These markers have long been a feature of colonialism and imperialism. They draw their power from intersecting religious and racial logics through which humans could imagine innate differences, conjure cultural asymmetries, and mediate relations between communities. This course tracks the origins of these categories, the institutions that gave life to their discursive violence, the experiences of people who encountered their logics, and their legacies in shaping our understanding of the world through frameworks such as civilizations, modernity, and the third world.