

The Geography of the Other
Honors Seminar (ALHN 13950-06)
Fall 2008
University of Notre Dame

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Office hours: T, 1:30-3; Th,
1:30-3, or by appointment

“Things seen are things as seen.”
Wallace Stevens

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

NB: All readings marked with one asterisk (*) are available via Electronic Reserve from the Hesburgh Library and those marked by a double asterisk (**) will be distributed as handouts. Lastly, those marked with a diamond (◊) are available online via a dedicated search by title.

PART I: TERRITORY

Week One Getting Oriented: Nomadic and Sedentary

*Ernest Gellner, *Plough, Sword and Book: The Structure of Human History*, 11-20.

Joseph Conrad, *The Heart of Darkness and the Secret Sharer*, xvii-xviii, 3-12.

Bruce Chatwin, *The Songlines*, 1-19.

**Clifford Geertz, “Found in Translation: On the Social History of the Moral Imagination,” (a selection) in Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 36-39.

⇒_Webwork: explore
Wikipedia texts on “other”
and “alterity”

Week Two Territory and “Metageography”

*Martin W. Lewis and Karen E. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), ix-xiv, 1-13.

_Rudyard Kipling, “The Ballad of East and West” (1889)
<http://www.bartleby.com/246/1129.html>

Conrad, *Secret Sharer*, 13-29.

⇒First Blog Commentary:
What is Civilization?

Week Three Pacing the Territory of the Encounter

Conrad, *Secret Sharer*, 30-49.

Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, *The Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca*, 1-28, 33-37, 38-41, 173-176.

Chatwin, *The Songlines*, 20-40.

*Lewis and Wigen, *Myth of Continents*, 13-19.

⇒ Film: *Cabeza de Vaca*, Nicolás Echevarria,
dir.

PART II: MAP

Week Four Concept and Coercion

Gellner, *Plough, Sword and Book*, 50-69.

Conrad, *Secret Sharer*, 50-59.

Cabeza de Vaca, *The Narrative*, 48-65, 85-97, 112-125, 130-142, 154-169.

Chatwin, *The Songlines*, 41-71.

*Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Myth and Meaning* (New York: Schocken Books, 1979), 5-24.

⇒First Paper Due (950
words): *Considering Power and
Coercion*

Week Five The Emergent Other and the Encounter

Chatwin, *The Songlines*, 72-109.

*Pierre Clastres, *Society against the State*, Robert Hurley and Abe Stein, trans. (New York: Zone Books, 1987), 7-26.

Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History*, vii-xviii, 1-9.

*Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America*, Richard Howard, trans. (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1985), 3-13.

Henri Baudet, *Paradise on Earth*, 3-22.

⇒Second Blog Commentary:
Identity and Difference

Week Six **Theoretical Curiosity and the Gaze**

Baudet, *Paradise on Earth*, 23-53.

Jason Goodwin, "Introduction," in Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, ix-xiv.

Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, xvi-xx, 3-18, 60-93.

Chatwin, *The Songlines*, 110-143.

⇒_Team Webwork: *The Flowering of Marco Polo's Imagination: Did he travel to China? Does it matter?*

Week Seven **Reprise of Key Themes: Self, Others, World**

Polo, *The Travels*, 106-150, skim.

Sahlins, *Islands of History*, 9-31.

*Todorov, *The Conquest of America*, 14-33.

*Seymour Phillips, "The Outer World of the European Middle Ages," Stuart B. Schwartz, ed., *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting and Reflecting on the Encounters between Europeans and Other Peoples of the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 23-63.

⇒ Film: *Walkabout*, Nicholas Roeg, dir.

Week Eight **Map Confronts Territory: Civilizing Mission I**

*Eric R. Wolf, *Europe and the People without History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 4-11, 24-34.

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, vii-xv, xix-xx, 63-108.

Polo, *The Travels*, 151-210, skim intermittently.

Mary B. Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400-1600*, 87-112.

⇒Third Blog Commentary:
How is Civilization Coercive?
Why does Exploration Accelerate in the 15th and 16th centuries?

Week Nine **Map Confronts Territory: Civilizing Mission II**

Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, 109-146.

Sahlins, *Islands of History*, 73-103.

*Wolf, *Europe and the People without History*, 34-65.

Baudet, *Paradise on Earth*, 54-73.

⇒Film: *Apocalypse Now Redux*, Francis Ford Coppola, dir.

PART III: CONCEPTUAL TERRITORY

Week Ten **Consequences of the Confrontation**

Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, 147-184.

Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*, 1-25.

Chatwin, *The Songlines*, 144-185.

Sahlins, *Islands of History*, 104-135.

*Jack Goody, *The East in the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1-10.

⇒Second Paper Due (1500 words): *Interpreting the 'Other': Cinematically, Narratively*

Week Eleven **Modernity and the Challenge of Representation**

Chatwin, *The Songlines*, 186-206.

Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, 52-85.

Sahlins, *Islands of History*, 104-110, 120-135.

*Zhang Longxi, "Introduction," *Mighty Opposites: From Dichotomies to Differences in the Study of China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 1-18.

Week Twelve **Mode of Apprehension: Conflict or Confluence**

Chatwin, *The Songlines*, 207-233.

Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, 86-118.

*Umberto Eco, "From Marco Polo to Leibniz: Stories of Intellectual Misunderstandings," in Umberto Eco, *Serendipities: Language and Lunacy*, translated by William Weaver (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1999), 52-75.

****Determination of Final Paper Topic****

⇒Film: *Black and White in Color (Noirs et blancs en couleur)*, Jean-Jacques Annaud, dir.

Week Thirteen Representing Self through the Other

Chatwin, *The Songlines*, 234-267.

Gellner, *Plough, Sword and Book*, 113-144.

Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, 119-151.

Sahlins, *Islands of History*, 143-156.

⇒Group Blog Post: A History of the Present?: Theoretical Curiosity and the Enlightenment Project

Week Fourteen Misunderstanding and Mutual Entailment

*Eco, "Languages in Paradise," in *Serendipities: Language and Lunacy*, 23-51.

*Zhang, "The Myth of the Other," in *Mighty Opposites*, 19-54.

*Goody, *The East in the West*, 250-262.

⇒Film: *The Last Wave*, Peter Weir, dir.

Week Fifteen The Return of the Nomad: Inhabiting the World

Chatwin, *The Songlines*, 268-294.

*Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World*, 165-209, 255-266.

⇒Final Paper Due (2500 words) Friday, December 14

Finis