

HIS 363K • The Bible In Colonial Americas  
39869 • Cañizares-Esguerra, Jorge  
Meets TTH 330pm-500pm UTC 1.104  
(also listed as R S 366)

Are you aware that Christopher Columbus wrote a book of prophecies? Yes, Columbus identified passages in the Bible that prefigured his own providential mission in the New World. He liked to call attention to the messianic symbolism of his own name: Christopher = Carrier of Christ; Columbus = Dove (Holy Spirit). To see Columbus as a biblical scholar might be jarring but much closer to the truth than to consider him swashbuckling, romantic adventurer.

Columbus was not alone in this. He provides an entryway for our exploration of the impact of the Bible in the colonization of the Americas. We will study the traditions of political philosophy that established Old Testament figures such as Moses, Aaron, and Joshua as models of rulership. Monarchs, popes, and magistrates drew on Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Leviticus, and Numbers to figure out the proper role of civil and religious authorities as well as to discern policies of territorial expansion and colonization.

It should be clear that the Bible hovered over every development in the colonial New World like a ghost. Cities, churches, missions, labor institutions, treatises, and even constitutions were created with the Bible always in mind. This course explores the Biblical roots of the religious and political traditions, architecture and material culture of the various Americas and of our forgotten colonial past.

### **Texts**

For search engines on the bible (King James and Vulgate), use:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/efts/ARTFL/public/bibles/>

Images and readings will be posted on Blackboard.

### **Grading**

Attendance and Class Participation: 25 %

First Assignment (biblical analysis of a colonial-era sermon on politics): 25 %

Second assignment (biblical analysis of colonial sermon on gender): 25 %

Third Assignment (biblical analysis of colonial sermon on race): 25 %

### **Grading scale:**

100-90: A

89-80: B

79-70: C

69-60: D

### **Rules on Class Participation and Attendance:**

25 % of your grade depends on participation and attendance. For every 3 lectures you miss, you will be deducted 5 % off your grade (For instance, from an A+ (98%) to an A- (93%). Make sure you prepare well for in-class discussion (images and texts will be posted on blackboard) prior to each class lecture. To help you prepare, I will provide you with questions about specific images and texts for the next class meeting. I will call on students during each and every class for answers to these discussion questions.

### **Rules on Semester Assignments:**

Students should identify a colonial sermon on three different subjects (politics, gender, race). Each sermon needs to be approved by the instructor. The deadlines to get sermons approved are: February 8 (politics); March 8 (gender); April 19 (race). There are several data bases where to look for the sermons (UT subscribes to the following data bases: Early English Books on Line; Goggle Books; Early American Imprints). Getting the sermon through old fashioned searches (with the help of librarians) at PCL is also an option.

Once you get a sermon approved, you need to study in detail. Look for the ways it relates to the assigned topic (politics; gender; race), but don't reduce your reading of the sermon to only this. Identify the biblical passages the author uses, how the author interprets the passages, and the larger argument of the sermon as a whole.

Deadlines to turn in assignments are: February 22 (politics); March 24 (gender); May 5 (race).

You have to turn in a copy of the sermon along with your 4-page analysis (between 800 and 1,000 words).

### **Disability:**

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259

### **Schedule**

January 18. Intro

January 20: The Bible at the time of Columbus (Biblia pauperum)

Come prepared to discuss these images:

<http://www.amasis.com/biblia/>

also:

<http://diglib.princeton.edu/view?xq=pageturner&index=1&inset=1&start=1&doc=/mets/whsS2.9-pauperum.mets.xml>

January 25; The Bible at the time of Columbus (Sistine Chapel)

Come prepared to discuss these images:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallery\\_of\\_Sistine\\_Chapel\\_ceiling](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallery_of_Sistine_Chapel_ceiling)

January 27: Columbus's Bible (Book of Prophecies)

New Testament and Psalms (pp. 55-177)

February 1: Columbus' Bible (2)

Books of Kings and Prophets (178-ff)

Image: Stradanus' *America Retectio* (Christopher Columbus as "christum-ferens" (carrier of Christ) and "columba" (dove-holy spirit) (posted on blackboard)

February 3: Leviathan and the Book of Daniel

Images: *Elegias de varones illustres* (1589) and *Gazophilatium Regium Peruvicum* (1647) (posted on Blackboard)

February 8: Issachar and Deuteronomy (first sermon approved)

Image *Tratado de las Confirmaciones Reales de Encomiendas* (1630) (posted on Blackboard)

February 10: Kings of Israel and Judah

February 15: Bible, Politics and Architecture: El Escorial

February 17: Kings of Israel and Judah: Early Modern Political Philosophy

February 22: Kings of Israel and Judah: Tom Paine's Common Sense (first assignment due)

[http://books.google.com/books?id=wVt7VxvFyegC&printsec=frontcover&dq=tom+paine+common+sense&hl=en&ei=K98sTejpJMT7lwemwMCRDA&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=wVt7VxvFyegC&printsec=frontcover&dq=tom+paine+common+sense&hl=en&ei=K98sTejpJMT7lwemwMCRDA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false)

February 25: Kings of Israel and Judah: Spanish American Wars of Independence

March 1: Wars of Independence

March 3: Gender and the Bible

March 8: The Old Testament and The Cult of Virgin Mary (second sermon approved)

March 10: The Cult of Virgin Mary

March 15 (spring break)

March 17 (spring break)

March 22: The Cult of the Virgin Mary

March 24: Second assignment due

March 29: Moses, Sinai, and Our Lady of Guadalupe

March 31: The Devil in the New World

April 5: in class assignment

April 7: in class assignment

April 12: The Aztecs and the Old Testament

April 14: Jesuit Churches (Gesú, St. Ignatius)

Images Gesú:

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Chiesa\\_del\\_Ges%C3%B9\\_\(Rome\)](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Chiesa_del_Ges%C3%B9_(Rome))

Images St Ignatius:

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Sant%27Ignazio\\_in\\_Rome](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Sant%27Ignazio_in_Rome)

April 19: Jesuit Churches (La Compañía) (third sermon approved)

April 21: Jesuit Churches

April 26: Slavery and the Bible (on Bodies and Souls)

April 28: Slavery and the Bible (Exodus and African Churches)

May 3: Slavery and the Bible

May 5: Third assignment due.