Instructor: Dr. Kutluğhan Soyubol – kutluğhan.soyubol@boun.edu.tr

Course Description:

This is an interdisciplinary course designed to introduce some current debates and scholarship on modern selfhood, identity and culture to advanced undergraduate and graduate students. During the course, we will dwell on specific themes on the subject matter, including but not limited to, the discussions of agency, structure, selfhood, and focus on the dynamic relationships between the nation state, colonialism, religion, secularism, gender, sexuality, and social class. We will further delve into current debates within the anthropology of religion on religious self-cultivation and engage with recent discussions on brainhood and neurosubjectivity as well as on animals, posthumans, and affect. Finally, we will reflect on the Turkish experience and discuss the intricacies of subjectivity and identity formation under the modern Turkish nation state.

Course Requirements:

1) Participation: Weekly presentations, attendance, and class participation: 30%
This is a seminar course in which active participation is crucial. Students are thus expected to read the required materials in advance of class meetings and come to the class ready to engage in weekly discussions. Every week a small group of students will be assigned to briefly present hence start the discussion for one of the required readings. The presentations should be approximately ten minutes and address the following questions: What are the author’s main arguments? What is the theoretical framework that these arguments are built on? And the evidence used to support them?
2) Two critical response papers (3-4 pages, double spaced) written on texts presented in class: 20%
3) Final Paper: A literature review paper (12-15 pages, double spaced, including references): 50%

Schedule:

This schedule is tentative and subject to change. Necessary announcements will be made in the classroom.

Week I – Introduction to the course

Week II – Agency, Structure, Selfhood I


**Week III – Agency, Structure, Selfhood II**


**Week IV – No class**

**Week V – Race and Ethnicity**


**Week VI – Nationalism/Millet/Milliyet I: Modern (Re)Conceptualizations**


**Week VII – Nationalism/Millet/Milliyet II: Case Studies**


**Week VIII – Sectarianism, Modernity, (Post)Colonialism**


**Week IX – Orientals, Occidentals, Colonial Subjectivity**


**Week X – Gender, Sexuality, Selfhood**:


**Week XI – No class**

**Week XII – Religion, Nation, Conversion**


**Week XIII – Class, Habitus, Taste**


Week XIV – Islam, Self-Cultivation, Modern State


Week XV – Brain, Selfhood, Revolution*

Fernando Vidal, “Brainhood, Anthropological Figure of Modernity” History of the Human Sciences 22:1 (2009), pp. 5-36.


Week XVI – Animals, Posthumans, Affect*


Suggested: Donna Haraway, When Species Meet (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).


*Extra meetings depending on availability