ARTh 482/599

The Art of Colonial India

Prof. Robert DeCaroli
Blueridge Hall 127
Tuesday: 4:30 – 7:10

Course Description/Objectives:

This seminar will look at the material culture of India during the Colonial period (1757-1947). Beginning with a look at the art of the Mughal Empire we will trace the rising influence of various European powers in South Asia with special attention on the expansion of the British East India Company and development of the Raj. The British Imperial system sought out Indian resources for exploitation and had a dramatic impact on the traditional arts and crafts of the Subcontinent. Topics for discussion will include: late art of the Mughal Empire, Company Style painting, Orientalism, photography, traditional crafts for domestic and foreign markets, Indo-Saracenic architecture, and colonial museums.

Office Hours: Horizon Hall 3139, Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00-11:00 and by appointment.

Email: rdecarol@gmu.edu

Course Requirements: Participation/Office Meeting 10%
Weekly Reading Response Papers (10) 20%
Paper Topic Proposal 10%
Research Paper 50%

482 (7-10 pages)
599 (15-20 pages)

Class Presentation 10%

The class meetings will consist of seminar-style discussions on specific topics. These meetings will form the core of the course material so it is strongly advised that you attend class consistently. ALL students are expected to participate in class discussions.

All students will need to turn in a Paper Topic Proposal, in which the subject of the research paper is discussed and bibliographic information is provided.

The Research Paper will involve independent research. All students have the option to turn in a rough draft of the paper if done so at least a week before the final draft is due. More information on all of these assignments will be provided during the term.

Each week students will be expected to turn in a 1 to 2-page Reading Response paper. You must turn in 10 over the course of the semester. If you turn in more, the lowest grade will be dropped.
Grading Policies:

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Attendance is necessary; much of the material will only be presented in class lectures and discussions. You are responsible for keeping up with the material and for getting notes for missed classes.

This class is a seminar centered on the discussion of assigned texts. A student’s class participation grade will be evaluated not according to the amount of talking that student does, but rather according to whether that student contributes thoughtfully and constructively, based on a careful consideration of the class readings. Obviously, students cannot contribute to class discussion if they are absent; consequently, repeated unexcused absences will be reflected in their participation grade.

Make-up times and extensions will be given ONLY in cases of emergencies or illnesses with proper documentation (doctor’s note etc.) In all other cases (family obligations, religious holidays, disabilities etc.), extensions may be granted if I am informed well BEFORE the deadline.

Papers are due IN CLASS on the day specified in the schedule. Late papers will be marked down five points (half a grade) for every weekday and ten points (a full grade) for every weekend they are late. Papers will be handed back once in class. If you are not present on the day papers are handed back it is your responsibility to ask me for the graded assignment.

Please shut off all cell phones before class starts. Anyone using the phone during class (including for texting) will be asked to leave.

Adherence to codes of academic honesty is expected on all assignments and in all testing situations. I take the Honor Code (as stipulated in the university undergraduate catalog) very seriously. This code is a simple expression of respect for the course, your classmates and yourself. Cheating and Plagiarism are forbidden (obviously).

For those who do not know what Plagiarism is, it can be defined as: presenting, as one’s own the words, work or opinions of someone else without giving them proper acknowledgment. Plagiarism can also refer to borrowing the sequence of ideas, arrangement of material, or pattern of thought of someone else without giving them proper credit. Plagiarism can be avoided by proper use of footnotes.
Texts:
All readings will be available on JSTOR, on Blackboard (MyMason) under the Course Content Folder, or available free through other online sources.

On some weeks the readings will be divided up among the students. The half of the class that read one set of articles will present it to the other and vice versa.

Readings and Lectures: (This schedule is subject to change)
----Readings need to be completed BEFORE the day under which they are listed----

Schedule of Classes

**Week 1 – Jan 25**  
**Introduction to Colonial India – Historical Overview**

Watson, Francis. “Chapter 7 Mughals and Europeans”, *Concise History of India*. (Thames and Hudson 1979) 105-157. (in 3 PDF files - Watson Mughals and Europeans)

**Week 2 – Feb 1**  
**Courtly Arts of the Mughal Dynasty**


Review online collections of Mughal Art (Such as at the Victoria and Albert Museum)

**Week 3 – Feb 8**  
**Collecting India - The Rise of the British Empire**


**Week 4 – Feb 22**  
**Displaying India - The Colonial Museum**  
**Topic Proposals Due**


**Week 5 – Mar 1  Regional Painting Styles – The Rajputs**


Aitken, Molly Emma. *The Intelligence of Tradition in Rajput Court Painting*. (Yale UP, 2010) 1-55


**Week 6 – Mar 8  Textiles and Glassware Tradition, Trade and Taste**


Watson, John Forbes. *The Textile Manufactures and the Costumes of the People of India*. India Office, 1866. Read Selections


**Week 7 ---- Mar 15 -- Spring Break**

**Week 8 – Mar 22  The “Mystical” East - Orientalism and Fantasy**


Look online for information on Nicholas Roerich, Thomas and William Daniell, and/or William Hodges


Week 9 – March 29  Photography - Framing the Colonial Subject


Week 10 – April 5  Indian Gems and Jewelry – Displaying Authority


For viewing: http://www.metmuseum.org/metmedia/video/lectures/attributes-of-splendor

Optional: Dehejia, Vidya. The Body Adorned: Dissolving Boundaries between the Sacred and Profane in India’s Art (Columbia UP, 2009)

Week 11 – April 12  Colonial Architectures – Empire and Influence


Week 12 – Apr 19  Syncretism and Nationalism – Toward an Independent India


Please look online for images by B.G. Sharma, Ravi Varma, Jamini Roy and the Tagore

Week 13 – April 26  Student Presentations (20 min)

Week 14 – May 3rd  Student Presentations (20 min)

----Final Paper’s Due ------