

**Transculturation through the Ages**  
**Fall 2007 | RCAH 201 section 3**  
M 7:00-7:50 > 107 South Kedzie  
TWR 10:20-11:10 > 306 Old Horticulture

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### **course description |**

To fully contextualize history in its complex and nuanced forms, we must investigate the varied, albeit simultaneous, histories from a transcultural perspective. What this means is that this course will attempt to decipher world history by investigating the similarities, differences, disjunctures, and ruptures between and amongst peoples. Since my academic interest and expertise are in the various societies of the Américas (both North and South), our focus will be on the Western hemisphere. We will do so, however, by understanding the multifaceted role that Indigenous, African, Asian, and European cultures play in the development of ‘American civilization.’ Through this course we will begin to think of the world as a ‘transcultural’ network that links all humanity into a common system.

### **objectives |**

Due to the interdisciplinarity of this course, the goals and objectives are likewise multiple. By reading, discussing, analyzing, and engaging course material, students will accomplish the following:

- Investigate the relationship between and amongst cultures and societies.
- Explain how and why bodies (and societies) create meaning within social spaces.
- Examine the complex role that identity plays across cultures.
- Interpret the meaning of signs (be they visual, oral, or performative).
- Describe the relationship between economics and social structures.

### **structure |**

This course will be divided into three sections of five weeks each. The three sections [1: indigeneity; 2: coloniality; 3: modernity] although somewhat chronological are in fact coeval and have co-existed on this continent for more than five-hundred years. As such, we will be discussing contemporary expressions alongside centuries-old indigenous practices. Likewise, we will pair seemingly disparate ideas anticipating further dialogue and investigation.

### **questions |**

Each week we will compose a series of questions to frame the discourse for that respective week. This process will be done collectively, as will most activities in this course. You will be expected to participate in the construction of the weekly questions, as well as in-class discussion.

### **readings |**

There are three main texts, with additional readings that support and complicate the main ideas of the class. These texts correspond to the thematic course sections. Since readings will be discussed during the class in which they are listed on the syllabus, you are expected to have completed the readings before coming to class. You are expected to purchase all class material.

**indigeneity** > Linda Tuhiwai Smith. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed, 1999. \$28

**coloniality** > Serge Gruzinski. *Mestizo Mind: The Intellectual Dynamics of Colonization and Globalization*. New York: Routledge, 2002. \$17-\$27

**modernity** > Immanuel Wallerstein. *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*. Durham: Duke, 2004. \$12-\$18

Course reader.

## part 1 > indigeneity

week 1 | august 27

### Creating Identities

M

T introductions + syllabus

None.

W how do you identify?

Smith, Chapter 1.

R identities across time + place

Brown, "Polyrhythms and Improvization," PDF.

week 2 | september 03

### Space + Place

M

T being + belonging

Smith, Chapter 2.

W defining place

Smith, Chapter 4.

R cultural connections to land

Anaya, "Aztlán," PDF.

week 3 | september 10

### Migration Narratives

M

T where did you come from?

None.

W indigenous migration narratives

Silko, "Pueblo Migration Stories," PDF.

R migration performances

week 4 | september 17

### Traditional Economies

M

T beyond [or before] capitalism

Cavanagh and Mander, "10 Principles," PDF.

W cooperative economics

R sustainability

week 5 | september 24

### Competing Cultures

M

T colonialism before Columbus

Smith, Chapter 3 & 8.

W against Eurocentrism

Williams, "Culture," PDF.

R defining culture

## part 2 > coloniality

week 6 | october 01

### Hybridity

M

T pureza de sangre

Campbell, "Halfbreed," PDF.

W race, gender, and colonialism

Gruzinski, Chapters 11 and 12.

R hybridity as empty signifier

Gruzinski, Chapter 2.

week 7 | october 08

### New Spaces + New Places

M

T cultural expansion

Gruzinski, Chapter 3

W cultural adaptation

Gruzinski, Chapter 4

R new cultures, new peoples

Gruzinski, Chapter 6.

week 8 | october 15

### **Diasporas**

M

T forced migrations

Patton, *African-American Art*, PDF.

W humans and labor

Equiano, "A Horror Remembered," PDF.

R immigration

week 9 | october 22

### **Slavery**

M

T class or race?

Fanon, "Facts of Blackness," PDF.

W gender and sexuality

Lorde, "Master's Tool..." PDF.

R wage slavery

none.

week 10 | october 29

### **Resistance**

M

T armed struggle

Fanon, "On National Culture," PDF.

W cultural resistance

Mora, "Zapatista Anticapitalist Politics," PDF.

R contemporary struggles

None.

## **part 3 > modernity**

week 11 | november 05

### **Alienation**

M

T Marx + Alienation

Wallerstein, Chapter 1 or 2.

Marx, "Alienation and Social Class," PDF

W Urbanity

Monsivaís, "Identity Hour," PDF.

R Community Histories

Hayden, *Urban Landscape History*, PDF.

week 12 | november 12

### **Nationalisms**

M

T defining the nation

Wallerstein, Chapter 3.

W anti-colonial nationalism

Smith, Chapter 6

R beyond nation-states

Wallerstein, Chapter 5.

week 13 | november 19

### **Capitalist Expansion**

M

T market economics

Chomsky, "Great Work of Subjugation," PDF.

W labor unions

Ngai, "Who is an American Worker?," PDF.

R advertising

None.

week 14 | November 26

### **Globalization**

M

T mondialization vs. mundialité

Graeber, "New Anarchists," PDF.

W resistance to the WTO  
R is it global?

Antliff, "Anarchy as Art," PDF.  
None.

Week 15 | December 03

**Discussion**

M

T open

W open

R open

Week 16 | December 10

**Examination Week**