

TRANSCULTURAL RELATIONS: INDIGENEITY, COLONIALITY, MODERNITY

Residential College in the Arts & Humanities

Fall 2008 | Michigan State University

RCAH 201 section 1

PROFESSOR INFORMATION |

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OFFICE HOURS | TR 2:10-3:30

DAY + TIME |

PLENARY | M 7:00-8:10 | CB20 SNYDER HALL

SECTION | TR 1:00-2:10 | C202 SNYDER HALL

TRANSCULTURATION |

Transculturation ‘expresses the different phases of the process of transition from one culture to another because this does not consist merely in acquiring another culture, which is what the English word *acculturation* really implies, but the process also necessarily involves the loss or uprooting of a previous culture, which could be defined as a *deculturation*. In addition it carries the idea of the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena, which could be called *neoculturation*.’

–Fernando Ortiz, 1947

COURSE DESCRIPTION |

To fully comprehend history in its complex and nuanced forms, we must first investigate the varied, albeit simultaneous, global histories from a transcultural perspective. As such, this course will attempt to decipher world history by investigating the similarities, differences, disjunctures, and ruptures between and amongst various peoples across multiple temporal zones. Our focus will be on the diverse societies in the Western hemisphere (commonly known as the Americas), particularly focusing on cultural studies and the political implications of cultural practice. To properly explore hemispheric relations, we must first analyze and decode the multifaceted role that Indigenous, African, Asian, and European cultures have played and continue to play in the development of ‘American civilization.’ Throughout this course we will interpret the world as a transcultural network that links all humanity into a common and interconnected world-system. Using this critical and historical knowledge, future systemic transformation becomes our collective responsibility.

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 societies create meaning within social spaces.
- Examine the complex role that identity plays across cultures.
- Interpret the meaning of signs.
- Describe the relationship between economics and social structures.
- Understand how and why certain societies dominate and/or subjugate others.

STRUCTURE |

This course will be divided into three sections of five weeks each. Although partially chronological, the three sections [1: indigeneity; 2: coloniality; 3: modernity] are in fact coeval

and have co-existed continentally for more than five hundred years. As such, we will be discussing contemporary expressions and situations alongside centuries-old practices in a diachronic and synthetic fashion. Likewise, we will pair seemingly disparate ideas together in anticipation of further dialogue and investigation.

PLENARY SESSIONS |

Once a week, you will meet collectively with all other RCAH first-year students to participate in joint plenary events surrounding the common themes of this course. These sessions will broadly relate with the subject matter and ideas addressed in individual sections of RCAH 201. However, the plenary is not intended to fall directly in line with each section's syllabus. Instead, the plenary sessions will focus on the 'cornerstones' of the college [world history, art + culture, ethics, and engaged learning] to develop a common, yet diverse understanding of transcultural relations. Plenary attendance is mandatory!

READINGS |

There are three main texts corresponding to the three thematic course sections. Additional readings will be used to support and complicate the main ideas of the class. Since readings will be discussed during the class in which they are listed on the syllabus, you are required to have completed the readings before coming to class. You are expected to purchase all class material, as well as print and bring all PDFs to class.

READINGS |

- Linda Tuhiwai Smith. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed, 1999.
- Robert J.C. Young. *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University, 2003.
- Immanuel Wallerstein. *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*. Durham: Duke, 2004.
- Additional readings are available as PDFs at angel.msu.edu. Log on with netID and password. These must be printed off and brought to class!

GRADING |

writing assignment 1	15%
writing assignment 2	15%
keywords assignment	30%
weekly writing + participation	20%
plenary papers	20%

As part of the Residential College in Arts and Humanities, attendance is expected!! Although I will not be actively 'taking roll,' you will be obliged to reflect upon classroom activities and discussion in the form of weekly writing assignments. Therefore, continued absences will alter your ability to comprehend the overall themes of the course. Moreover, your presence in the classroom is needed for full participation credit. As such, your attendance may positively or negatively affect your final grade through multiple venues.

QUESTIONS |

Each week we will compose a series of questions to frame the dialogue 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 all in-class discussion.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM + INTEGRITY |

In agreement with Article 2.3.3 of the *Academic Freedom Report* which states that ‘the student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards,’ it is expected that students neither plagiarize nor copy from a peer’s intellectual or creative work. In addition, the RCAH adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in *General Student Regulations* 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and in the All-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, which are included in *Spartan Life: Student Handbook + Resource Guide* (<http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/index.htm>). Students who engage in academically dishonest activities may receive a 0.0 on that given assignment or for the overall course.

POLICY ON ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES |

Students with disabilities that may interfere with completing your assigned course work may speak with me, as well as contact the *Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities* to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call 353-9642 [voice] or 355-1293 [TTY].

PART 1 | INDIGENEITY

WEEK 1 | AUGUST 25

CREATING IDENTITIES

M plenary | introduction
T introductions + syllabus

R identities across time + place

None.
Brown, "Polyrhythms and Improvization," PDF.
Mazlish, "Global History," PDF.
Smith, Chapter 1.
Young, Introduction: Montage.

WEEK 2 | SEPTEMBER 01

SPACE + PLACE

M Labor Day
T being + belonging

R cultural connections to land

NO CLASS
Smith, Chapter 2.
Young, Chapter 2.
Smith, Chapter 4.
Anaya, "Aztlán," PDF.

WEEK 3 | SEPTEMBER 08

ORIGIN + MIGRATION NARRATIVES

M plenary | transcultural relations
T where did you come from?
R indigenous migration narratives

Malinowski, "Introduction," PDF.
Coates, "Peopling the Earth," PDF.
Silko, "Pueblo Migration Stories," PDF.
Penn, *The Telling of the World*, PDF.

WEEK 4 | SEPTEMBER 15

TRADITIONAL ECONOMIES

M plenary | world history
T beyond [or before] capitalism

R cooperative economics + sustainability

To be announced.
Armstrong, 'Indigenous Knowledge...,' PDF.
Abrahams, 'Khoekhoe Free Economy,' PDF.
Trask, 'Indigenous Women...,' PDF.
Wallerstein, Chapter 2.

WEEK 5 | SEPTEMBER 22

COMPETING CULTURES

M plenary | world history
T against Eurocentrism
R defining culture

None.
Smith, Chapter 3 + 8.
Williams, "Culture," PDF.
Friedman, "Culture and Global Systems," PDF.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE

PART 2 | COLONIALITY

WEEK 6 | SEPTEMBER 29

HYBRIDITY

M plenary | art + culture
T race, gender, and colonialism
R hybridity as empty signifier

To be announced.
Harris, "Constructing & Visualizing Race," PDF.
Gruzinski, "Mélange and Mestizo," PDF.
Santos, "Globalizations," PDF.

WEEK 7 | OCTOBER 06

NEW SPACES + NEW PLACES

M	plenary art + culture	None.
T	cultural expansion + adaptation	Young, Chapter 4.
R	new cultures, new peoples	Young, Chapter 1.

WEEK 8 | OCTOBER 13

DIASPORAS

M	plenary art + culture	None.
T	forced migrations	Young, Chapter 3. Equiano, "A Horror Remembered," PDF.
R	cultural change + continuity	Pabon, "Physical Graffiti," PDF. Verán, "Native Tongues," PDF.

WEEK 9 | OCTOBER 20

SLAVERY

M	plenary ethics	To be announced.
T	class ≠ race	Fanon, "Facts of Blackness," PDF.
R	gender, sexuality + oppression	Lorde, "The Master's Tool...", PDF. Young, Chapter 5.

WEEK 10 | OCTOBER 27

RESISTANCE

M	plenary ethics	None.
T	armed struggle	Césaire, <i>Discourse on Colonialism</i> , PDF.
R	continued cultural resistance	Hernández Navarro, "The Breaking Wave," PDF.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE

PART 3 | MODERNITY

WEEK 11 | NOVEMBER 03

ALIENATION

M	plenary ethics	None.
T	marx + alienation	Wallerstein, Chapter 4. Marx, "Alienation and Social Class," PDF.
R	memory + community histories	Loftus, "Tricked by Memory," PDF. Williams, "Community" + "History," PDF.

WEEK 12 | NOVEMBER 10

PERFORMANCE

M	plenary Stratford Theatre Co.	None.
T	performance	Taylor, "Transculturing Transculturation," PDF.
R	performance	None.

WEEK 13 | NOVEMBER 17

NATIONALISMS

M	plenary Margeret Atwood	Handout.
T	defining the nation	Wallerstein, Chapter 3. Romero, <i>Hyper-Border</i> , PDF.
R	beyond nation-states	Wallerstein, Chapter 5. Smith, Chapter 6

WEEK 14 | NOVEMBER 24

CAPITALIST EXPANSION

M plenary | engagements
T market economics + labor

R Thanksgiving

To be announced.
Ebert + Zavarzaden, "Class Is," PDF;
Wise, "NAFTA's Untold Story," PDF.
NO CLASS

WEEK 15 | DECEMBER 01

GLOBALIZATION

M plenary | engagement
T mondialization vs. mundialité

R Is it global?

None.
Ortiz, "Mundialization/Globalization," PDF.
Featherstone, "Genealogies of the Global," PDF.
Young, Chapter 6 + 7.

KEYWORDS JOURNAL DUE

WEEK 16 | DECEMBER 08

EXAMINATION WEEK

MEET + RETURN FINAL PROJECTS
MONDAY, 08 DECEMBER 12:45-2:45

BIBLIOGRAPHY |

- Yvette Abrahams. "The Khoekhoe Free Economy: A Model for the Gift." In Genevieve Vaughan, ed. *Women and the Gift Economy: A Radically Different Worldview is Possible*. Toronto: Inanna, 2007: 217-221.
- Rudolfo Anaya. "Aztlán." In *The Anaya Reader*. New York: Grand Central, 1995: 369-383.
- Jeanette Armstrong. "Indigenous Knowledge and Gift Giving: Living in Community." In Genevieve Vaughan, ed. *Women and the Gift Economy: A Radically Different Worldview is Possible*. Toronto: Inanna, 2007: 41-49.
- Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin. *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*. New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Elsa Barkeley Brown. "Polyrhythms and Improvization: Lessons from Women's History," *History Workshop Journal* 31-32 (1991): 85-90.
- Maria Campbell, Excerpt from "Halfbreed." In Janet Witalec, ed. *Native North American Literary Companion*. Detroit: Visible Ink, 1998: 100-108.
- Aime Césaire. *Discourse on Colonialism*, New edition. New York: Monthly Review, 2000.
- Ken S. Coates. "Peopling the Earth: The Greatest Migration," *A Global history of Indigenous Peoples: Struggle and Survival*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004.
- Teresa Ebert and Mas'ud Zavarzadeh. "Class Is." In *Class in Culture*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm, 2008: 89-95.
- Olaudah Equiano. "A Horror Remembered: Olaudah Equiano's Passage to America." In Ronald Takaki. *A Larger Memory: A History of Our Diversity, with Voices*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1998: 38-44.
- Mike Featherstone. "Genealogies of the Global." *Theory, Culture & Society* 23: 2-3 (2006): 387-392.
- Frantz Fanon, "Facts of Blackness," Excerpt republished in Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, eds. *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge, 1995: 323-326.
- Jonathan Friedman. "Culture and Global Systems." *Theory, Culture & Society* 23: 2-3 (2006): 404-406.
- David Graeber. "New Anarchists," *New Left Review* 13 (Jan-Feb 2002): 61-73.
- Serge Gruzinski, "Mélange and Mestizo," *The Mestizo Mind: The Intellectual Dynamics of Colonization and Globalization*. New York: Routledge, 2002: 17:32.
- Michael D. Harris. *Colored Pictures: Race and Visual Representation*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2003.

Elizabeth F. Loftus. "Tricked by Memory," In Jaclyn Jeffrey and Glenace Edwall, eds. *Memory and History: Essays on Recalling and Interpreting Experience*. Lanham, MA: University Press of America, 1994: 17-32.

Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tool Will Never Dismantle the Master's House." In Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, eds. *The Bridge Called my Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. San Francisco: Boston, MA: Persophone, 1981.

Bruce Mazlish. "Global History." *Theory, Culture & Society* 23: 2-3 (2006): 406-408.

Luis Hernández Navarro. "The Breaking Wave." In Subcomandante Marcos. *The Other Campaign*. San Francisco: City Lights, 2006: 7-59.

Karl Marx. "Alienation and Social Class," In Robert C. Tucker, ed. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, Second edition. New York: Norton, 1978:133-135.

Renato Ortiz. "Mundialization/Globalization." *Theory, Culture & Society* 23: 2-3 (2006): 401-403.

Jorge Pabon. "Physical Graffiti: The History of Hip-Hop Dance." In Jeff Change, ed. *Total Chaos: The Art and Aesthetics of Hip-Hop*. New York: Basic Civitas, 2006: 11-17.

W.S. Penn, ed. *The Telling of the World: Native American Stories and Art*. New York: Fair Street, 2000.

Fernando Romero, *Hyperborder: The Contemporary U.S.-Mexico Border and its Future*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2008.

Boaventura de Sousa Santos. "Globalizations." *Theory, Culture & Society* 23: 2-3 (2006): 393-399.

Leslie Marmon Silko, "Pueblo Migration Stories." In *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit: Essays on Native American Life Today*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997: 25-47.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed, 1999.

Diana Taylor. "Transculturating Tranculturation." *PAJ: Performing Arts Journal* 13:2 (1991): 90-104.

Mililani Trask. "Indigenous Women and Traditional Knowledge: Reciprocity is the Way of Balance." In Genevieve Vaughan, ed. *Women and the Gift Economy: A Radically Different Worldview is Possible*. Toronto: Inanna, 2007: 293-300.

Cristina Verán, et al. "Native Tongues: Hip-Hop's Global Indigenous Movement," In Jeff Change, ed. *Total Chaos: The Art and Aesthetics of Hip-Hop*. New York: Basic Civitas, 2006: 278-290.

Immanuel Wallerstein. *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*. Durham: Duke, 2004.

Raymond Williams. *Keywords: Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Revised edition. New York: Oxford University, 1983.

Timothy A. Wise. "NAFTA's Untold Stories: Mexico's Grassroots Responses to North American Integration." *Americas Program Policy Report* (June 2003). Interhemispheric Resource Center.

Robert J.C. Young. *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University, 2003.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

RCAH 201 | TRANSCULTURAL RELATIONS | FALL 2008
PROF. DYLAN MINER

FINAL WRITING ASSIGNMENT

KEYWORDS IN TRANSCULTURAL STUDIES

Following the model originated by literary critic Raymond Williams, you will be producing a selection of *Keywords in Transcultural Studies*. Think of this project as your textbook for next year's incoming RCAH class. What terms, themes, and/or concepts do you feel are quintessential to the material covered in this class. These keywords function as the foundational concepts, not only in this class, but in the RCAH generally and their proper usage will help you develop an intellectual base for future analysis arts and humanities material. Remember that these keywords will reflect your own interests and the concepts you feel are important, as much as they will reflect the curriculum.

Do not think of this project as merely an assignment; rather think about this as building a theoretical and analytical foundation to critically engage the world around you! The application of these concepts is not limited to this class, but will continue in your studies in the RCAH and future endeavors outside of academia.



PROJECT

- 1: Choose twelve keywords
- 2: For each word, compose three sections or paragraphs
 - create a working definition of the keyword;
 - describe the historical role that the keyword plays in the material we have covered;
 - discuss why this keyword is important and its larger implications and applications.

Each keyword should be at least one-half page. Therefore your final project will be a minimum of 6 pages in length.

DUE | THURSDAY, 04 DECEMBER 2007

You are expected to bring the assignment to class. Unless previous permission is granted (extreme circumstances notwithstanding), projects will be counted late if handed in after 2:00pm on the due date. Late projects will be marked down 1.0 GPA. Papers will not be accepted after Monday, 08 December 2008.

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