
ARLT 100g
“Cultural Encounters in the Age of Exploration”

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 10am-noon, or by appointment
Office: VKC 368

Fall 2007
M/W 12-1.30pm
THH 108

Course Description

This course will examine selected episodes in the history of cultural encounters in the Americas, focusing on the first long century of contact between Europeans and Americans. In this first age of truly global interactions, peoples and cultures encountered one another in multiple contexts: exploration, trade, war, colonial occupation, religion, art. These encounters forced those who participated in them to examine some of their most basic ideas and beliefs: what a human being is, how a culture functions, what is acceptable and unacceptable in a society, and—perhaps most important—how to respond to similarity and difference, notions of self and otherness. We will examine the ways in which a wide range of texts, images, and objects produced during the period participated in and reflected upon experiences of encounter, exchange, interpretation, and representation among different and often distant cultures. We will also examine the ways in which a selection of contemporary films has represented early modern encounters.

Course Objectives

In terms of subject matter, students will gain familiarity with the history of early modern cultural encounters by working with both primary and secondary sources. In terms of skills useful in college and beyond, the main objective of this course is to develop students' critical, analytical, and interpretive skills as readers, writers, and thinkers. Students will work on their capacity to identify key issues and ask probing questions; to argue persuasively and eloquently in both written and oral contexts; and to write thoughtful, focused analysis that is convincing and thought-provoking. Through the examination of how one historical moment is depicted and described both in its own time and later on, students will address questions of perspective and motivation in the representation, use, and transformation of encounter narratives. The class will also have a strong focus on writing skills, with students both actively engaged in improving their own writing and on learning from their classmates. The final three weeks of class will be devoted entirely to working on students' final writing projects.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

You must complete all assignments and exams in order to pass the class. Grades are not assigned on a curve; excellent quality work merits high marks no matter how many people achieve it. Grades will conform to University standards (A: work of excellent quality, B: work of good quality, C: work of fair quality, D-: work of minimum passing quality). Course evaluation will be determined according to the scale outlined below.

Attendance, readings, and class participation

25% of final grade

This is not a lecture course. As an Arts and Letters class, our primary emphasis will be on developing skills of close, critical examination of texts and images through oral and written expression. All members of the class are expected to attend each class meeting prepared to discuss assigned readings and visual material. Attendance and participation are fundamental requirements of the course and represent an important portion of the final grade.

Students are expected to attend all class sessions—a sign up sheet will be distributed at every meeting. If you will not be able to attend a particular session, please make arrangements with another student to get copies of notes and announcements. Note that you are allowed only one excused absence. Five absences will result in a failing grade.

Reading of assigned texts is required. Students are responsible for reading all the assigned materials BEFORE class meetings. Students are always welcome—indeed, encouraged—to ask questions in class about any of the readings.

*Short written assignments**30% of final grade*

There will be three short writing assignments (3- to 4-pages long each), each worth 10% of the final grade for the course. These assignments must be submitted online using the Turnitin function on Blackboard. Detailed guidelines will be distributed in class.

*Midterm exam**15% of final grade*

There will be a midterm exam for this course, which may include identifications, short answers, and essay questions addressing the major issues and questions raised in the course, as well as specific readings discussed up to that point in the semester.

*Final project**30% of final grade*

There will be no final exam for this course. The final project will represent the capstone of our work throughout the semester. The assignment will consist of two written portions, each of them worth 15% of the total grade for the class:

(1) Writing a "primary source" from the period, using the texts we will read throughout the course as models. This is both a creative and an analytic assignment: students will invent a situation of cultural encounter and write a text, in any format they choose (journal, letter, dialogue, book chapter, etc.), using the voice of one or more participants in this encounter. This primary source will be 5- to 7-pages long and include at least one image (drawing, map, diagram, etc.) in addition to this textual length.

Students will clear their topic idea with Professor Bleichmar by 11/07 at the very latest.

(2) Writing a secondary source, that is, an introduction and short analysis of a primary source that situates it in historical context and makes convincing points about it in terms of the history of cultural encounter, from the perspective of a contemporary scholar. Again, the readings we'll do during the semester will be useful as models.

Students will write about a classmates' primary source, not about their own. This essay will be 3- to 4-pages long.

Students will work on this final project individually, with a classmate, in small groups, and as a class. We will devote two weeks of our course entirely to working on various drafts of final projects, focusing on developing students' skills at analytical, interpretive, critical, and persuasive writing.

Guidelines for written work:

All written assignments should be well written and researched with appropriate documentation (footnotes, bibliography, reproductions of images). They should not be preliminary drafts but finished pieces of research and writing, with well-developed ideas, argument, structure, and tone, and demonstrate both independent thought and a thoughtful engagement with the materials and issues discussed throughout the seminar. *Your work should always be spell-checked and proofread.*

Proper citation is required in all papers. You can review citation norms in either of the following titles:

- Gibaldi, Joseph, *MLA style manual and guide to scholarly publishing* (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2nd ed. 1998)
Available at Doheny Reference, Leavey Commons Desk, and Leavey Lower Commons.
Call number: PN147.G444 1998
- *The Chicago manual of style* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 15th ed. 2003)
Available at AFA Reference, Doheny Reference, and Leavey Commons Desk.
Call number: Z253.U69 2003

Either MLA or Chicago Manual citation style is appropriate to use provided you are consistent throughout your paper. Choose the one you prefer, and stick to it!

In addition, the following reference work is an extremely useful guide for paper writers in general:

- Turabian, Kate L., *A manual for writers of term papers, theses, and dissertations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 5th ed. 1987)
Available at Leavey Lower Commons. Call Number: LB2369.T8 1987

All written assignments must be printed in standard fonts and type size (no larger than 12), double-spaced, on 8½" x

11" paper, with 1" margins. Deadlines are firm; written assignments will be marked down a step of a letter grade per day (an A paper will be marked down to an A- if handed in one day late, to a B+ if handed in two days late, etc.). Appropriate medical or family excuses must be provided in order to establish new dates for assignments. Make-ups for the midterm will require substantial justification.

Deviating from these guidelines will adversely affect your grade. If you have any questions about paper format or methods, please let me know, and I will be very happy to review them with you.

Blackboard Website

I will use the Blackboard system to post announcements, class documents, and send emails. You will be responsible for any information communicated through Blackboard. Please make sure that the email address that is listed for you on the system is one you check at least once a day. You may log into the Blackboard system at <https://blackboard.usc.edu/webapps/login/>.

Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to submit their own original work for all assignments. Breaches of academic integrity include turning in a paper that has been written by anyone other than yourself or contains portions that have been written by someone other than yourself and copied into the paper from the internet, an electronic database, or a local source such as another student; as well as improper citation practices, such as copying exactly an author's words without using quotation marks and citing the source, paraphrasing in your own words an author's work without citing it, or faking a citation. The person who plagiarizes is stealing somebody else's words and also lying by claiming that they are their own. They show contempt not only for the author who they plagiarized but also for me as a professor, for other students who are fulfilling the assignment with honesty, and for the entire academic enterprise. Most importantly, they are cheating themselves of the very point of getting a college education, which is to learn valuable skills such as conducting research, thinking and analyzing, organizing, writing, planning, and managing time.

Any breach of academic integrity will be treated with the utmost seriousness. The student will receive an "F" for that assignment; based on the seriousness of the offense, he or she could receive an "F" for the course and be brought to disciplinary action by the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards.

Academic integrity practices, especially citation and plagiarism, are discussed in helpful detail in the following USC documents, which will be distributed in the first day of class and are also available online:

- "Trojan Integrity: A Guide Avoiding Plagiarism."
<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/docs/tig.pdf>
- "Trojan Integrity: A Guide to Understanding and Avoiding Academic Dishonesty"
<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/docs/tio.pdf>
- "Academic Integrity Overview"
<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/docs/AcademicIntegrityOverview.pdf>

Please read these documents carefully. If you have any questions about what is acceptable and unacceptable academic practice, please consult the Writing Center or come see me—I will be very happy to clarify information or discuss specific questions and examples.

Email Etiquette

I am always willing to help you as best I can. Email is the best way of reaching me if you need my help with a question or concern that cannot wait till my office hours or the next meeting. I will be happy to respond to your email as promptly

as I can, typically the same day and often within twenty-four hours (unless I am traveling or there is an unforeseen circumstance). Please treat email as a privilege that should not be abused: if you can find the answer to your question by yourself or by asking a classmate, then there is no need to email your professor.

IMPORTANT: Always observe proper email etiquette when contacting any professor. Your email should have a proper subject heading ("Question about SPAN495 paper topic," not, "Hello!") and use a proper and polite greeting ("Dear Professor So-and-so," not "Hi prof!"). Write in standard English and in full sentences, with proper capitalization and punctuation—think of an email to a professor as a professional communication, not a text message to a friend. Aim for politeness, consideration, and a professional attitude; all your professors will greatly appreciate this.

Materials for the Course

Most readings for the course are included in a Course Reader available for sale at Magic Machine, in University Village.

The only required book for the course is: Stuart Schwartz, *Victors and Vanquished: Spanish and Nahua Views of the Conquest of Mexico* Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000). This book will be available for purchase from the Campus Bookstore; it can also be ordered directly from Amazon.

Seminar schedule

Week 1

M 08/ 27: Introduction to the course

W 08/29: Reading, writing, and researching historical topics

- Read USC guidelines on academic honesty, distributed on first meeting, and come ready to discuss them and ask for clarification as needed
- Read Patrick Rael, *Reading, Writing, and Researching for History: A Guide for College Students* (Brunswick, ME: Bowdoin College, 2004), pp. 5-33
[This is an extremely useful guide for college reading and writing. You can access the entire text, including detailed advice on writing papers, at: <http://academic.bowdoin.edu/WritingGuides/>]

First Descriptions of the Americas / Discovery as Encounter

Week 2

M 09/3: NO CLASS (Labor Day)

W 09/05: Columbus' letters: versions of a story

- Christopher Columbus, "The Letter to Luis de Santángel, Announcing his Discovery (1493), in Peter C. Mancall (ed.), *Travel Narratives from the Age of Discovery. An Anthology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 207-214
- Margarita Zamora, "Christopher Columbus's 'Letter to the Sovereigns': Announcing the Discovery," in Stephen Greenblatt (ed.), *New world encounters* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 1-11

Week 3

M 09/10: Columbus' journal: authorship and agency

- *The Diario of Christopher Columbus's first voyage to America, 1492-1493*: abstracted by Bartolomé de las Casas; transcribed and translated into English, with notes and a concordance of the Spanish, by Oliver Dunn and James E. Kelley, Jr. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), pp. 17-27, 33-35, 41-43, 51-109
- Margarita Zamora, *Reading Columbus* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 9-20 and pp. 39-62

W 09/12: Possible interpretations: marvels and wonder

- Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 53-85

Week 4

M 09/17: Possible interpretations: mental landscapes, then and now

- Valerie I.J. Flint, *The imaginative landscape of Christopher Columbus* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 115-148
- Carla Rahn Phillips and William D. Phillips, Jr., "Christopher Columbus. Two Films," in Mark C. Carnes (ed.), *Past Imperfect. History According to the Movies* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1995), pp. 60-65

Film viewing: 1492: Conquest of Paradise (1992), directed by Ridley Scott (segments)

The Conquest of Mexico/ War as Encounter

W 09/19: Multiple tellings of the conquest of Mexico

- Stuart Schwartz, *Victors and Vanquished: Spanish and Nahua Views of the Conquest of Mexico* (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000), pp. 15-28
- R. Adorno, "The Discursive Encounter of Spain and America: The Authority of Eyewitness Testimony in the Writing of History." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd. series, vol.49, no. 2 (April 1992), pp. 210-228

First short written assignment due on Blackboard by 5pm on Friday 09/21

Week 5

M 09/24: Cortés and his men arrive in Yucatan

- Schwartz, pp. 40-43
- Bernal Díaz del Castillo, from *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, in Schwartz, pp. 43-74
- Hernán Cortés, excerpts from the letters to Charles V, in Schwartz, pp. 75-78

W 09/26: Cortés' early encounters with the Nahua

- Schwartz, pp. 79-80
- Hernán Cortés, excerpts from the letters to Charles V, in Schwartz, pp. 80-84
- Bernal Díaz del Castillo, from *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, in Schwartz, pp. 84-91
- Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, from the *Florentine Codex*, in Schwartz, pp. 91-99

Week 6

M 10/01: Tlaxcala and Cholula

- Schwartz, pp. 100-102
- Bernal Díaz del Castillo, from *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, in Schwartz, pp. 103-115
- Andrés de Tapia, in Schwartz, pp. 115-119
- Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, from the *Florentine Codex*, in Schwartz, pp. 119-123
- Images from the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala*, in Schwartz, pp. 123-126

W 10/03: The entrance to Tenochtitlan

- Schwartz, pp. 127-128
- Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, from the *Florentine Codex*, in Schwartz, pp. 128-132
- Bernal Díaz del Castillo, from *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, in Schwartz, pp. 133-155

Week 7

M 10/8: The fall of Tenochtitlan

- Schwartz, pp. 182-184

- Selection from the *Chronicles of Michoacán*, in Schwartz, pp. 184-189
- Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, from the *Florentine Codex*, in Schwartz, pp. 189-196
- Francisco Aguilar, in Schwartz, pp. 196-199
- Bernal Díaz del Castillo, from *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, in Schwartz, pp. 199-211
- Selection from the *Cantares mexicanos*, in Schwartz, pp. 211-213

W 10/10: Aftermath

- Schwartz, pp. 214-243

Week 8

M 10/15: The conquest on the screen

Film viewing: La otra conquista / The other conquest (2000), directed by Salvador Carrasco

- Inga Clendinnen, "Fierce and Unnatural Cruelty: Cortés and the Conquest of Mexico," *Representations*, No. 33, Special Issue: The New World. (Winter, 1991), pp. 65-100

W 10/17: MIDTERM EXAM

Week 9

M 10/22: No class meeting (to make up for extra meeting on Friday)

W 10/24: Visit to USC Special Collections (list of items to be discussed will be handed out by professor)

EXTRA MEETING: FRIDAY, 10/26: *Class visit to view the exhibit The Arts in Latin America, 1492-1820, on show at LACMA.*

Religious Encounters / Religion as Encounter

Week 10

M 10/29: Missionaries in the New World

- "Orders given to 'the Twelve' (1523)," in Kenneth Mills, William B. Taylor, and Sandra Lauderdale Graham (eds.), *Colonial Latin America : a documentary history* (Wilmington, Del. : S.R. Books, 2002), pp. 59-64

W 10/31: A missionary's view

- Motolinía, Toribio, *History of the Indians of New Spain*, translated and annotated with a bio-bibliographical study of the author by Francis Borgia Steck (Washington: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1951), pp. 87-109, 124-132, 141-145, 148-151, 295-298

Second short written assignment due on Blackboard by 5pm on Friday 11/02

Week 11

M 11/05: A defense of Amerindians

- Las Casas, Bartolome de, *A short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*; edited and translated by Nigel Griffin, with an introduction by Anthony Pagden (London and New York: Penguin Books, 2004), pp. 3-36, 42-64, 107-115

W 11/07: Las Casas' mode of argumentation and debates around Amerindians' rights

Anthony Pagden, "*Ius et Factum: Text and Experience in the Writings of Bartolomé de las Casas*," in Stephen Greenblatt (ed.), *New world encounters* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 85-100

Last day to clear final project idea with Professor Bleichmar.

Cannibals and Savages/ Captivity as Encounter

Week 12

M 11/12: Hans Staden

- Hans Staden, *The true history of his captivity, 1557*; translated and edited by Malcolm Letts, with an introduction and notes (New York, R. M. McBride & Company, 1929):
 - o Chapters XVIII-XXVIII, pp. 62-81
 - o Chapter XXXIX, pp. 98-101
 - o Chapters XLVI-LI, pp. 113-120
 - o Concluding address, pp. 169-171

W 11/14: Jean de Léry

- Jean de Léry, *History of a voyage to the land of Brazil, otherwise called America*, translated by Janet Whatley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990):
 - o Table of contents, pp. vii-xi
 - o Dedication, introduction, and preface, pp. xli-lxii
 - o Chapter VIII, pp. 56-68
 - o Chapter XV, pp. 122-133

Third short written assignment due on Blackboard by 5pm on Friday 11/16

Week 13

M 11/19: European reflections on savagery

- Michel de Montaigne, "On Cannibals," in *The complete works: essays, travel journal, letters*, translated by Donald M. Frame, with an introduction by Stuart Hampshire (New York: Knopf, 2003), pp. 182-193

W 11/21: Cannibals on the screen

Film viewing: How Tasty was my Little Frenchman (1971), directed by Nelson Pereira dos Santos

- Richard Peña, "How Tasty Was My Little Frenchman," in Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (eds.), *Brazilian Cinema* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1982), pp. 191-199
- Review by Darien J. Davis, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 106, No. 2. (Apr., 2001), pp. 695-697
- Review by James W. Green, *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 77, No. 3. (Sep., 1975), pp. 699-700
- Rachel T. Greenwald, "Models of Identity Exploration in Film: *A Letter without Words* and *How Tasty Was My Little Frenchman*," *Radical History Review* 83 (2002), pp. 175-179

Week 14

M 11/26: In-class writing workshop, with first drafts of writing projects pre-circulated in advance. Details of assignments for this and the following three meetings will be discussed in class, and detailed guidelines provided.

W 11/28: In-class writing workshop

Week 15

M 12/03: In-class writing workshop

W 12/05: In-class writing workshop