

HIST. 490A.01 Games in Cultural History

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Credits: 3 ECTS: 6

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the long history of games covering a period from the earliest known games and game tools to the Modern Age. It aims to demonstrate the importance of games for the study of cultural history. We will pay attention to the relationship between games and the culture that invented, adopted, transformed, and enjoyed playing them. We will begin with locating the place of games in culture and outlining the fundamentals about games to build our basic knowledge. After historical periods are covered, we will delve into selected topics to further our understanding of games in the intersections of religion and politics. Our course ends with a workshop on game design to prepare the students for their final projects.

The course is designed to instruct students about how to use games as sources in historiographical research through selected case studies in which various textual, visual and ludic approaches are executed. During the course we will play some of the selected historic games from different periods, cultures and geographies covering the Far East, South Asia, Pre-Colombian America, Africa, and Europe. This way we will have a unique chance to interact with historic games (our primary sources) and experience what these games might tell about that particular culture/society.

Our readings are designed to nurture our perspective while studying cultural history; it includes works from various disciplines such as anthropology, archaeology, history, literature and game studies. We will investigate each week several games related to the topic of the class. You will be provided with games that we will study in this course. The reading list will be shared via the MOODLE.

Requirements:

1. Class Participation (20%): You must do all assigned readings before the scheduled date of discussion. During each class, you are expected to engage actively in the discussion as it proceeds. Each class will include a short lecture, but it will be taught in seminar fashion; class discussion is an essential part of instruction and your participation is required. I expect everyone to share their informed views and to be open to a constructive exchange of perspectives.
2. Midterm Paper. 30%
3. Reading Quizzes. 20%

4. Final project (30%): You are expected to design an original game by using the game mechanics and game types studied in the course. Your game must clearly reflect the characteristics of a freely chosen period / culture. The medium can be analog or digital. Best game(s) will be presented in a panel in Board Game Studies Colloquium 2021 in Paris.

Course Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction (22.10.2020)

Week 2: Game and Play in Culture (27-29.10.2020)

And, M., 2012. *Oyun ve Bügü*. Yapı Kredi Yayınları. İstanbul. [Pages: 27-85]

Caillois, R., 2001. *Man, Play and Games*. Trans. Barash, M. Oxfordshire: University of Illinois Press. [Pages: 3-10, 57-67, 81-97]

Huizinga, J., 1949. *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture*. Reprint 1980 London: Redwood Burn Ltd. [Pages: 1-19]

Week 3: Structure of Games: Game Mechanics and Types of Games (3-5.11.2020)

Murray, H. J. R., 1952. *A history of board-games other than chess*. Oxford, Clarendon Press. [Pages: 1-12]

Parlett, D., 1999. *The Oxford History of Board Games*. Oxford University Press. [Pages: 1-19]

Sutton-Smith, B. & Roberts, J. M., 1971. The Cross-Cultural and Psychological Study of Games. *International Review of Sport Sociology*, 6(1), pp: 79–87.

Week 4: Games in the Neolithic Period (10-12.11.2020)

Gilmour, G. 1997. The Nature and Function of Astragalus Bones from Archaeological Contexts in the Levant and Eastern Mediterranean. *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*, 16, pp: 167-175.

Rollefson, G., 1992. A Neolithic Game Board from 'Ain Ghazal, Jordan. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, (286), pp: 1-5.

Sidéra, I & Vornicu, A. 2016. The Archaeology of Games. Playing with Knucklebones in the Early Chalcolithic of the Balkans. (Eds.) Krum Bacvarov and Ralf Gleser. *Southeast Europe and Anatolia in prehistory Essays in honor of Vassil Nikolov on his 65th anniversary*. Verlag Dr. Rudolf Habelt, Bonn. [Pages: 379-388]

Voorhies., B., 2012. Games Ancient People Played. *Archaeology*, Vol. 65, No. 3 (May/June 2012), pp: 48-51.

Week 5: Games in Antiquity (17-19.11.2020)

Crist, W., Dunn-Vaturi, A.-E., & Voogt, A. J. D., 2016. *Ancient Egyptians at Play: Board Games across Borders*. Bloomsbury Publishing. [Pages: 125-150]

Crist, W., de Voogt, A., and Dunn-Vaturi, A.-E., 2016. Facilitating Interaction: Board Games as Social Lubricants in the Ancient Near East. *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*, 35, pp: 179– 196.

Schädler, U., 1995. *XII Scripta, Alea, Tabula*-New Evidence for the Roman History of 'Backgammon', in A. J. de Voogt (ed), *New Approaches to Board Games Research: Asian Origins and Future Perspectives*, Leiden: International Institute for Asian Studies [Pages: 73-98]

Schädler, U., 2009. *Pente grammai*—the Ancient Greek Board Game Five Lines, in J. Nuno Silva (ed.), *Board Game Studies Colloquium XI, Proceedings*, Lisboa: Associação Ludus R. da Escola Politécnica, pp: 169-192.

Week 6: Games in the Medieval Period (24-26.11.2020)

Adams, J., 2006. *Power Play: The Literature and Politics of Chess in the Late Middle Ages*. University of Pennsylvania Press Philadelphia. [Pages: 1-15]

Fajardo-Acosta, F., 2015. The King is Dead, Long Live the Game: Alfonso X, el Sabio, and the Libro de açedrex, dados e tablas. *eHumanista* 31, pp: 489-523.

Parlett, D., 1999. *The Oxford History of Board Games*. Oxford University Press. [Pages: 196-204]

Soar, M., 2006. Shiva and Parvati at Play: Backgammon in Ancient India. In Topsfield, A. (Ed.), *The art of Play: Board and Card Games in India*. Marg Publications. [Pages: 44-60]

Week 7: Games in China, Africa, and Pre-Colombian America (1-3.12.2020)

Depaulis, T., 2018. Ancient American Board Games, I: From Teotihuacan to the Great Plains. *Board Game Studies Journal*, 12, pp: 29-55.

Papineau, E., 2001. The Game of Go: A Chinese Way of Seeing the World, MSO, 8 March 2001. [Pages: 1-17]

Parlett, D., 1999. *The Oxford History of Board Games*. Oxford University Press. [Pages: 207-223]

Walden, J., Voorhies, B., 2017. Ancient Maya Patolli. In Voorhies, B (Ed) *Prehistoric Games of North American Indians*. University of Utah Press. [Pages: 197-218].

Week 8: Games in the Early Modern Period (8-10.12.2020)

Bakhtin, M., 1968. The Role of Games in Rabelais. *Yale French Studies*, Issue 41, pp: 124-132.

Seville, A., 2008. The geographical Jeux de l'Oie of Europe. *Belgeo*, 3(4), pp: 427-444.

O'Bryan, R. L., 2019. Introduction, in O'Bryan, R. L. (Ed) *Games and game playing in European art and literature, 16th-17th centuries*. University of Amsterdam Press. [Pages: 17-71]

Rocco, P., 2019. The World Upside Down: Giuseppe Maria Mitelli's Games and the Performance of Identity in the Early Modern World, in O'Bryan, R. L. (Ed) *Games and game playing in European art and literature, 16th-17th centuries*. University of Amsterdam Press. [Pages: 157-179]

Smoller, L. A., 1986. Playing Cards and Popular Culture in Sixteenth-Century Nuremberg. *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 17(2), pp: 183-214.

Week 9: Games in the Modern Period (15-17.12.2020)

Depaulis, T., 2016. Bingo! A Material History of Modern Gaming. In: M. Zollinger, ed. *Random Riches: Gambling Past & Present*. New York: Routledge, pp: 36-56.

Norcia, M., 2019. *Gaming Empire in Children's British Board Games, 1836-1860*. New York; London Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. [Pages: 1-49]

Parlak, Ö. F., 2020. "Seafaring through the Perspective of Historic Board Games" in *Das Schiff als Thema der Moderne Rezeptionen des technischen Gegenstandes Schiff*, by Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Schifffahrt- und Marinegeschichte. [Pages: 20-27]

Seville, A. & Spear, J., 2010. The Game of the Goose in England – a tradition lost. *The Ephemerist*, Issue 151. [Pages: 8-14]

Special Topics

Week 10: Games in the Ottoman Empire (22-24.12.2020)

Değirmenci, T., 2015. Kahve Bahane, Kahvehane Şahane: Bir Osmanlı Kahvehanesinin "Portresi". Pekin, E. (Ed.) *Bir taşım keyif: Türk kahvesinin 500 yıllık öyküsü*. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı. [Pages: 118-136]

Değirmenci, T., 2020. Game as a Sign of Social Status: Backgammon in the Ottoman Literature and Visual Culture, in Kopp, V; Lapina, E. (Eds.) "*Games and Visual Culture in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*", Turnhout, Brepols. [Pages: TBA]

Schick, I. C., 2020. Chess of the Gnostics: The Sufi Version of Snakes and Ladders in Turkey and India, in Kopp, V; Lapina, E. (Eds.) "*Games and Visual Culture in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*", Turnhout, Brepols. [Pages: TBA]

Week 11: Games, Divination, Spirituality and Religion (29-31.12.2020)

Bornet, P., 2012. Introduction: Games and Religion in History. In: P. Bornet & M. Burger, eds. *Religions in Play: Games, Rituals, and Virtual Worlds*. Zürich: Theologischer Verlag. [Pages: 15-22]

Decker, R., Depaulis, T., & Dummett, M., 2002. *A wicked pack of cards: the origins of the occult tarot*. London, Duckworth. [Pages: 1-22, 23-40]

Farley, H., 2009. *A Cultural History of Tarot, From Entertainment to Esotericism*. London: I. B.Tauris. [Pages: 151-172]

Piccione, P. A., 2007. The game of Senet and the Migration of the Soul. In: I. Finkel, ed. *Ancient Board Games in Perspective*. London: British Museum Press, pp: 54-63.

Week 12: Games, Politics, and Propaganda (5-7.1.2021)

Morris-Friedman, A. & Schädler, U., 2003. "Judens Raus!" (Jews Out!) – History's most infamous board game. *Journal of Board Game Studies*, Volume 6, pp: 47-59.

Parlak, Ö. F., 2018. "Playing the Turk: Early Modern Board Games and Playing Cards in Europe as a Counter-Argument to History" in "*Games of Empires*" *Kulturhistorische Konnotationen von Brettspielen in transnationalen und imperialen Kontexten*. Aydin, K., Ghosh-Schellhorn, M., Schlange-Schöningen, H., Ziegler, M (Eds.), Lit Verlag, Berlin. [Pages: 189-204]

Simons, P., 1993. (Check) Mating the Grand Masters: The Gendered, Sexualized Politics of Chess in Renaissance Italy. *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (1993), pp: 59-74.

Week 13: Game Design Workshop (12-14.1.2021)

Costikyan, G., 2015. *Uncertainty in Games*. MIT Press. [Pages: 105-112]

Elias, G. S., Garfield, R., & Gutschera, K. R., 2012. *Characteristics of Games*. Cambridge, MA, MIT Press. [71-100]