HU 5050—Theories of Interculturality / Spring 2012

Dr. Ciro A. Sandoval/Walker 322
Tel.: 7-3257
Office Hours M/W/F/11:00/12:00 and by appointment (Walker 322)

Course Description and Objectives

As the title of this course announces, we will be doing a critical overview of theories of Interculturality from/within different critical perspectives. Accordingly, we will consider theoretical, critical, philosophical and cultural perspectives of the very concept of Culture/s and interculturality from within and across philosophical and anthropological postulates, with special emphasis on ethnological and sociological critical views.

In order to pursue such critical views, we will be reading and analyzing different critical thinkers as representatives of such different critical theories and movements within different intercultural contexts, European, Indian, African, and Latin American.

We will select readings from anthologies dealing with problems of cultural translation, such as “The Translability of Cultures” by Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser, as well as single authored books dealing with critical perspectives of cultural hegemony and globalization, such as Fred Dallmayr’s *Beyond Orientalism*, Tzvetan Todorov, *The Morals of History*, and Wim Van Binsbergen’s *Intercultural Encounters*. Finally, we will also discuss more philosophically oriented views of Interculturaity as postulated by Ram Adhar Mali’s “Intercultural Philosophy.”

Obviously, as the very title, and nature of the course indicate, its goals have to be pursued from an interdisciplinary philosophy or way of thinking which allow us to carve the different, positive as well as negative connections, within a globalizing new world order. This demands, accordingly, a non-egemonic, non-ethnocentric and more democratic universal philosophy or way of thinking, one that can be subsumed under new paradigms of interpretation such as the one that encompasses Gadamer’s “Hermeneutics of difference.”

Responsibilities for this class:

- Complete the readings assigned for each class before hand
- Keep written track of main ideas and concepts to elaborate in class or as to prepare for a presentation.
- Write a final formal paper, 10-12 pages (not including required bibliography) to be handed in at the end of the class. [This paper can be on a topic that you select from the readings which we can comment among ourselves before you decide to compose, if you so desire, or you can consult individually with me, or we can do both!]
- We can decide together about an informal presentation on a specific topic of interest to you at mid-term.

Grade Percentages: TBA (through discussion first class)

Readings Schedule

Here follows the tentative selection of readings from each of the books selected for this class. As it reads, “tentative” means that as the course develops, we may decided to change the order of reading or skip some and move on to others, depending on how the discussion goes, and interest in the topics.

For those registered for the class, if you have the time to read the introduction FROM Binsbergen’s *Intercultural Encounters, please do so!* This will provide for some initial background for discussion, and setting the tone of the class.
Weeks 1/2/3
Wim van Binsbergen’s “Intercultural encounters” and will read:

Introduction, “African, anthropological and historical lessons towards a philosophy of interculturality”

Chapter 2. “Can anthropology become the theory of peripheral class struggle”?

Chapter 4: “Reflections on the future of anthropology in Africa.”

Chapter 9: “Sensus communis or sensus particularis? Emmanuel Kant in Africa

Chapter 12: “Some philosophical aspects of cultural globalization, with special reference to Moll’s intercultural hermeneutics.”

Chapter 13: “ICT [Information Communication Technology] and intercultural philosophy: an African exploration.”

Chapter 15: “Cultures do not Exist: exploding self-evidences in the investigation of interculturality.”

Weeks 4/5/6
Fred Dallmayr’s Beyond Orientalism

Introduction

Chapter I: “Modes of Cross cultural Encounter
Chapter II: “Gadamer, Derrida and the hermeneutics of difference”
Chapter IV: “Heidegger, Bhakti and Vedanta”
Chapter V: “Exit from Orientalism”
Chapter VI: “Western Thought and Indian Thought”
Chapter VII: “Modernization and Postmodernization. Wither India?”
Chapter IX: “Democracy and Multiculturalism”

Weeks 7/8/9
Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser: The Translatability of cultures. Figurations of the space in between”

1- “Crisis of alterity: cultural untranslatability, and the Experience of Secondary Otherness”
2- “Visual Syncretism: A Case Study”
3- Translation Studies [sic] and Renaissance: from vertical to horizontal translation
4- “The Curse and blessing of Babel; or, Looking Back on Universalisms”
5- “Emerson’s Constitutional Amending: Reading “Fate”
6- “Discovering America: A Cross-Cultural Perspective”
7- “The Black Hole of Culture: Japan, Radical Otherness and the Disappearance of Difference (or, “In Japan everything normal!”)
8- “Border Crossings: Translating theory: Ruth”
9- “Cross-culture, Chiasmus, and the Manifold of Mind”
10- “Memory and Cultural Translation”
11- “Remarks on the Foreign (Strange) as a Figure of Cultural Ambivalence”

Weeks 10 and 11
Tzvetan Todorov’s The Morals of History

Introduction: The Moral and Political Sciences
1. Bulgaria in France
2. Postscript: Knowledge of Others
3. The Conquest as Seen by the Aztecs
4. The conquest as Seen by the French
5. The Wrong Causes for the Wrong Reasons
Weeks 10 and 11

Tzvetan Todorov’s The Morals of History

Introduction: The Moral and Political Sciences
1. Bulgaria in France
2. Postscript: Knowledge of Others
3. The Conquest as Seen by the Aztecs
4. The conquest as Seen by the French
5. The Wrong Causes for the Wrong Reasons
6. The Journey and its Narratives
7. Some remarks on Contacts among Cultures
8. Postscript: the Truth of interpretation
9. Toleration and the intolerable
10. The debate on values

Weeks 12/13/14

Ram Adhar Mall’s Intercultural Philosophy

Chp. 1: Intercultural philosophy: A conceptual clarification
Chp. Toward a Theory of an Analogous Hermeneutics
Chp. 4: Intercultural Philosophy and Postmodernity
Chp. 5: An intercultural philosophy of Unity without uniformity
Chp. 6: Two metaphors of Time-Arrow and Time-Cycle
Chp. 9: The Concept of the Absolute—An intercultural Perspective
Chp. 10: Europe in the Mirror of Cultures—On the Myth of the Europeanization of Humanity: A Non-European Discovery of Europe

Official Notes:

1. MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the American with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to educational services at MTU, please contact the Dean of Students Office. For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact the Humanities Department Advisor or Chair.

2. Academic Integrity: Students who cheat, plagiarize or fabricate information, as well as students who help others to cheat, plagiarize or fabricate information, can receive sanctions ranging from warning to special failing grade to expulsion from the university depending on the severity of the offense. See MTU handbook or the Academic Integrity Policy: www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/proposal/02/18-02.htm