

History 105: Cultural Encounters in History
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9:00-9:50
Fall 2007

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(or by appointment)

Course description

History 105 covers an extremely broad topic from world history: the interaction of different cultures through such means as war, trade, religious proselytizing, and enslavement. In particular, the course will look at five different cultural encounters, ranging from the Spanish conquest of the New World to the politics of apartheid-era South Africa and covering historical moments from the early modern period to the present day.

The course will have several objectives. First, and most obviously, it will help students to better understand each of the cultural encounters it discusses—analyzing the factors that resulted in the rise of the African slave trade and in the varying experiences of Polish immigrants and African-American workers in Chicago, for example. Second, it will seek to cast light on some of the main concepts we discuss in class, clarifying the meaning of terms like “culture” and highlighting the factors that have shaped migration and conquest throughout history. Finally, the course will serve as an introduction to historical methodology, helping students to analyze primary documents and to construct an effective historical argument. We will examine primary sources discussing each of the five encounters discussed in class while examining accounts of cultural interaction written by professional historians.

Course materials

The following books are available for sale at the college bookstore and are on course reserve at Burling Library:

Stuart B. Schwartz, ed., *Victors and Vanquished: Spanish and Nahua Views of the Conquest of Mexico*

Bartolomé de las Casas, *The Destruction of the Indies*

John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800*

Dominic Pacyga, *Polish Immigrants and Industrial Chicago: Workers on the South Side*

Mark Mathabane, *Kaffir Boy: The True Story of a Black Youth's Coming of Age in Apartheid South Africa*

Rian Malan, *My Traitor's Heart: A South African Exile Returns to Face His Country, His Tribe, and His Conscience*

In addition, a number of course readings (both articles and primary sources) will be available for download on the course's Blackboard site, located at <https://pioneerweb.grinnell.edu>. (Log in, go to the section for this course, and then click on “E-Reserves” on the left-hand side to find them.)

Requirements and grading

This course will have three main written requirements, which will be weighted as follows in determining your grade.

Three short papers of 3-5 pages each (30% total). Each of these papers will be an analysis of some of the primary documents we examine in class; I'll hand out an assignment sheet for each paper roughly 10 days before it is due. The first paper will be due on Thursday, September 27, at 5:00 PM; the second will be due on Thursday, November 8; the last will be due on Tuesday, December 11.

Mid-term exam (30%). There will be a 50-minute mid-term examination held in class on Monday, October 15. This exam will involve several comparative essay questions related to the first two units in the class, on the Spanish conquest and the African slave trade; it may also include some shorter identification questions.

Final exam (40%) The final exam, to be given on a date set by the registrar, will focus more closely on the second half of the course, but it will also include essay questions covering History 105 as a whole.

The final requirement of the course is informed and active **class participation**. Informed participation is a crucial part of the classroom experience: to earn a good grade, you'll need not only to complete the three types of written work mentioned above, but to provide evidence in class that you've done the assigned readings and that you're thinking about the issues that they address. Class participation, of course, involves not only speaking in class, but listening to (and respecting) the opinions of your classmates; if you feel uncomfortable speaking in class, come speak to me and we'll figure out how best to proceed. Class participation also depends on regular attendance—if you aren't here, you obviously aren't participating!

Grading will be based on the following formula. I will calculate a preliminary grade based on the written assignments, which will be weighted as I describe above. Once I have determined this preliminary grade, however, I will consider raising or lowering your grade based on class participation, usually by a maximum of one notch. (That is, if the grade for your short writing assignments and your exams average out to an A-, you could earn a B+, an A-, or an A, depending on the extent and the insightfulness of your class participation.) In many cases, I will simply use your class participation to decide which of two grades to assign you (that is, if your work is on the line between an A- and a B+, your class participation will decide your grade); in others, I may raise or lower your mark (say, from an A- to an A) depending on your performance in class discussion.) In rare instances, I will consider lowering a preliminary grade two notches based on your class participation—mostly in cases where you have missed an inexcusable number of class sessions or consistently failed to participate in discussion. (Rest assured that I will only lower a grade by two notches if I have spoken to you ahead of time, giving you the chance to improve.)

Important notes

Grinnell College makes reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students need to provide documentation identifying any special needs to the Dean for Student Academic Support and Advising, Joyce Stern, whose office is located on the third floor of the Rosenfield Center. Students should then notify me within the first few days of class.

Students should also be aware of the college's policy on academic honesty; plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course.

Course Schedule

Encounter One: The Spanish Conquest of the Americas

Friday, August 31: Course introduction and goals

Readings: "Letter of Christopher Columbus" [Blackboard]

Monday, September 3: What did the Spanish crown want?

Readings: "Instructions on the Government of the Colonies" [Blackboard]
"Decree on Indian Labor" [Blackboard]

Wednesday, September 5: What went wrong with the Spanish crown's plan?

Readings: "The Advent Sermons of Fray Antonio Montesinos" [Blackboard]
"Royal Response to the Sermons" [Blackboard]

Friday, September 7: How did the crown adapt?

Readings: Palacios Rubios, "The Requirement" [Blackboard]
The Laws of Burgos [Blackboard]
"The General Repartimiento of 1514" [Blackboard]

Monday, September 10: Who were the players in the conquest of Mexico?

Readings: Stuart B. Schwartz, ed., *Victors and Vanquished: Spanish and Nahua Views of the Conquest of Mexico*, pp. 1-99

Wednesday, September 12: How did Cortes proceed?

Readings: *Victors and Vanquished*, pp. 100-181.

Friday, September 15: How did Cortes succeed?

Readings: *Victors and Vanquished*, pp. 182-243.

Monday, September 17: How did the Spaniards conquer?

Readings: Bartolome de las Casas, *The Destruction of the Indies*, entire

Wednesday, September 19: How did the crown react?

Readings: "The New Laws" [Blackboard]

Friday, September 21: Did the crown get what it wanted?

Readings: Lopez de Gomora, "The Viceroy Announces the New Laws" [Blackboard]
Pizarro, "Letter to Pedro de Valdivia." [Blackboard]
Garcilaso de la Vega, "The Death of Pizarro" [Blackboard]

Encounter Two: The African Slave Trade

Monday, September 24: Why was there a slave trade?

Readings: "Labor Demand in the Americas" [Blackboard]

Wednesday, September 26: How did the slave trade work?

Readings: Job Ben Solomon, pp. 1-9. [Blackboard]
Letters of Philip Quaque, pp. 10-12. [Blackboard]
John Barbot's description of Guinea, pp. 21-29. [Blackboard]
Royal Africa Company Minutes, p. 30. [Blackboard]
The Voyage of John Atkins, pp. 31-37. [Blackboard]
Francis Moore's Travels in Africa. [Blackboard]
Letter of Captain Phelps, p. 47. [Blackboard]

Thursday, September 27: **FIRST PAPER DUE**

Friday, September 28: How did the slavers see the trade?

Readings: William Snelgrave's Account of Guinea, pp. 38-43.
Letter on board the Prince of Orange, p. 47.
Letters of Henry Laurens, pp. 48-9.
Letter of Richard Brew, p. 50.
Voyage of Joseph Hawkins, pp. 51-52.
News Items, 1759, p. 54.
Letter of William Bull, p. 54.
Letter of William Claiborne, p. 55.
Tables on the Slave Trade, p. 56.

Monday, October 1: How do historians view the trade?

Readings: Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, introduction and ch. 1-2.

Wednesday, October 3: How did the Africans in Africa view slavery?

Readings: Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, ch. 3-4.

FILM: “Africans in America” [viewing time to be arranged]

Friday, October 5: How did African slaves respond to the New World?

Readings: Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, ch. 5-6.

Monday, October 8: What happened to African culture?

Readings: Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, ch. 7-8

Wednesday, October 10: How did Africans adapt?

Readings: Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, ch. 9-10

Friday, October 12: Did the story change in the eighteenth century?

Readings: Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, ch. 11

Monday, October 15: **MID-TERM EXAM**

Encounter Three: The Chinese Diaspora in America

Wednesday, October 17: Theorizing Colonial Encounters

Readings: Scott Cook, “Colonizing Technologies” and “Imperial Diasporas”

Friday, October 19: Why did the Chinese migrate?

Readings: Maps, pp. 1-4
Spence, pp. 210-215
Congressional Record documents (4 pages total)
articles from *Harper's Weekly* (6 pages total)

FALL BREAK: OCTOBER 20-28

Monday, October 29: Why go to America?

Readings: Takaki, *Strangers*, pp. 21-42, 79-131.
Yung, *Unbound Feet*, pp. 1-4, 15-51.

Wednesday, October 31: How did the missionaries view the prostitutes?

Readings: Yung, documents, pp. 1-8.
Cameron documents, pp. 377-383, 327-331

Friday, November 2: How do historians view the missionaries?

Readings: Pascoe, "Gender Systems"

Encounter Four: The Poles in Chicago

Monday, November 5: How was the immigrant experience different in Chicago?

Readings: Dominic Pacyga, *Polish Immigrants and Industrial Chicago*, pp. 1-81

Wednesday, November 7: What makes the Poles different from the Chinese?

Readings: Pacyga, pp. 111-157

Thursday, November 8: **SECOND PAPER DUE AT 5:00**

Friday, November 9: Why was it called a "jungle"?

Readings: Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (excerpts)
Barrett, "Life"
Katzauskis, "From Lithuania to the Chicago Stockyards"

Monday, November 12: Do workers have a culture?

Readings: Pacyga, pp. 158-205.
Poole, "The Meat Strike"
Stewart, "The Influence of Trade Unions"
McDowell, "The Struggle for an American Standard of Living," pp. 62-66

Wednesday, November 14: What role did race play in this story?

Readings: Pacyga, pp. 206-227, 238-257
Spear, "Black Chicago"

Friday, November 16: How did ethnic identity affect class identity?

Readings: James Grossman, "Land of Hope" [Blackboard]
Crisis documents [Blackboard]
McDowell, "Prejudice" [Blackboard]

Monday, November 19: What is the American nation?

Readings: James R. Barrett, "Americanization from the Bottom Up" [Blackboard]

Encounter Five: South Africa

Wednesday, November 21: What was apartheid?

Readings: Sparks, *The Mind of South Africa*, pp. 147-182, 195-202, 208-213, 217-229,

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Monday, November 26: White versus white?

Readings: Bryce Courtenay, *The Power of One*, pp. 19-51 [Blackboard]

Wednesday, November 28: Black versus black?

Readings: Mark Mathabane, *Kaffir Boy*, introduction through p. 62.

Friday, November 30: Did people internalize the system?

Readings: Mathabane, pp. 86-141

Monday, December 3: Did the system work?

Readings: Mathabane, pp. 170-204, 216-223, 249-271, 328-335

Wednesday, December 5: What kind of culture did apartheid produce?

Readings: Rian Malan, *My Traitor's Heart*, pp. 5-81

Friday, December 7: What does culture tell us?

Readings: Malan, pp. 148-191

Monday, December 10: What is African culture?

Readings: Malan, pp. 283-349

Tuesday, December 11: **THIRD PAPER DUE AT 5:00**

Wednesday, December 12: Can the new South Africa leave the culture of race behind?

Readings: Preamble and Bill of Rights to the South African Constitution

Friday, December 14: Reconciliation?

Readings: Watch the film "Facing the Truth" [viewing time to be determined]