

HIS 301.02
How Did Science Become Western?

Satisfies: ESI

Tu/Th, 2:00 – 3:20 PM

Professor Tamara Fernando

The story of the “history of science” used to be told as a deeply Western, Euro-centric narrative, stretching from Galileo through to Newton, culminating in the present moment of quantum computing and genetic technology. In this class we will ask “when did science become Western?” Students will be introduced to the field of the history of science but focused on the global and non-West. We will ask, instead, what science looks like from the perspective of seventeenth-century Istanbul, nineteenth-century Bombay, or twentieth-century Iran. Answering this question will help us to fine tune core skills in the craft of history, including how to read critically, engage with something called “historiography,” and to write clear, analytic, argumentative essays.