Material culture studies is an interdisciplinary field that incorporates methods from anthropology, economics, sociology, art history, and archaeology in order to examine the varied significance of objects in social life. This seminar explores some of the major approaches to the study of material culture through the contexts of Renaissance Europe, its global networks, and colonial endeavors. We will examine how material culture illuminates changing structures of value, exchange, and circulation during the period. Through theoretical readings and case studies, we will investigate some of the intricate relationships between persons, things, and social practice, circa 1400-1600. Our engagement with the past will also provide the impetus for considering issues in our own present context.