Western paradigms), but also upon the religious, literary, and folk traditions.

This course will focus on central matters of sociological theory as addressed by "non-white," mostly nonwestern authors. It is a dialog with classical Western theory, however, the tradition in which the instructor was trained. We will explore such issues as the relationship between the individual and society; the nature of human nature; theories of social change, movements and revolution and order; the role of the state; central concepts and metaphors; and positions on the most fruitful means and the purposes of social inquiry (methodology and whether social science should be normative or value neutral). **A prefatory note to participants:** I do recognize the irony in my being a middle-aged white North American male, trained in traditional Western sociological theory, who has the audacity to teach this course. Nonwestern thought and cultures profoundly influence my thinking and I have learned much from former students as well as Nonwestern colleagues, friends, and family, but much of what we study here is still uncharted territory for me and is situated on the edge of my intellectual and cultural boundaries. I assume that some members of the class will have insights to which I am blind. The ideas we are exploring are alternatives to mainstream social thought, what Gideon Sjoberg calls "counter-systems." Written primarily by people out of power, they are inevitably critical and often emotionally-charged. That critique, and our responses to it, should energize our journey through the course, and I anticipate lively discussions in which we disagree with one another, with the authors, and even with ourselves. I invite participants to remain open-minded to new ideas; we do not need to jettison our own perspectives, but we should allow the voices to speak for themselves first, and then in dialogue with our own voices. One final caveat: unfortunately, we will read everything in translation, which presents a number of problems inherent in this sort of exercise.

Thank you for joining me in this exciting and significant intellectual adventure -- it is the kind of thinking urgently needed in our time.

Texts

- Gandhi, Mohandas K. 1967. *The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi*. R. K. Prabhu and U. R. Rao, eds. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House. Available in hardcover, Kindle, or free online at <http://www.mkgandhi.org/momgandhi/momindex.htm>
- Kurtz, Lester, ed. *Nonwestern Social Thought: An Anthology*. Available on Blackboard
- Sacred Books of the East* 50 volumes. Translation by FR. Max Müller. Available in Kindle edition free at http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_ss_i_0_12?url=search-alias%3Ddigital-text&field-keywords=sacred+books+of+the+east&prefix=sacred+books%2Cdigital-text%2C150
[Old classic translation of the classics - an invaluable collection with some translation problems.]
- Abraham, W. E. *The mind of Africa*. Legon-Accra, Ghana: Sub-Saharan Publisher, 2015.

COURSE SCHEDULE (TENTATIVE)

I. Great Books of Nonwestern Thought

29 Aug. Prologue: Kant, Williams and the Background

II. Selected Nonwestern Traditions

- 12 Sept. A. Mohandas K. Gandhi
19-26 Sept. B. Ancient Asian Social Thought
3 Oct. C. African Social Thought
11 Oct. D. Islamic Social Thought
17 Oct. E. Indigenous American Social Thought

II. Substantive Issues

- 24 Oct. A. Social Movements and Liberation Theories
1. Anticolonialism
2. Liberation Theology
31 Oct. 3. Racism and Ethnocentrism
4. Human Rights
7 Nov. 5. Women's Rights
6. Ecology & Sustainability
B. Domination and Economic Paradigms
14 Nov.. C. Peace and Conflict
21 Nov. D. Spirituality & Religion
E. Health
28 Nov. **MARATHON PAPER SESSION**
5 Dec. F. The State, Politics, & Nationalism
G. Community, Sexuality, and Family

III. Towards a Global Social Theory

TBA PAPER DEADLINE



COURSE OUTLINE

1. Great Books of the Nonwestern World

The famous “Great Books” tradition at the University of Chicago (where I studied) focused on a close study of the “Great Books of the Western World,” with the earlier assumption that doing so was all you needed to be an educated person. By doing so, it privileged social thought from one small corner of the globe, omitting vast and eminent intellectual traditions and sophisticated wisdom from most of the planet. Moreover, as modern science and technology shaped the world and an educated person had to know statistics as well as Aristotle, that classical model ceased to attract the best and brightest students. The dialectical relationships between representative theories or schools of thought and the particular sociohistorical contexts in which they emerge constitute the major domain assumption of the approach taken in this course.

Readings

Immanuel Kant, “This fellow was quite black ... a clear proof that what he said was stupid.” Pp. 38-78 in *Race and the Enlightenment*, ed. Immanuel Chukwudi Eze. Cambridge: Blackwell, 1997 (selection).

Williams, Patricia J. 1991. *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, pp. 3-14.

II. Selected Nonwestern Traditions

It is, of course, impossible to explore all of the major nonwestern traditions of social theory in one semester. Consequently, we will superficially examine only a few representative social thinkers in traditions from Asia, Africa, and the Americas, to begin this experimental investigation.

A. Mohandas K. Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi may be remembered as one of the great thinkers of our time and we will begin with him because he serves as a bridge from postmodern to modern and premodern social thought as well as between western and nonwestern, scientific and spiritual traditions. Not a systematic social theorist, Gandhi nonetheless made important intellectual contributions, as well as those more explicitly political and spiritual which are interwoven with his social theory.

Readings:

Gandhi, Mohandas K. 1967. *The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi*. R. K. Prabhu and U. R. Rao, eds. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House. Available online at <http://www.mkgandhi.org/momgandhi/main.htm>

Suggested reading:

Lester R. Kurtz. "Gandhi and His Legacies" *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace and Conflict* (2nd ed). Ed. Lester R. Kurtz. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2008. 837-851.

Available at: http://works.bepress.com/lester_kurtz/1

Parekh, Bhiku. 1989. *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform: An Analysis of Gandhi's Political Discourse*. New Delhi: Sage, pp. 11 -33.

Gandhi Rap: Be the change that you want to be <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Qd-fAnHjPg>

B. Ancient Asian Social Thought

K'ung Fu Tzu, also known as Confucius (551-497 B.C.E.) had a profound impact for centuries on a culture that is now a major alternative to Western culture. K'ung Fu Tzu himself lived in the chaotic "Period of the Warring States." Just as the French founders of the sociological tradition focused on the social order in the chaotic aftermath of the French Revolution, so too K'ung Fu Tzu elaborated a hierarchical system designed to mitigate chaos and preserve peace and order imposed at all levels of society.

The Vedic texts constitute another basic foundation of Asian thought dating back at least several thousand years; according to tradition, they having no original date at all since they have always existed. They continue to have a profound impact on the everyday life as well as the intellectual traditions of a society that comprises almost one billion people.

Gautama Buddha (563-483 B.C.E.) rebelled against his social and class situation as the son of a powerful Indian Raj; he forged an ethical and social theory that became the basis of a religious movement that swept across Asia 2,000 years ago and now informs social and religious thought worldwide.

We conclude this section with an essay by Japanese intellectual Kamei Katsuichiro (b. 1907) who raises questions about "modernization" and proposes a return to "Asian ideals," notably those espoused by Gandhi.

Readings:

- The Bhagavad Gita:(Classics of Indian Spirituality)*. Easwaran, Eknath, tr. Nilgiri Press.
- Ashoka, Rock Edict and Religious Tolerance
- "K'ung Fu Tzu on the Four Questions: Selections from the *Analects*"
- Mo Tzu (479-438 BCE). 1963. "Mo Tzu's Doctrines of Universal Love, Heaven, and Social Welfare." Pp. 211-231 in *A Sourcebook on Chinese Philosophy*, ed. Wing Tsit Chan. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press.
- The Buddha. 1955. *The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha: Early Discourses, the Dhammapada, and Later Basic Writings*. E. A. Burtt, ed. New York: New American Library
- Mentor Religious Classic, pp. 28-47, 60-63.
- Kamei Katsuichiro, "Return to the East." Pp. 393-399 in *Sources of the Japanese Tradition*, ed. Kyusaru Tsunoda, William Theodore de Bary, and Donald Keene. Vol. II. NY: Columbia Univ. Press, [1958] 1964. [Translated from *Nijisseiki Nihon no Risojo*, pp. 191-201.]

Recommended

- Vedic Hymns in *Sacred Books of the East* 50 volumes. Translation by FR. Max Müller. Available in Kindle edition free at http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_ss_i_0_12?url=search-alias%3Ddigital-text&field-keywords=sacred+books+of+the+east&prefix=sacred+books%2Cdigital-text%2C150
- Laozi. 2007. *Tao Te Ching*. National Braille Press. Stephen Mitchell, Jorge Viñes Roig, and Stephen Little, tr. Retrieved January 25, 2015.
- (<https://googledrive.com/host/0B2ENMT97AP4oVTJQQ3Z2RDJPUEU/Magie,%20Psychique,%20physique,%20spirituel/Tao%20Te%20Ching/Stephen%20Mitchell%20-%20Tao%20Te%20Ching.pdf>).
- De Bary, William T., ed. 1964 [1958]. *Sources of Indian Tradition*. Vol. I. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, selections.
- Lester R. Kurtz. "Karma as Social Theory" *Ahimsa Nonviolence* 1.Nov.-Dec. (2005): 574-551. Available at: http://works.bepress.com/lester_kurtz/11

C. African Social Thought

A major outcome of the convergence of slavery and colonialism was the creation of what some now call an "African Diaspora," consisting in large part of the descendants of slaves taken from Africa to Europe and the Americas. In this section, we will look at the development of social thought in contemporary Africa (especially Otite 1978) and among people of the African diaspora.

Readings:

- Abraham, W. E. *The mind of Africa*. Legon-Accra, Ghana: Sub-Saharn Publisher, 2015.

Recommended

- Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*. New York: Anchor Books, 1994 [1958].
- Assimeng, J. M. *Foundations of African Social Thought: A Contribution to the Sociology of Knowledge*. African Books Collective, 1997.
- Otite, Onigii, ed. 1978. *Themes in African Social and Political Thought*. Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishers, pp. 1-33.
- Adebanwi, Wale. 2014. "The Writer as Social Thinker." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 32(4):405–20. Available online (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02589001.2014.978556>).
- Emagalit, Zeverin. n.d. "Contemporary African Philosophy." Retrieved (<http://faculty.msmc.edu/lindeman/af.html>).

D. Islamic Social Thought

Many of the more volatile political conflicts of the late twentieth century are between various groups and members of the Muslim community, especially from the Middle East (or "West Asia") through much of Africa and South and East Asia. This section will survey some of the social theories from this diverse body of thought, from the important Medieval thinker Ibn Khaldun to North American Malcolm X and contemporary Muslim scholars. We will again encounter anticolonialism, since most of the Muslim world was conquered by European colonial powers in the nineteenth century.

Readings:

Khaldun, Ibn (1332-1406). 1950. *An Arab Philosophy of History: Selections from the Prolegomena of Ibn Khaldun of Tunis*. Charles Issawi, tr., ed. London: Murray, Chapter VI. Available online at http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ik/Muqaddimah/Chapter6/Toc_Ch_6.htm.

Rumi, *The Essential Rumi* (selections)

Recommended

Said, Edward W. 1985. "Orientalism Reconsidered." *Cultural Critique* 89–107. Retrieved January 20, 2015 (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1354282>).

Arkoun, Mohammed. "Rethinking Islam Today." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 588, no. July (2003): 18–39.

Arjomand, Said. 1994. *From Nationalism to Revolutionary Islam*. Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, pp. 195-247

E. Indigenous American Social Thought

As a consequence of the colonial conquest of the Americas, much of the indigenous culture there was destroyed. Indigenous cultures in the Americas and elsewhere had rich social theories, however, some of which have been preserved in various forms and to various degrees, despite obvious contact and influence from other cultures, especially from the West.

Readings:

Gustavo Estevan Prakash. *Grassroots Postmodernism* (selection).

Deloria, Vine, Jr. 1997. "Anthros, Indians, and Planetary Reality." Pp. 209–222 in *Indians and Anthropologists: Vine Deloria, Jr., and the Critique of Anthropology*, edited by Thomas Biolsi and Larry J. Zimmerman. University of Arizona Press. Retrieved (<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0816516073>).

Grande, Sandy. 2011. "Red Pedagogy: Indigenous Theories of Redistribution (a.k.a. Sovereignty)." Pp. 190–203 in *The Routledge International Handbook of Critical Education*, edited by Michael W. Apple, Wayne Au, and Luis Armando Gandin. Taylor & Francis. Available online at (<http://tinyurl.com/lqs2ehq>).

Franz Boas, "How Lebid became a Shaman (Kwakiutl Indians)." Pp. 429-433 in M. Eliade, *From Primitives to Zen*. NY: Harper and Row.

Online at <http://www.mircea-eliade.com/from-primitives-to-zen/202.html>

Recommended

DeLoria, Vine, Jr.

Grande, Sandy. 2004. *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Rowman & Littlefield. selections).

III. Substantive Issues

A. Theories of Liberation: just as modern Western social thought emerged as part of a struggle for freedom from the constrictions of the ancien regime in medieval Europe, so nonwestern thought focuses in large part on freedom from the structures that bind people outside of the West. Consequently, such phenomena as colonialism, racism, and patriarchy loom large in nonwestern social theories of liberation. Various liberation movements based on gender, race, class, and other criteria, have given rise to a number of significant theories about human behavior and social structure. In this section, we will sample some that appear particularly important.

1. Anticolonialism

A central aspect of reality for much of the nonwestern world has been colonialism, which thus set the stage for twentieth century social theory. This form of domination is in turn based on a number of other significant social phenomena, notably early capitalism, military conquest, racism, and cultural imperialism. We have already encountered this phenomenon in our study of Gandhi, who challenged Britain's control over India, the "jewel in the crown," and shook the foundations of the colonial system.

Readings

Bolivar, Simon. 1983. *The Hope of the Universe*. J. L. Saicedo-Bastardo, ed. Paris: UNESCO, pp. 63-80.

Nyerere, J. K. 1978. "The Process of Liberation." Pp. 335-344 in *Themes in African Social and Political Thought*, ed. Onigu Otite,. Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishers.

Serequeberhan, Tsenay. 1994. *The Hermeneutics of African Philosophy*. New York: Routledge (selection).

Davies, Merryl Wyn, Ashis Nandy and Ziauddin Sardar . 1993. *Barbaric Others: A Manifesto on Western Racism*. London: Pluto Press (selection).

Suggested reading:

Sevea, Terenjit, "Islamist questioning and [Colonialism: towards an understanding of the Islamist oeuvre." *Third World Quarterly* 28 (7, October 2007): 1375-1399.

2. Liberation Theology

Despite a substantial secularization of Western intellectual culture, most of the world interprets the world in religious frames and with religious symbols and rhetoric. Out of an interaction between post-Vatican II Roman Catholicism and the poor of Latin America came a socio-religious movement that provided a powerful critique of capitalism and structures of domination that combined Marxist social analysis with Christian theology.

Readings:

Gutiérrez, Gustavo. 2009. "The Option for the Poor Arises from Faith in Christ." *Theological Studies* 70(2):317-26.

Cardenal, Ernesto, ed. 1976. *The Gospel in Solentiname*. 4 vols. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, pp. 70-86.

Recommended

Bonpane, Blase. 1985. "Democratic Pedagogy: The Birth of Liberation Theology." Pp. 23-32 in *Guerrillas of Peace: Liberation Theology and the Central American Revolution*. Boston: South End Press.

3. Racism and Ethnocentrism

The confluence of systems of social stratification constructed on arbitrarily-defined criteria such as race and ethnicity with those of slavery and colonialism had a profound impact on social life on the planet and gave rise to some important insights into social processes of domination among their victims.

Readings:

Bannerji, Himani. "Building from Marx: Reflections on Class and Race." *Social Justice*, 2005, 144–60.

hooks, bell, and Cornel West. 1992. *Breaking Bread: Insurgent Black Intellectual Life*. Boston: South End Press, pp. 1-6.

Recommended

Van den Berghe, Pierre. 1978. *Race and Racism: A Comparative Perspective*. 2nd ed. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

4. Human Rights

The contemporary notion of "human rights" comes primarily from the European Enlightenment and often has an individualistic conceptual frame rejected by traditional cultures. It has been incorporated into and elaborated by many in the nonwestern world, where it often synthesizes the political rights from Western democratic theory with economic rights of Marxism and socialism. Consequently, the human rights movement--although extremely diverse in nature--constitutes a major focal point for efforts to develop a minimal global consensus on the bottom line of how people can have decent lives together on the planet without exploiting vulnerable social groups.

Readings:

Chatterjee, Partha. 1984. "Gandhi and the Critique of Civil Society." Pp. 153-195 in *Subaltern Studies III*, ed. Ranajit Guha. Delhi: Oxford Univ. Press. (selection, pp. 160-166).

Wole Soyinka, "Twice Bitten: The Fate of Africa's Culture Producers." Pp. 1-24 in *Development and Culture*, by Wole Soyinka and Junzo Kawada. Ota Nigeria: **Africa** Leadership Forum.
http://www.jstor.org.mutex.gmu.edu/stable/462347?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

5. Women's Liberation

Within each society of both West and East, patriarchal systems of domination have become a significant source of social theorizing about a type of social differentiation that has deep roots and creates social and personal problems with no simple solutions. Although the modern feminist movement has its roots in the Western Enlightenment, we shall focus in this course on women of color and their search for liberation.

Readings;

Narayan, Uma. 1989. "The Project of Feminist Epistemology: Perspectives from a Nonwestern Feminist." Pp. 256-269 in *Gender/Body/Knowledge: Feminist Reconstructions of Being and Knowing*, ed. Alison M. Jagger and Susan R. Bordo. New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press.

Kishwar, Madhu. "Why I Do Not Call Myself a Feminist." *Manushi* 61, no. 3 (1990).
<http://tinyurl.com/n2rumfv>.

Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2000, pp. 1-19. <http://tinyurl.com/n5cukyr>

Khan, Anisur. "A Chronicle of the Global Movement to Combat Violence against Women: The Role of the Second-Wave Feminist Movement and the United Nations: The Perspective of Bangladesh." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 16, no. 2 (January 30, 2015): 213–44.
<http://vc.bridgew.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1793&context=jiws>

Recommended

Collins, Patricia Hill. "Social Inequality, Power, and Politics: Intersectionality and American Pragmatism in Dialogue." *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 26, no. 2 (2012): 442–57.

Kishwar, Madhu. 2015. Chapter 14 in *Women, War, & Violence: Topography, Resistance and Hope*, edited by Mariam M. Kurtz and Lester R. Kurtz. Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2015.

5. Ecology, Climate Change, and Sustainability

In addition to the exploitation of human beings, violence to the environment has become a major issue in the nonwestern world, linked to the nature of economic production developed in the modern era.

Readings:

Shiva, Vandana, and others. *Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in a Time of Climate Crisis*. South End Press, 2008. <http://www.cabdirect.org/abstracts/20093126102.html>.

Nyong, A., F. Adesina, and B. Osman Elasha. "The Value of Indigenous Knowledge in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies in the African Sahel." *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change* 12, no. 5 (2007): 787–97.

Pope Francis's encyclical on climate change (if it's issued when we get to this topic). Available online at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/>.

B. Domination and Economic Paradigms

Theories of liberation grow out of theories of domination, of course, and nonwestern social thought (like mainstream social theory) is much concerned with structures of domination, economic development, and structures of inequality. Structural violence that emanates from the inequality embedded in the economic paradigm of the global economic system interacts with cultural and then direct violence has been challenged on many levels, most recently by the idea of replacing GDP measures with a multidimensional measure of Gross National Happiness, growing out of Bhutan, or as UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon puts it, Gross Global Happiness, which is based on fair distribution and environmental sustainability.

Readings:

Realizing a World of sustainable wellbeing and happiness

<http://www.2apr.gov.bt/images/stories/coredoc/realisingtheworld.pdf>

Ura, K., S. Alkire, T. Zangmo, and K. Wangdi. 2012. *A Short Guide to Gross National Happiness Index*. Thimphu: Centre for Bhutan Studies. Available online at <http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Short-GNH-Index-edited.pdf>.

Recommended

Panikkar, K. M. [1953] 1969. *Asia and Western Dominance*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 313–332.

Kurtz, Lester R. "Mobilizing Nonviolent Resistance, Shifting Economic Paradigms" https://www.academia.edu/10040832/Mobilizing_Nonviolent_Resistance_Shifting_Economic_Paradigms

C. Violence, Peace, and Conflict

A related substantive issue concerns the emergence of nonviolent social change and a rethinking of violence and social conflict that emerges primarily from Gandhi and U.S. civil rights movement. I consider this to be one of the major contributions of nonwestern social theory to contemporary understandings of social life, even though it gets filtered through an African-American lens. Another important element of nonwestern approaches to social life is the diverse set of methods of indigenous conflict management, widely challenged since the colonial

period and in many places replaced by the modern court system.

Readings:

- Gandhi, Mohandas K. 1967. *The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi*. R. K. Prabhu and U. R. Rao, eds. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House. Available in hardcover, Kindle, or free online at <http://www.mkgandhi.org/momgandhi/encyclopedia.htm> [Review Section V, "Nonviolence"]
- Souillac, Geneviève, and Douglas P. Fry. "Indigenous Lessons for Conflict Resolution." In *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice*, edited by Peter T. Coleman, Morton Deutsch, and Eric C. Marcus, Third., pp. 602–22. San Francisco, Calif: Jossey-Bass, 2014.
- Uwazie, Ernest E. "Social Relations and Peacekeeping among the Igbo." In *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts: African Conflict "Medicine,"* 15–29. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000.
- Recommended*
- Kurtz, Lester R. "Gandhi and His Legacies." Edited by Lester R. Kurtz. *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace, and Conflict*. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2008. : http://works.bepress.com/lester_kurtz/1.

D. Spirituality & Religion

Much of the world remains steadfastly religious, despite secularizing trends, and significant cultural reactions against modernity (and postmodernity?) take the form of religious traditionalism (sometimes called "fundamentalism"). In the Arab world, Islam has an elective affinity with anticolonial and antiwestern forces; in Latin America, liberation theology has seized portions of the Christian church from elites and turned it into a legitimator of popular dissent and, in some cases, even revolution.

Readings:

- Somé, Malidoma. 1994. *Of water and the Spirit: ritual, magic, and initiation in the life of an African shaman*. New York : Putnam.
- King Ashoka. 1967. "Rock Edict" IX. Translation by N. A. Nikam and Richard McKeon. P. 561 in M. Eliade, *From Primitives to Zen*. NY: Harper and Row.
- Rig Veda* etc. [Hindu selections,] pp. 246-255 in M. Eliade, *From Primitives to Zen*. NY: Harper and Row.

E. Health

Although western scientific medicine has gained a high status in much of the world, traditional healing methods -- usually associated with spiritual traditions -- persist and raise fundamental questions about western theories of health and wellbeing.

Readings:

- Kothari, Manu L., and Lopa A. Mehta. 1988. "Violence in Modern Medicine." Pp. 167-209 in *Science, Hegemony, and Violence*, ed. by Ashis Nandy. Tokyo: United Nations Univ.. Available online at <http://archive.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu05se/uu05se0d.htm>.
- Chopra, Deepak. 1993. *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind: The Quantum Alternative to Growing Old*. NY: Harmony Books (read the sample available at <http://tinyurl.com/qcxst96>).

F. The State, Politics, and Nationalism

Contemporary theory in the nonwestern world is much concerned with the role of the state and issues of nationalism, again in large part as a result of efforts to define identities and to understand the world in a postcolonial context. As if the world were not complicated enough in its formal

organization (nation states, alliances, etc.) we will also explore alternative modes of viewing large scale social organization and political decision making that emerge in opposition to formal structures which are, by definition, usually controlled by western forces.

Readings:

Gandhi, Mohandas K. 1967. *The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi*. R. K. Prabhu and U. R. Rao, eds. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, pp. 435-437.

Gutierrez, Gustavo. 1973. *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation*. Sister Caiidad Inda and John Fagleson, tr. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, pp. 227-229.

Wilmer, Franke. *The Indigenous Voice in World Politics*. Newbury Park- Sage, pp. 192-210.

Recommended

G. Community, Sexuality, and Family

Finally, much of the social thought emerging in the nonwhite world centers around such issues as community, sexuality, and the family, in part because of the perception of a disintegrating influence by dominant Western culture.

Readings:

Park, Young-Shin, and Kim, Uichol. "Family, Parent-Child Relationship, and Academic Achievement in Korea Indigenous, Cultural, and Psychological Analysis." In *Indigenous and Cultural Psychology Understanding People in Context*, edited by Uichol Kim, Guoshu Yang, and Kwang-kuo Hwang, 421–43. International and Cultural Psychology Series. New York, NY: Springer, 2006. Available online at <http://tinyurl.com/nfwc5bc> .

Suggested Readings:

Georgas, James. "Family: Variations and Changes Across Cultures." *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture* 6, no. 3 (August 1, 2003). Available online at <http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1061&context=orpc>

Collins, Patricia Hill. "It's All in the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation." *Hypatia* 13, no. 3 (1998): 62–82.

Omolade, Barbara. 1994. *The Rising Song of African American Women*. New York: Routledge, pp. 3-38.

Lorde (1984), Roscoe (1988)

IV. Towards a Global Social Theory

In the last class session we will review and synthesize the discussions of the semester, attempting to identify emergent themes from the course and areas of future exploration.

Assignments and Grading

This course will be organized as a seminar and all participants will be expected to contribute to the collective process of learning. In addition to collaborative learning, everyone will engage in their own projects. Grading will be based on the quality of the following assignments:

* Proposal	10 %
* Presentations	10
* Bibliography	10
* Term paper	70

In-class presentations on selected (unassigned) readings for each of the major topics of the course,

providing background information and analysis that goes beyond the assigned readings and sets them in context. They should be supplemented with bibliographies. Bibliographies should be submitted to the shared Zotero library and made available to everyone in the class. You may wish to make your presentation and prepare a bibliography in the same general area as your term paper.

At the end of the course we will have presentations on the term papers.

The Four Questions Test

As we move through the course, we shall apply the "four questions test" to each of the authors and traditions we are discussing. This set of questions is adapted from my survey of Western sociological theory, and one of the tasks of this course is to ask if they are adequate for evaluating social theories and their domain assumptions.

1. How can we best obtain knowledge of, and develop theories concerning, social life?

- general goals and orientations of the field
- relationship to other sciences, other modes of inquiry
- preferred methods
- preferred rhetoric

2. What is the perceived relationship between the individual and society?

- view of human nature?
- realist or nominalist (collectivistic or individualistic)?
- theory of action?
- theories of identity, power, and stratification?

3. What is the nature of modern society?

- how does it differ from pre-modern?
- What are its assets and liabilities? how is it evaluated?

4. How do we interpret the social change or revolution explored by the theorist?

- What kind of revolution was it?
 - What kind of revolution do we need? (how to organize; against what?)
 - What is the role of the sociologist (or scholar) in social change?
 - value-free scholarship to "loosen the soil" (Weber)
 - science-based moral critique and involvement (Durkheim, Marx)