Instructor: Ying Jia Tan
Class Meetings: MTWRF 10-12am, 1-3pm
Office: 110 Mt Vernon, Room 202
Office Hours: By appointment
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Course Description:
Why did mapping take off after the sixteenth century around the world? How did maps become an integral part of our lives? We will start with questions like “What is a Map?” and “What is a continent?” We will look towards theoretical works in science and technology studies and visual epistemologies for new insights into these questions we take for granted. We will trace the role of maps through the age of maritime exploration, age of empires and the rise of nationalism. We will then look at our present age of electronic navigation systems and Geographical Information Systems. Have we moved beyond the map? Or did new mapping methods transform our lifeworlds?
We will learn that maps are not just receptacles of geographical information, but are part of a broader family of value-laden images. Just as paintings are deposits of social relations, maps played an integral role in the accumulation of political power, the creation of geographical imagination, production of knowledge, and communication of ideas.

The class assumes no prior background and no knowledge of any foreign languages. That said, students are encouraged to use historical scholarship and primary sources in languages other than English, if they wish to.

**Learning Objectives**

This is a research seminar that aims to prepare undergraduates for their capstone research. The course will take the students through several stages: defining a topic and locating primary materials, crafting proposals, writing drafts, and the final write up.

Students will become familiar with the major collection of maps in the libraries on campus and online databases. They will also learn about the major intellectual debates in the history of cartography, historical geography, and area studies.

**Assignments**

Every student will be required to complete the assigned readings and weekly assignments. The seminar requires the active contribution of each and every seminar member. Besides speaking up in class, pay attention to what other colleagues have to say. Students will keep a reading journal throughout the semester. These entries will serve as building blocks for the final assignment, which can take the form of a literature review essay, GIS story map, lesson plan for K-12 social studies unit, or a feature article for a magazine or newspaper.

There are two major assignments for this class:

a. Map Analysis Paper (1,000 words, approximately 4 pp.) You will be asked to bring a map to class and relate it to the theoretical readings assigned for the first two days of class. By the middle of the semester, you should have developed new insights into this map. Write an essay to present your original analysis of the map.

b. Final project

**Final grades will be determined on the following basis:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Map Analysis Paper (4pp.)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Journal</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final grade</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Required Texts (Marked with * on syllabus, on reserve and for sale at RJ Julia Bookstore)


Meeting Schedule and Assignments

**Jan 10th**  What is a Map? Telling Stories with Maps (a.m. class)

Readings to be completed before Day One:  


In-class activity:  
Bring a map to class. Find out about the historical context of the map. When was it made? What does it tell us about the time period when it was made? Explain how the map relates to one or more of the readings. Do not worry if you do not fully grasp the readings. You will have a chance to revisit them when you do the first assignment for the next class.

**Jan 11th**  Maps and Power


Journal Entry:  
Choose a map. You can use the map from the first class meeting. Write a short passage of about 300 to 400 words to explain how this map functions as an instrument of power by applying the insights of Harley, Andrews, or Edney. This exercise is a springboard for subsequent research assignments.
Jan 12th  Are Maps Scientific? Are Maps a Work of Art?


Journal Entry:
Why is the history of cartography an integral part of the history of science? Why is the study of maps a crucial part of art history? Why are inter-disciplinary scholars interested in maps?

Jan 13th  Maps and Exploration


Seed, Patricia. Ceremonies of Possession. Chapter 4.

Journal Entry:
How do the following readings challenge the conventional narrative on the age of exploration? How would you redesign a world history class on the age of exploration that places another part of the world other than Europe in the center of the historical narrative?

<Map Analysis Paper Due Jan 13th, 11.59pm>

Jan 16th  Maps and the Rise of Empires


Journal Entry:
What are the key differences between French and Qing mapping conventions? What do these differences reveal about European and Asian Empires?
Visit to Special Collections and Archives (p.m.) Pick out one important detail from the maps. Investigate the detail and bring your observation to our next class.

Jan 17th-18th Maps and Frontier Exploration

Emma Teng, *Taiwan’s Imagined Geography* *

**Journal Entry:**
Maps do not exist in isolation. The assigned reading for the next two days use a wide range of sources. Make a list of the type of sources that the author uses in this book. Think about broadening the source base of your final project. What other primary sources can you incorporate to enrich the analysis of your map or geographical writing? List two additional primary sources that you thought about incorporating after reading both books in the past two weeks. Revise the literature review and resubmit it by April 5.

Jan 19th Maps as Scientific Inscriptions


**Journal Entry:**
How did the study of geology shape our understanding of time? Illustrate your argument with a picture of an artifact from the hallways of Exley Science Center, Olin Library, or the Science Library.

Jan 20th Will You Die For a Map?


**No Journal Entry:** Afternoon sessions devoted to project workshops

Jan 23rd One More Time! Will You Die For a Map?

**Journal Entry:**
Revisit a history textbook that you used in grade school. Discuss how maps and propaganda posters are used to foster a sense of patriotism and sense of belonging.

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**Jan 24th-25th**
**Final Project presentations will be held during reading “week” and final exam day.**