

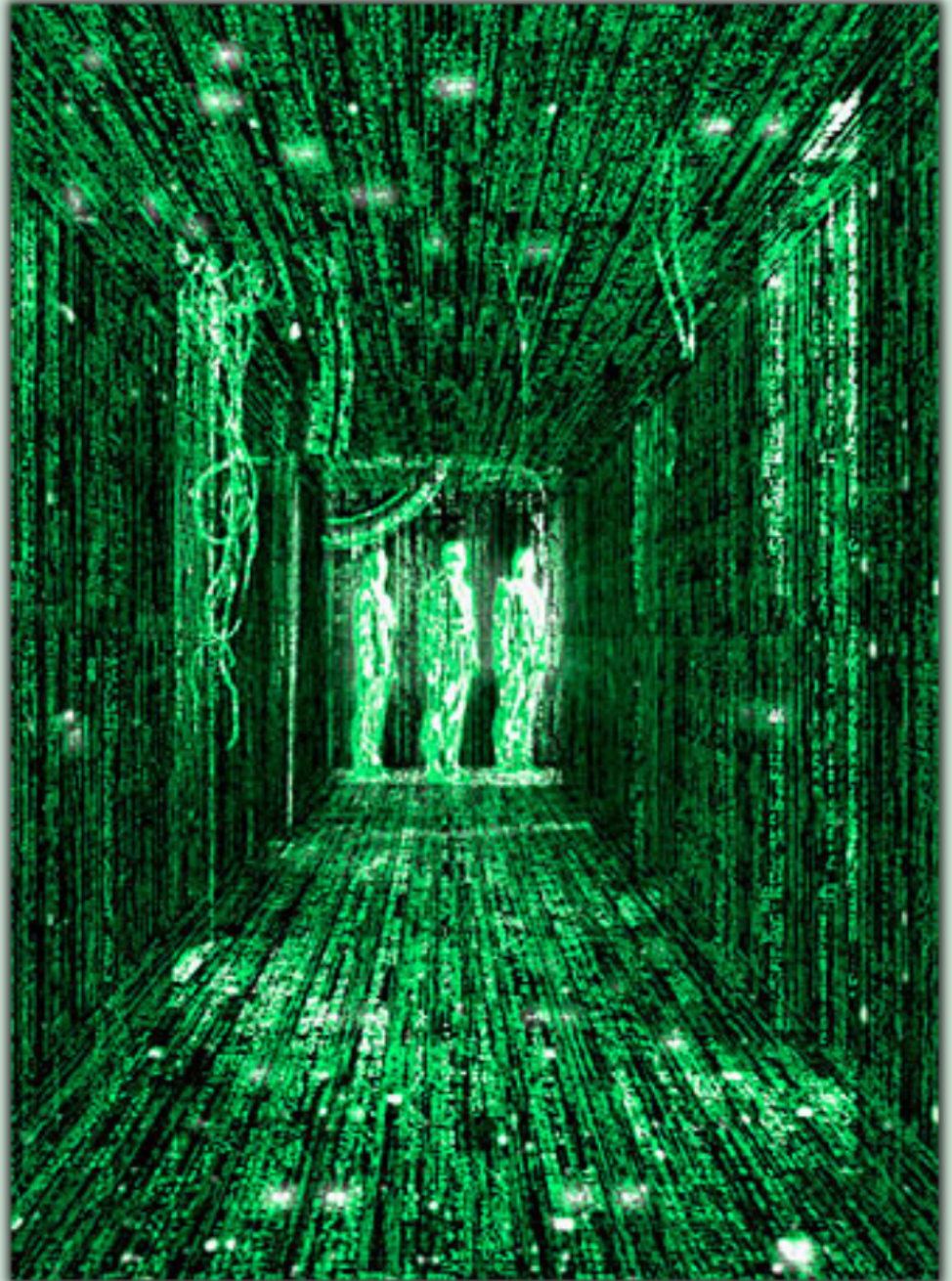
# FIRST YEAR SEMINAR: AFTERLIVES AND LIVING AFTER: ENVISIONING OTHER WORLDS

**Spring 2023**

**REL 101-6-23**

**STEWART**

**MW 2:00-3:20 PM**



Humans for thousands of years have documented their visions of other worlds and afterlives. Whether informed by religious revelation, collective trauma, or individual creativity, these visions provide important vantage points for assessing cultural values and experiences. In this class we will explore religious models of “The Afterlife” while also analyzing afterlives constructed in fiction, film, art, and other forms of popular media. We will ask how envisioning other worlds can help us to alternately articulate and blur the boundaries between life and death, trauma and healing, past and present, and reality and fiction. We will also explore what it means to “live after” major ruptures in individual and collective experience. For instance, how do we envision life after pandemic? After climate change? Revolution? Immigration? Utopia? Through speculative fiction, how do we envision the afterlives of humanity as we assess the potential for a post-human world?

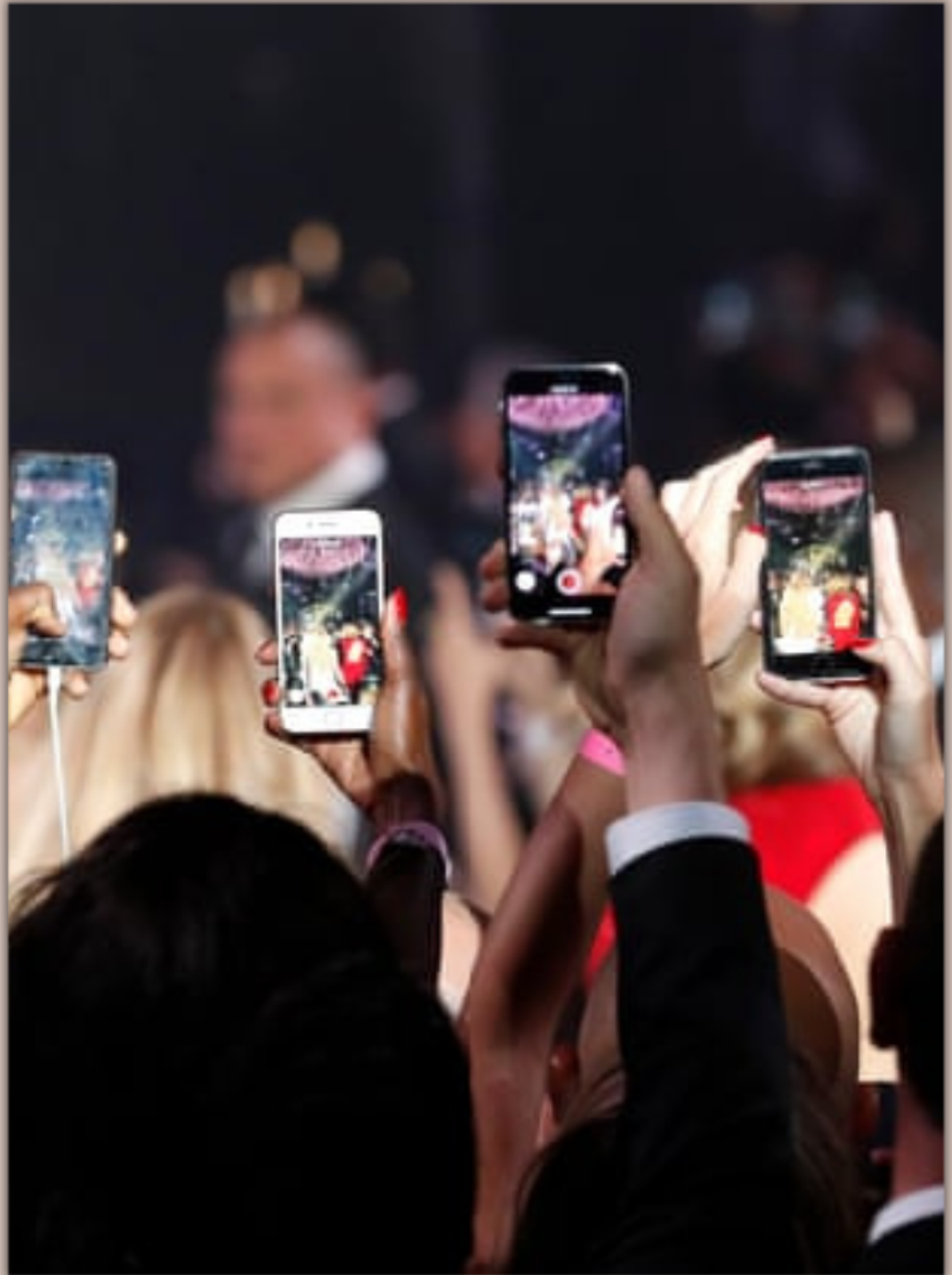
# INTRODUCTION TO RELIGION, MEDIA, and CULTURE

**Spring 2023**

**REL 172-21**

**TAYLOR**

**TTH 2-3:20 PM**



In this course, we dive into one of today's most exciting and rapidly growing areas of scholarship – the intriguing intersections and complex entanglements of religion and media in popular culture. We analyze sources drawn from television, film, radio, digital gaming worlds, billboards, advertisements, popular music, comedy, streaming video, social media, memes, and even tattoos and graffiti. Students explore how religion gets mediated; the religious dimensions of transmedia storytelling and media world-building (including the Marvel Cinematic Universe), and more! Of particular interest in this course will be the impact of digital culture on the media-religion interface. Students will be asked to research and analyze a primary source of their choice and then to make their own media to communicate their original analysis and research findings. This course helps students develop the kind of skills that will set them up for success as communicators across multiple professional areas. Format: Combined Lecture/Discussion

# INTRODUCTION TO HEBREW BIBLE

**Spring 2023**

**REL 220-20**

**WIMPFHEIMER**

**TTH 9:30-10:50 AM**



The Bible is a text that has been repeatedly turned to for spiritual guidance, for explanations of mankind's origins and as the basis of both classical art and contemporary cinema. This course introduces students to the Hebrew Bible by reading sections of most of the Bible's books. This course will introduce students to the various challenges that present themselves within the study of the Hebrew Bible and the varied approaches scholars take when reading the Hebrew Bible.

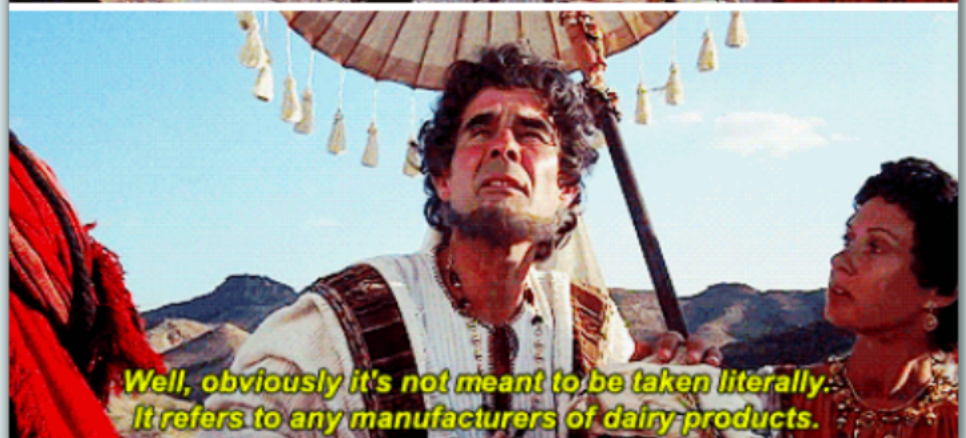
# INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT

Spring 2023

REL 221-20

STEWART

MW 9:30-10:50 AM



The New Testament has influenced the lives and experiences of individuals and communities across the globe for thousands of years. It has served as a source of structure, meaning, and hope for many while also influencing ideologies and practices of bigotry and violence. But what do we really know about the world in which the New Testament was produced? What was the project of Jesus and his followers and why was it so polarizing? What authors composed the New Testament's texts and what can we glean about their audiences and motivations? Why were some texts chosen for the canon of the New Testament and others left out? This course will consider the New Testament from a range of vantage points and methodologies, allowing students to explore the complex networks of religious practices, cultural ideologies, and political actors that influenced its production and global reception.

# AMERICAN RELIGIOUS HISTORY FROM WWII TO PRESENT

Spring 2023

REL 265-20/HIS 200-25

AMER\_ST 310-50

ORSI

MW 12:30-1:50 PM



This course examines major developments, movements, controversies and figures in American religious history from the 1920s, the era of excess and disillusionment, to the 1980s, which saw the revival of conservative Christianity in a nation becoming increasingly religiously diverse. Topics include the liberalism/fundamentalism controversy of the 1920s; the rise of Christian realism in the wake of the carnage of World War I; the making of the "tri-faith nation" (Protestant/Catholic/Jew); the supernatural Cold War; the Civil Rights Movement; the revolution in American Catholicism following the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and the rise of Catholic political radicalism in the 1960s; religion and the post-1965 immigration act; the religious politics of abortion; and the realignment of American religion and politics in the 1970s and 1980s. \*Counts towards Religion, Law and Politics (RLP) major concentration.

# INTRODUCTION TO TEXTUAL LANGUAGES: SANSKRIT II

Spring 2023

REL 305-2-20 | MCCLISH | TTH 11:00-12:20 PM



This course is the second of a two quarter sequence that provides instruction in the Sanskrit language for beginners. Students continue a comprehensive introduction to the Sanskrit language through the study of its forms and through translation. Prerequisite: RELIGION 305-1.

# MARTIAL ARTS, RELIGION, and PHILOSOPHY IN EAST ASIA

Spring 2023

REL 318-22

ASIAN\_LC 390-20

TERRONE

MW 2:00-3:20 PM



This course offers the opportunity to investigate martial art culture in Japanese society in the centuries between the Tokugawa shogunate takeover in the sixteenth century until the aftermath of WWII. Students will learn how samurai military culture and the Japanese art of sword fighting (kenjutsu) evolved conceptually from a system of fighting to cut down an adversary to one aimed at personal spiritual growth and cultivation of the mind. Course readings include treatises, essays, and poetry (waka, haiku) by several expert Japanese swordsmen including feudal lords, samurai, Buddhist monks, and philosophers who highlight not just actual combat techniques, but also the inward aspects that can lead to psycho-spiritual realization.

# **BUDDHIST LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION**

**Spring 2023**

**REL 319-22**

**ASIAN\_LC 390-21**

**TERRONE**

**MW 11:00-12:20**



In this course, students will read writings from Buddhist canonical and non-canonical literature on a variety of subjects to gain an introduction to the variety of literary genres used in Buddhist works, as well as to consider the central tenets of the Buddhist literary tradition these works convey. Who was the Buddha? What did he preach? Why do we suffer and how do we realize enlightenment? How should one follow the Buddhist path? What metaphors and parables have Buddhists used to convey these insights over the centuries? Students will be able to explore these and other questions through a selection of English translations of original texts in Sanskrit, Pali, Chinese, and Tibetan including the life of the Buddha, his sayings, Buddhist sutras, and Buddhist autobiographies. As this course is an introduction to Buddhist literature, there are no prerequisites, and students will gain familiarity with Buddhist teachings through engaging directly with primary sources in translation.



# FROM JACOB'S TENTS TO KATZ'S DELI: AMERICAN JUDAISM AND "SACRED SPACE"

Spring 2023

REL 339-20

SCHWARTZ

TTH 11-12:20 PM



This course offers an in-depth study of the concept of “sacred space,” engaging American Judaism for its case study repertoire. Rather than thinking broadly and linearly about the history of American Judaism, we will consider: What is sacred space? What makes or unmakes sacred space? How have sacred spaces shaped American Judaism, and how has American Judaism contributed to the formation of American sacred space? We will map the topography of American Jewish sacred spaces, both literal and conceptual, and we will consider the effects of American laws, practices, and norms on Jewish communities. As a central component of the course, students will craft their own “site biography,” acquiring first-hand experience conducting ethnographic and historical research. Students will gain a critical understanding of “sacred space” as an academic construct and learn how Judaism uniquely germinated in American soil. \*Counts towards Religion, Law and Politics (RLP) major concentration.

# SUFISM

**Spring 2023**

**REL 354-20**

**MENA 390-5-1**

**INGRAM**

**TTH 9:30-10:50 AM**



This course introduces Sufism, the ‘mystical’ tradition of Islam. After critically examining the concept of ‘mysticism’ within Religious Studies, we will examine the historical origins of Sufism, its emergence from and relationship to foundational discourses within Islam, its engagement with the Qur’an, and the figure of the Prophet Muhammad in Sufi devotions. We will then investigate notions of ‘sainthood’ in Islam, the roles of Sufism in popular Muslim piety, the centrality of the body and bodily disciplines in Sufi practice, and the critique and defense of Sufism in the context of colonialism. The course will offer a broad introduction to the historical and geographic range of Sufism in Islam, but will give special attention to Sufi traditions in the Indian subcontinent. We will conclude with critical reflections on the place of Sufism in contemporary Islam.

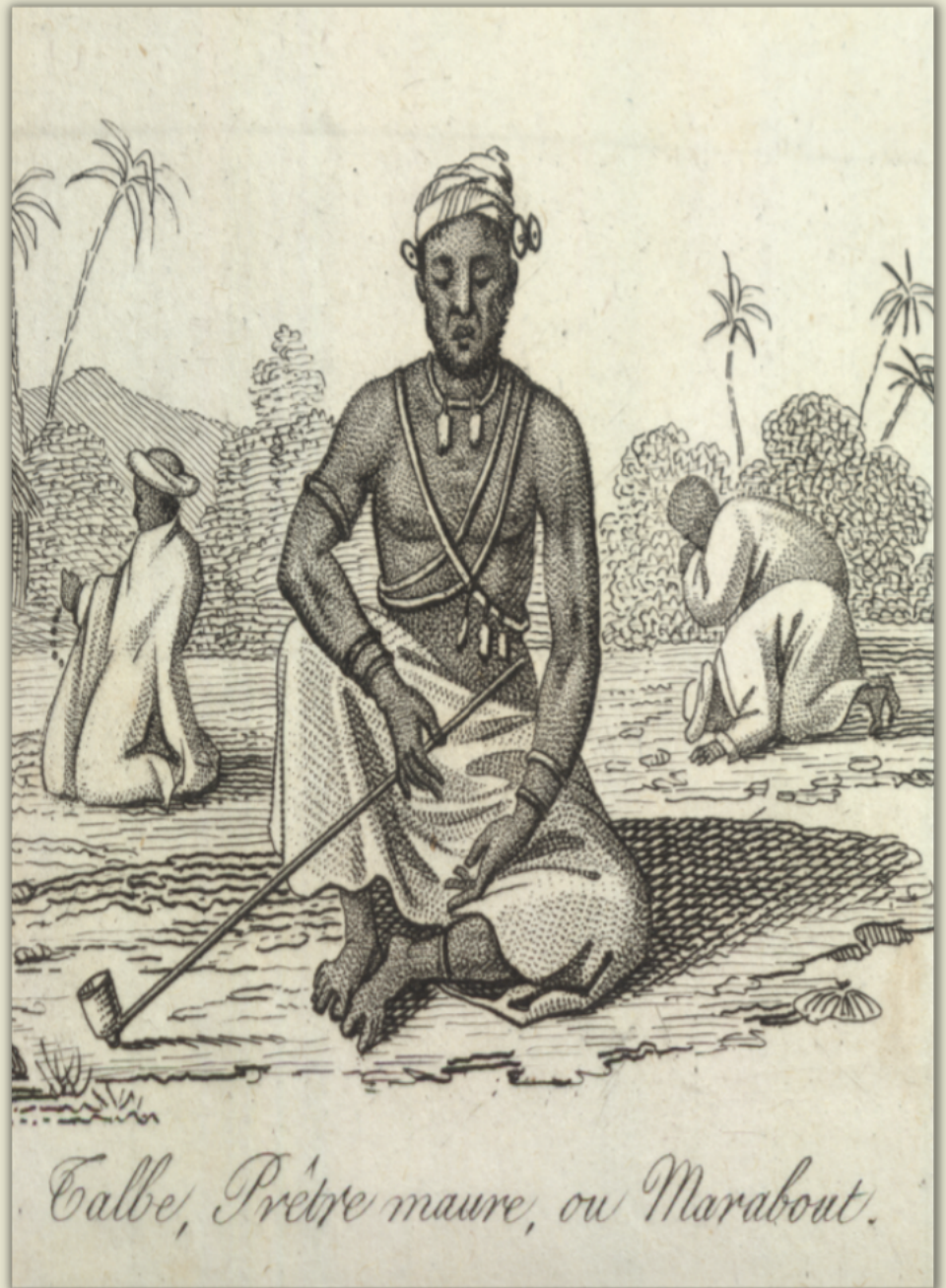
# ISLAM and COLONIALISM

Spring 2023

REL 359-23/MENA 301-3-23

INGRAM

T 2:00-4:30 PM



This course examines the effects of colonialism on Islam and the effects of Islam on colonialism. It is designed to acquaint students with the broad history of European colonialism and imperialism from the 17th to the 20th century, and the roles of that history in shaping modern Muslim societies. It begins with the concept of "Orientalism" and how Orientalist representations of Islam fueled Europe's "civilizing mission." It then considers colonialism's impact on multiple dimensions of Islam and Muslim societies, including (but not limited to) Islamic law, Muslim worship and ritual life, forms and systems of knowledge, and the status of women. It ends with the rise of anticolonial resistance and the formation of proto-Islamist movements in the early twentieth century.

# INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN AMERICAN RELIGIONS

Spring 2023

REL 360-20

AF\_AM\_ST 380-23

KB DENNIS MEADE

F 10:00 - 1:00 PM



*Image by: Black Girl's Window, Betye Saar (1969)*

This course will introduce students to major themes and texts in the study of African American religion. We will read the works of foundational writers who shaped the field. Topics include African-derived beliefs and practices, the transatlantic slave trade, Christianity and slaveholding, conjure/hoodoo, music, gender & sexuality, and Afrofuturism. Film, poetry, fiction, and the visual arts will further our understanding of the diversity of African American religious cultures. There are no prerequisites, but students would benefit from having taken one course in either Religious Studies or African American Studies. Freshmen and graduate students interested in taking the course should contact the professor before enrolling.

# **MEDIA, EARTH, and MAKING a DIFFERENCE**

**Spring 2023**

**REL 369-24**

**ENVR\_POL 390-27**

**SARAH TAYLOR**

**F 2:00-4:30 PM**



When motivating public moral engagement in climate crisis, are the solutions being offered those that the planet will actually “register” or “notice” on a global scale? If not, what kinds of “media interventions” do we need to be making and how? Course content will include discussion of media interventions as moral interventions, media activism for social change, eco-media responses by religious communities and organizations, participatory digital culture, and the challenges of addressing environmental crisis in the distraction economy and what has been called the “post-truth era.” Students will have the opportunity to learn by doing, proposing and crafting their own environmental media interventions as the course’s final project. Counts towards Religion, Law and Politics (RLP) major concentration.