

**Boğaziçi University**  
**Spring 2022**  
**SOC 451: Identity and Culture**  
**(Cross-listed with ATA 584: Selected Topics in Social Theory and History)**

**Instructor:** Dr. Kutluğhan Soyubol – [kutlughan.soyubol@boun.edu.tr](mailto:kutlughan.soyubol@boun.edu.tr)

**Office:** Sloane Hall 204 – Office hours by appointment only.

**Course Description:**

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

**Course Requirements:**

1) Participation: Weekly presentations, attendance, and class participation: 25%

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. Suggested readings might also be discussed during the lecture. Students are not responsible to read them but are encouraged to do so if they wish to dig more into the literature on some of the weekly themes.

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, mainly composed of short notes, and ideally 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? The group of students, who are responsible for weekly presentations must share their presentation notes online (via Moodle) the day before (i.e., by Sunday, 11:59 pm) the class meeting.

2) Two critical response papers (3-4 pages, double spaced) written on texts presented in class: 15%

3) Final paper: A literature review paper (12-15 pages, double spaced, including references): 60%

Final papers would only be accepted via Turnitin. Necessary information on how to submit your papers via Turnitin will be provided during the semester.

A word about plagiarism: Plagiarism is a criminal offense and will not be tolerated on any levels in this course. Should you wish to learn more on plagiarism and how to avoid it, you may check Boğaziçi University Online Writing Lab's web page below:

<http://www.buowl.boun.edu.tr/students/favoidingplagiarism.htm>

## **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**

Ian Hacking, “Kinds of People: Moving Targets” *Proceedings of the British Academy* 151 (2007), pp. 285-318.

David Scott, “Prologue” in *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), pp. 1-22.

Suggested: Ian Hacking, “Making Up People” In *Historical Ontology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), pp. 99-114.

Arnold I. Davidson, “Closing Up the Corpses” in *The Emergence of Sexuality: Historical Epistemology and the Formation of Concepts* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 1-29.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Acting Bits/Identity Talk” *Critical Inquiry* 18:4 (1992), pp. 770-803.

### **Week III – Race, Colonialism, Subjectivity**

Stefania Pandolfo, “The Thin Line of Modernity: Some Moroccan Debates on Subjectivity” in Timothy Mitchell (ed.) *Questions of Modernity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), pp. 115-147.

Ann Laura Stoler, “Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Colonial Southeast Asia” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34:3 (1992), pp. 514-551.

Suggested: Sa’ed Atshan and Katharina Galor, “Racism, Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia” in *The Moral Triangle: Germans, Israelis, Palestinians* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020), pp. 91-115.

### **Week IV – Ethnicity, Community, Nation**

Rogers Brubaker, “Ethnicity without Groups” *European Journal of Sociology/Archives européennes de sociologie* 43/2 (2002), pp. 163-189.

Tom Papademetriou, “The Millet System Revisited” in *Render unto the Sultan: Power, Authority, and the Greek Orthodox Church in the Early Ottoman Centuries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 19-62.

Suggested: David A. Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 1-21.

### **Week V – Millet/Milliyet: Modern (Re)Conceptualizations**

Milena B. Methodieva, “Introduction” and “Homeland, Nation, and Community” in *Between Empire and Nation: Muslim Reform in the Balkans* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2021), 1-10; 211-233.

İpek K. Yosmaoğlu, "Counting Bodies, Shaping Souls: The 1903 Census and National Identity in Ottoman Macedonia" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 38:1 (2006), pp. 55-77.

### **Week VI – Religion, Memory, Ethnicity**

Charles Hirschkind, "Introduction"; and "The Difficult *Convivencia* of Spanish History" in *The Feeling of History: Islam, Romanticism, and Andalusia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), pp. 1-34; 69-99.

Suggested: Gil Anidjar, "The Semitic Hypothesis" in *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), pp. 13-38.

Martin Bernal, "Race, Class, and Gender in the Formation of the Aryan Model of Greek Origins" in V. Y. Mudimbe (ed.), *Nations, Identities, Cultures* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), pp. 7-28.

### **Week VII – Sectarianism, Modernity, (Post)Colonialism**

Saba Mahmood, "To Be or Not to be a Minority" in *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), pp. 66-107.

Suggested: Max Weiss, "Prologue: Shi'ism, Sectarianism, Modernity" in *In the Shadow of Sectarianism: Law, Shi'ism, and the Making of Modern Lebanon* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), pp. 1-37.

Roy Bar Sadeh and Lotte Houwink ten Cate, "Toward a Global Intellectual History of "Minority"" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 41:3 (2021), pp. 319–324.

### **Week VIII – Humanity, Diversity, Multiculturalism**

Elizabeth Povinelli, "Introduction" in *The Cunning of Recognition: Indigenous Alterities and the Making of Australian Multiculturalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), pp. 1-34.

Aslı İğsız, "By Way of an Introduction: The Entitled Legacies of a Population Exchange" in *Humanism in Ruins: Entangled Legacies of the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018), pp. 1-40.

Suggested: Walter Benn Michaels, *The Trouble with Diversity: How We Learned to Love Identity and Ignore Inequality* (New York: Holt, 2007), pp.1-49.

J. L. and Jean Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), pp. 117-138.

### **Week IX – Gender, Sexuality, Queerness**

Joseph Massad, "Re-Orienting Desire: The Gay International and the Arab World" *Public Culture* 14:2 (2002), pp. 361-385.

Evren Savcı, "Introduction" and "Conclusion: Queer Studies and the Question of Cultural Difference" in *Queer in Translation: Sexual Politics under Neoliberal Islam* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021), pp. 1-28; 142-150.

Suggested: Sa'ed Atshan, "there is no hierarchy of oppressions" in *Queer Palestine and the Empire of Critique* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2020), pp. 1-26.

### **Week X – Nation, Conversion, Modernity**

Nathaniel Roberts, "Is Conversion a 'Colonization of Consciousness'?" *Anthropological Theory* 12:3 (2012), pp. 271-294.

Talal Asad, "Comments on Conversion" in Peter van der Veer (ed.) *Conversion to Modernities: The Globalization of Christianity* (New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 263-273.

Beth Baron, "Combating Conversion: The Expansion of the Anti-Missionary Movement" in *The Orphan Scandal: Christian Missionaries and the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), pp. 135-150.

Suggested: Esra Özyürek, "Christian and Turkish: Secularist Fears of a Converted Nation" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 29:3 (2009), pp. 398-412.

### **Week XI – Class, Habitus, Embodiment**

Pierre Bourdieu, "Sport and Social Class" *Social Science Information* 17:6 (1978), pp. 819-840.

Saba Mahmood, "Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival" *Cultural Anthropology* 16:2 (2001), pp. 202–236.

Suggested: Michèle Ollivier, "Revisiting Distinction: Bourdieu without Class?" *Journal of Cultural Economy* 3:1 (2008), pp. 263-279.

Paul A. Silverstein, "Sport, Bodily Habitus, and the Subject(s) of the Middle East" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 51:3 (2019), pp. 482-485.

### **Week XII – Disability, Politics, Violence**

Jasbir K. Puar, "Bodies with New Organs: Becoming Trans, Becoming Disabled" *Social Text* 33:3 (2015), pp. 45-73.

Salih Can Açıksöz, "Introduction" and "Epilogue: Bodies and Temporalities of Political Violence" in *Sacrificial Limbs: Masculinity, Disability, and Political Violence in Turkey* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020), pp. 1-14; 175-186.

### **Week XIII – Medicine, Genetics, the Future of Identity**

Ian Hacking, "Genetics, Biosocial Groups & the Future of Identity" *Daedalus* 135:4 (2006), pp. 81-95.

Nikolas Rose, "Race in the Age of Genomic Medicine" in *The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 155-186.

Suggested: Deborah A. Thomas and M. Kamari Clarke, "Globalization and Race: Structures of Inequality, New Sovereignties, and Citizenship in a Neoliberal Era" *Annual Review of Anthropology* 42 (2013), pp. 305-325.

Nadia Abu El-Haj, "The Genetic Reinscription of Race" *Annual Review of Anthropology* 36 (2007), pp. 283-300.

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