

**Multiculturalism and Beyond:
Identity Politics, Cultural Difference, and Hybridity in the Americas.**

ABSTRACTS

Romulo Acurio (Vienna)

Identitary Competence and Cultural Freedom in the Andean Region

In the Andean countries, racism is peculiar because it refers not only to discrimination against indigenous or Afro-American minorities, but draws a boundary of contempt against those individuals deemed less urban, educated or modern within each region, community or even family. Racism persists even among individuals of similar socio-economic condition because it is a practice of obsessive categorization, based on personal appearance, which is not just a matter of skin color, but includes the subjective traits of intonation, vocabulary, clothing and manners. In Andean societies, every individual is simultaneously a potential object and agent of racism, depending on the mutual categorizations of each social situation.

The most influential popular cultures only deepen this problem. On the one side, the official *mestizo* culture, promoted by the State and the media, instills an abstract and patriotic egalitarianism which masks local and regional memories. On the other hand, global popular culture imposes, with its introspective and expressive power, a demanding model of autonomy, modernity and cosmopolitanism.

To confront the fluid boundary of racism, individuals must learn, from early childhood, to obtain in every situation the social recognition they need to articulate their sense of singularity with their sense of local, national or global belonging. Individuals must develop an introspective and expressive competence with which they negotiate their social position and, in some cases, create products and practices of ironic, artistic or intellectual resistance.

Andean individuals have always developed such an *identitary competence*, with varying degrees of success, since the Colonial period to the present. It has helped them live with each other and avoid – often subliminally - overt violence during long periods of history, but has not eliminated the daily stress of cultural contempt.

In order to encourage the development of such *identitary competence* in society, Andean countries need public spaces of cultural freedom. Only a mobilization of civil society can conquer, in reaction to the popular cultures encouraged by the State and the media, the policies and practices necessary to promote an equitable cultural market, intercultural dialogue, a critical exploration of local and regional memories, new forms of patriotism and cosmopolitanism, respect

for collective rights and recognition of individual rights to cultural entrenchment or cultural uprooting.

Without cultural freedom, a steady growth of the economy, even if it becomes more inclusive, will leave unresolved the problem of racism and, with it, a basic ingredient of social conflict in the Andean region.

Philipp Altmann (Marienheide)

Pluriculturalismo o multiculturalismo – El movimiento indígena ecuatoriano y su política cultural

La sociedad ecuatoriana está caracterizada por una gran diversidad cultural y étnica. Esta diversidad conlleva a una discusión entre diferentes actores políticos sobre su concepción y organización. En las constituciones políticas de 1998 y 2008 se puede notar esta, discusión en una manera diferente de describir la sociedad ecuatoriana. En 1998 la constitución definió al Ecuador como “pluricultural y multiétnico” (Art. 1), mientras en el 2008 Ecuador está descrito como “intercultural, plurinacional” (Art. 1).

Esta ponencia quiere dar un panorama sobre las definiciones de las posibles convivencias entre las culturas y etnias que tienen importancia en el discurso político en Ecuador; especialmente las diferentes organizaciones indígenas y sus políticas culturales serán descritas e interpretadas en este contexto de forma amplia y profunda. Se vislumbran grandes diferencias entre la CONAIE y las diferentes organizaciones indígenas que por lo general son menos radicales en sus exigencias de autonomía cultural.

Se analizarán las políticas culturales o de identidad de las grandes organizaciones indígenas, enfatizando en los conceptos de multiculturalismo, pluriculturalismo, interculturalismo y la concepción de los pueblos indígenas como naciones. Estas políticas culturales serán descritas en cuanto a sus implicaciones, sus fines y razones políticas, la posibilidad de realizarlas y sus funciones dentro del discurso político en Ecuador

Leslie Bary (University of Louisiana at Lafayette)

Race, Color, and Culture in Peru and Brazil

The son of a doctor employed on a sugar plantation, Cirilo Villaverde (1812-1894) had to present a “certificate of whiteness” to enroll in school. These certificates were ostensibly proofs of lineage and purity of blood. They could also be obtained, as José Piedra (1987) reminds us, through a demonstration of literacy in Latin and Spanish, and of cultural allegiance to the Western world. The possibility of earning whiteness was no challenge to the color hierarchy itself.

Does the present day emphasis on multiracial identities challenge the ideal of whiteness, or does it merely broaden its scope? Are we, on the other hand, re-creating intermediate categories of privilege? Is the “inclusiveness” associated with both multiculturalism and “hybridity” a way to evade discussion of persistent racial inequality? Why is it so attractive to turn from the question of race to that of culture, or from facing difference to embracing hybridity?

While race and *mestizaje* have been discussed, and racial prejudice condemned in Latin America from Independence forward, structural and institutional racism are evaded more often than they are addressed. Although there is significant regional variation in the ways in which the notion of “race” is constructed, the structure of racist practice is remarkably uniform. This paper argues that both “race” and racism can most usefully be studied in a transnational frame.

Engaging recent work on Peru by Marisol de la Cadena and Gonzalo Portocarrero, and on Brazil by António Sérgio Guimarães and Denise Ferreira da Silva, Alexandra Istafahani-Hammond and Patricia Fox, this paper examines the relationship which has been constructed among the concepts of race, color and culture in these two countries. Our primary question concerns the ways in which the interrelation of these three terms may help to illuminate institutional racism and/or to screen it from view.

Olaf Berg (Medienpädagogik Zentrum Hamburg)

**The Zapatista Politics of History:
Reconfiguring the Role of Indigenous Tradition in National Culture**

When the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) first appeared publicly with an armed uprising in 1994 in the south-eastern part of Mexico it immediately entered into a symbolic struggle with the Mexican government about the classification of the Zapatista project. While the government tried to classify the uprising as a local conflict with indigenous people that can be solved by implementing social assistance and development projects, the Zapatistas located their struggle as a nation wide struggle for democratic changes of the political and economic system and the real inclusion of indigenous people into the nation.

I argue that an important part of this struggle for inclusion and redefinition of the Mexican Nation is a very conscious politics of history brought forward by the Zapatistas. On the one hand it refers to symbols of the Mexican Revolution, like the very name of Emiliano Zapata, historic places like Aguascalientes that gave name to the first place of meeting between the Zapatistas and the Mexican civil society or the route chosen by the Zapatistas for their march to Mexico City in 2001. On the other hand it takes up playfully the indigenous tradition of oral history telling and includes the historic experience of 500 years of resistance to the occupation by Spanish conquerors and their successors not as past but as present. This indigenous understanding of history that challenges the idea of history as a successive line of past presents allows for a critical or postmodern reading of history that superposes different time layers at a specific given moment into what Walter Benjamin had called a dialectical image.

The Zapatista project intervenes into a Mexican Nation-State that itself is built on a revolution and an understanding of multi-cultural “mestizaje” as expressed in Vasconcelos’s concept of a “cosmic race”. This concept acknowledges the indigenous culture as important heritage that has been integrated into the current Mexican culture but does not recognize indigenous tradition as a progressive element in the development of the society. Contrary to this the Zapatista politics of history considers indigenous tradition as a dynamic process and source of social improvement that can help to develop a better society for all Mexicans. It reinvents

the relation between local, national and global self-interpretation and identity by introducing the unfulfilled hopes of past struggles into the actual moment as a dialectical image. Thus I argue, that the famous Zapatista slogan “for a world where many worlds fit” should not necessary be interpreted as a claim for multi-cultural coexistence of cultures but can be seen as the assertion of a space for a multiplicity of shifting identities. In this scenario history is a contested place where the manifold indigenous experiences of past and present are always already there.

Katharina Bick (Bremen University)

Localizing Literary Whiteness: Post-Critical Whiteness Studies in the Contemporary American Novel

My presentation will be a contribution to critical whiteness studies, a new academic field that has complemented minority studies of racialization. I examine the literary representation of whiteness in six contemporary American novels, including Dorothy Allison’s *Cavedweller* (1999), Brock Clarke’s *The Ordinary White Boy* (2001), Anthony Giardina’s *White Guys* (2006), Jeffrey Lent’s *In the Fall* (2000), Kate Manning’s *Whitegirl* (2002), and Danzy Senna’s *Caucasia* (1998). By analyzing these novels, my study focuses on the discursive process of developing a white racial identity. In addition, it unveils the manner in which whiteness and white identity have been shaped through a range of intersectional aspects (race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality). Furthermore, this study inquires how the novels contribute to a self-conscious cultural discourse on whiteness by way of literary representation.

Whereas whiteness is discussed in various other fields, such as history or sociology, whiteness as race has yet to receive adequate critical consideration in literary studies. The few literary critics who actually focused on whiteness in their studies primarily analyzed works of white American authors prior to the development of whiteness studies. In these earlier publications, whiteness is usually perceived as a racially neutral category and is never explicitly stated unlike the race of black characters. The novels I analyze, however, disrupt the notion of whiteness as invisible and clearly mark whiteness and white identities. Each novel stresses specific elements of whiteness / race such as racial passing, white trash or whiteness and masculinity. The writers deal with whiteness in a new and direct way, which challenges (white) readers and literary critics alike. In *Whitegirl*, for example, the very first sentence “I was not always a white girl” (1) immediately relates to the topic of white racial identity and is a form of introducing whiteness that has not yet occurred in American literature.

Leila Bijos (Universidade Católica de Brasília)

Multiculturalism and Ethnic Communities in the Americas

The aim of this paper is to analyze the concept of “multiculturalism” as a social, political, and cultural paradigm in the Americas, focusing on the indigenous population, especially socially excluded Aymara, Quéchua, and Moxeñas women in Bolivia, as well as black Brazilian women, African descendent slaves from the State

of Bahia who are socially excluded. In spite of the development levels achieved in the last decades, Latin America countries still have a large number of persons living in absolute poverty. Despite of colonialism most of the communities are presently inserted into affirmative actions, social and political projects which are changing their daily life.

Capucine Boidin (Institut des Hautes Etudes de l’Amerique latine, Paris)

Mestizaje and Multiculturalism from Paraguayan Intellectuals’ and Peasants’ Points of View / Mestizaje y multiculturalismo vistos desde los intelectuales y campesinos paraguayos de hoy

El multiculturalismo como ideología regional (el guaraní si bien no consiguió ser reconocido como lengua oficial del MERCOSUR a pesar de ser oficial en el Paraguay y en la región de Corrientes en Argentina es lengua cultural del MERCOSUR), nacional y el mestizaje como práctica cotidiana en Paraguay toman formas particulares e interconectadas. Hasta los años 1990 y la caída de la dictadura del General Stroessner (1989), la ideología nacional estaba forjada en torno al mestizaje hispano- guaraní. Con la nueva constitución (1992), se define el Paraguay como un país oficialmente bilingüe Guaraní Castellano y pluricultural. Afirmando la necesidad de consolidar tanto el español como el guaraní como lenguas centrales de la identidad nacional paraguaya varios intelectuales discriminan dos realidades: las demás lenguas indígenas no paraguayo-guaraníes (habladas por el 2% de la población) así como las formas populares del habla guaraní que se mezclan fuertemente con el castellano (el 90% de la población afirma hablar el guaraní, y el 40% declara hablar solamente el guaraní). Así mismo contrastaremos este proyecto de educación bilingüe con la percepción que tienen en el día a día los campesinos paraguayos de su lengua “guaraní jopara” (es decir entreverado) que presenta tanto interferencias como alternancias de códigos lingüísticos. Gracias a un trabajo de campo realizado en guaraní, analizaremos los distintos significados de la palabra *jopara* en la vida cotidiana de los campesinos porque remite tanto a mezclas de plantas como de comidas y personas.

Alejandra Bottinelli Wolleter (Universidad de Chile, Santiago)

**Construir un sujeto, ensayar una nación:
letrados, racismo y poder en el sur americano**

El trabajo propone una mirada crítica acerca de las formulaciones que algunos intelectuales sudamericanos, en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX (Sarmiento, Alberdi, Vicuña Mackenna) y primeros decenios del XX (Palacios, Encina), realizan en relación con la definición de la “identidad nacional” (Larraín 2001), en el entendido que dichos planteamientos se han desarrollado como discursos autoidentificatorios culturalmente hegemónicos (Laclau, 2000), perfilando los contornos de lo que los imaginarios nacionales reproducen como definiciones de la *esencia* de *lo* nacional.

Interesa evidenciar la correlación entre los conflictivos procesos de construcción identitaria de las naciones latinoamericanas, los imperativos del

desarrollo capitalista y la construcción de discursos etnocentristas, racistas y progresivamente xenofóbicos por parte de los sectores intelectuales dirigentes.

El trabajo intentará, específicamente, la construcción de una genealogía latinoamericana del discurso racista, perfilando el particular desarrollo que este discurso discriminador y excluyente ha mostrado en América Latina, debido sobre todo a la influencia que aquí ha tenido la ideología desarrollista -como *falacia desarrollista*- para la cual “el desarrollo que siguió Europa deberá ser seguido unilinealmente por toda otra cultura” (Dussel 1994: 19). Se sostiene que a partir de esta matriz cultural eurocentrada los sectores nacionales dirigentes habrían (re)formulado la idea de *raza* tanto para justificar las políticas de exclusión y de exterminio de los indígenas, como para deshistorizar las asimetrías estructurales de estas sociedades promoviendo una integración subordinada de sus miembros.

Para evidenciar a la vez las alternativas deconstructoras de la matriz racista entre nuestros letrados, el trabajo tendrá en cuenta las formulaciones críticas de intelectuales latinoamericanos como Manuel González Prada, José Carlos Mariátegui, Francisco Bilbao y Alejandro Lipschutz acerca de la operatoria del discurso racista en Latinoamérica.

El análisis será realizado privilegiando la noción de ‘discurso’ proporcionada por Foucault (1966, 1985), como construcción de poder que en su circulación construye y reconstruye las interpretaciones legítimas sobre lo social. Muy útil nos serán, a la vez, las herramientas proporcionadas por el método de la deconstrucción derridiana (Derrida, 1967) especialmente para intentar la desarticulación de la retórica binaria del racismo y visibilizar los engranajes de esta operatoria en la lucha por el poder interpretativo.

Gerardo Chacón (Quito)

Demandas y pláticas transversales de multiculturalidad, e interculturalidad en el Ecuador

El Ecuador es un país megadiverso. Posee una extraordinaria biodiversidad en diferentes especies vegetales y animales. Las islas Galápagos, la costa del Pacífico, los altos Andes, con su coloso Chimborazo de más de 6000 metros de altura y, la selva amazónica, constituyen un hábitat sumamente variado, que permite un ecosistema adecuado para la existencia plural de toda clase de seres vivos. Los humanos, no son la excepción. El país está poblado por más de 14 nacionalidades y 24 pueblos originarios, cada una de los cuales ha desarrollado su propia cultura, desde cientos o miles de años antes de la conquista incásica e hispana.

Siendo la conquista y la colonia un acontecimiento histórico que atravesó la historia del país, con sus traumas de dominación, desvalorización y destrucción cultural, la emergencia de la rebelión como acto de recuperación de la dignidad humana oprimida, ha pasado por las etapas de resistencia, levantamiento, luchas de la independencia, organización y participación política con demandas de creación de un Estado Plurinacional y Pluricultural. Esta propuesta es, consecuentemente, un postulado de creación de las condiciones de posibilidad de una sociedad intercultural en la que todos los ciudadanos puedan participar activamente en la construcción de este modelo social y político único y diverso.

Kathryn E.T. Dennler (London)

**Mexican State-Led Transnationalism Revisited:
Perception and Reception among Mexican Migrants**

This paper analyzes the impact of the state-led transnational policies and practices of the Mexican government on the lives of Mexican migrants. Through interviews with Mexican migrants and representatives of the Mexican consulate in New York City, this paper examines several aspects of the reception of state-led transnationalism: levels of contact with the Mexican government; perceptions of the relationship between Mexican migrants and the government; and participation in public and private transnational activities.

This research confirms that transnational participation is widespread among Mexican migrants, but despite the efforts of the Mexican government to encourage and facilitate transnationalism, participants knew little about such programs. Thus, state-led transnationalism has not significantly impacted participants' life patterns or engagement in transnationalism. Although study participants expressed interest in dual citizenship and absentee voting laws passed by the Mexican government, even these policies failed to make a meaningful difference in transnational participation and perception of the migrant-state relationship among participants. The data suggests that access to and engagement with public or institutionalized forms of transnationalism are uneven, based in part on gender, immigration status, and socioeconomic position.

Gisella Díaz Azofeifa (Universidad de Costa Rica, San José)

**Pueblos Indígenas en Costa Rica y políticas de reconocimiento:
una aproximación crítica al paradigma del multiculturalismo**

El pueblo indígena de Térraba es considerado como uno de los pueblos más transculturados de Costa Rica. Hoy en día, la comunidad indígena de Térraba enfrenta importantes desafíos que ponen en riesgo la continuidad étnica de ese pueblo. De ahí que en los últimos años, las y los indígenas térrabas han iniciado un proceso de revitalización de la cultura y la identidad indígena que ha dado lugar a interesantes procesos de etnogénesis. A partir de un estudio sobre la organización política en esta comunidad, se pone de manifiesto por un lado la complementariedad entre la organización tradicional indígena y la organización comunal establecida por la legislación nacional bajo la figura de la Asociación de Desarrollo Integral Indígena Térraba (ADIIT), así como las relaciones interétnicas entre el Estado costarricense y el Pueblo Indígena. La etnicidad se ha convertido en un eje central de la organización política de térraba, dejando al descubierto las debilidades del sistema de representación y participación política del sistema político costarricense.

Thomas Doerfler (Bayreuth University)

After Multiculturalism: The Dead Ends of Culturalism

It is a commonplace nowadays that we have to challenge (neo-)colonialism, imperialism or racism, as they are a threat for civil societies and respectful social relations. But among an emancipation-oriented left there is no shared perspective how to challenge it, as the fierce debates among post-colonialists, anti-Empire-activists or Foucault-inspired Critical Studies show.

Thereby the limitations of multiculturalism as a “left” theory got obvious: to make the subaltern speak (Spivak 1994) only adds new narrations to the discourses of power, as we might know they are underprivileged, but resign to change this fundamentally. This problem converges with the limits of postmodernism as a once critical perspective: both fail to promote a “positive” order that could e.g. ensure the rights of the others as this may only be a western *grand recit* (Lyotard 1979). Moreover, in deconstructing the “hegemonic discourses” multiculturalism affirms the western narration of reason and rationality as it has to rely on them necessarily to make the points.

What should be discussed therefore is how to overcome the intrinsic dead end of this political stance: that “the other” is used as an object of my own (western, deconstructive) ideology, let him/her be enriching, “altered” or “othered”: it is the western *grand recit* of universality (*one* theory of differentiation/deconstruction for *all* the cultural identities around the globe) that marks the ideological trap here, as these theories reject any universal entitlement – except the universal stance of multiculturalism itself.

Although this is not a completely new critique (e.g. Ahmad 1995) I would like to add a perspective based on Lacanian psychoanalysis: What about, when the subaltern is a mere western (libidinal, suppressed) object of desire that tells us more about ourselves than about “the other”? What about, when the culturalization of the other is only a sublime way to avoid the reality of class struggle, social injustice or globalization? And finally, what if the subject is not dead but the only way to ensure diversity, as postmodernism is fundamentally rooted in a profound misreading of Lacanian psychoanalysis itself (Žižek 2002, 2005)?

Sheri Dorn-Giarmoleo (Claremont)

How Is a Multicultural Student Transformed into a Multicapital Prototype?

To begin to identify what cultural capital is according to Bourdieu, it is necessary to put in the forefront of my mind, my own complicity, conscious and unconscious, as victim and perpetrator in this process. I am a social product of the relationship between the three possible representations of Bourdieu’s cultural capital: the embodied state, the long term mind and body manifestations of acquisition; a kind of personal marketing strategy of “new and improved.” As an educator in an educational system that reproduces the cultural divisions of society; manipulated by the principle of equivalence used as a foundation for rigid hierarchies and ferocious inequalities, I am manipulated and manipulative. I contribute to the production of an education to enlighten students to value their multicultural lives while I recognize their desire to learn is driven by the social infection of class ascension not social transformation. Capital is delighted to pit one social group against another, each clamoring for their own justice, their own greater part of what is designed to deny unless you transform

yourself into looking like what is marketable. Ethnic histories are harbored for panorama boxes in museums not to be respected on the street.

Education is enlightenment and it is also designed to indoctrinate a human being to embrace the invisible violence of capital. Education may be viewed as a way to transform an individual's habitus reconstituting ones social reality as a social reproduction of a specific intended reality. One is a product of social capital to be transformed into another form of a social kinship. It is in this process that educational opportunity as we think of it may not be an opportunity at all – but a set up for a disintegration of ones own social reality. The lure is material gain, a personal inflation, to be more than where you are from, at what price?

Isabel Durán (Universidad Complutense, Madrid)

A Transatlantic Approach to Chicano/a Lifewriting

At stake in ethnic life-writing studies is the question of the subject as individual self, and as the product of social and ideological forces. That is, is one 'subjected to' a group identity over which one has no autonomous control, or is the ethnic self, as an individual, also constituted by multiple differences within and from itself?

In my attempt to show how a poetics of differences may accommodate a recognition of the effects of group consciousness in the production of the autobiographical 'self,' as much as the specificity and the possible agency of that self, I will share with the audience my experience with teaching Chicano Life-writing in Spain. And it is there; in the paedagogical field, that I can perhaps bring some unexplored insights, because I bring into my teaching the comparativist insight of the outsider. I will follow two comparative lines in my analysis of four particular works; one generic approach which will deal with Chicano autobiography as part of the Western literary tradition of life-writing (focusing on works by Richard Wright and Luis Rodriguez), and a second one which will deal with Chicano Life-writing as one of the many voices that compose "American Autobiography" (focusing on works by Oscar Zeta Acosta and Paul Monette).

Liamar Durán Almarza (Universidad de Oviedo)

Dominicans from 'Here' and 'There': Transcultural Ethnicity on Stage

The Dominican-American community in New York is perhaps one of the best examples of how processes of transculturation are affecting traditional definitions of ethnic identity in the Americas. Given the intense economic, social and cultural transnational exchanges between the island and the US from the 1960s, Dominicanyorks have been challenging the illusion of homogeneity in the definition of Dominicanness for decades, creating a transnational social space that transcends traditional national border lines.

The theatrical works of Josefina Báez, a Dominican-American performer living in New York, and Sherezada (Chiqui) Vicioso, a Dominican poet and playwright, lyrically explore issues of Diaspora, identity and migration and the impact these phenomena might have in the lives of migrant Dominican women. Presenting

diasporic experiences from two differing but interconnected locales—New York and Santiago de los Caballeros--, these plays offer two complementary views on how ethnicity, race, social class, age and geopolitical location interact in the formation of transcultural identities. This paper seeks to establish a comparative framework for the study of performative representations of ethnic identities in the Americas, while at the same time revealing critical linkages between cultural productions in the Caribbean and Latino/a communities in the US.

Demetrius L. Eudell (Wesleyan University, Middletown)

The Dialectic of the Sixties and the Counter-Reformation of Multiculturalism

Despite its many transformative aspects, the social movements of the 1950s and the 1960s that took place in the United States, would have unintended consequences with tremendous implications, one of which would be that they would give rise to the current discourse of multiculturalism and hybridity. Using an archeological approach, one that excavates the intellectual foundations of this discursive formation, this presentation seeks to interrogate the epistemological ground of these discourses. It begins with an overview of the post-1776 history of the United States, central to which will be its discourse on race, a belief system that structured the social hierarchies of “post-colonial” U.S. society, and in whose terms, most extremely, those of African heredity descent would be represented as the lack of what it means to be fully human. This presentation aims to demonstrate that, rather than constituting a challenge to our present globally Western discourse of biocentrism (on the medieval analog of theocentrism), these discourse actually reinforce the very system of meaning that they ostensibly set out to challenge. Therefore, this interpretive framework remains woefully inadequate in dealing with the history and contemporary realities of the Black and Indigenous population groups, two of the three founding civilizations to the cultural matrix of the Americas, as both presently find themselves enduring machineries of containment; the latter on tribal reservations, while the former does so as part of the prison industrial complex. In other words, after the Sixties, whose potential remained the transformation of apartheid (and bourgeois) United States, these counter-reformational discourse have emerged, and often beyond their conscious intentions, have served to solidify these containments rather than enable their dismantling.

Maren Freudenberg (Berlin)

Self and Other in Chinese Canadian Literature: Identity and Belonging in Larissa Lai’s *When Fox is A Thousand*

The paper addresses Chinese Canadian writing as a fairly young literary genre, which began emerging as a distinct field of ethnic minority literature with the publication of the anthology *Many-Mouthed Birds* in 1991.

The paper concentrates on Larissa Lai’s first novel, *When Fox is A Thousand*, published in 1995. A member of Vancouver’s Chinese Canadian community, Lai started working for the Asian Canadian Writers’ Workshop in 1990. *Fox* explores

ideas of identity, belonging and hybridity: Artemis Wong, a young Chinese Canadian woman living in Vancouver, grapples with finding a place of belonging for her racialized and marginalized self. She is racialized by white society for her Chinese background, and marginalized further both by the mainstream and Vancouver's Chinese Canadian community because she is lesbian.

In the course of the novel, Lai attempts to construct alternative spaces of belonging for oppressed members of ethnic, sexual and other minorities. She argues for a "diaspora of the queer", a convergence of racialized and marginalized individuals who define themselves and their identity in negation of dominant social discourse. Within this diaspora, notions of "nation", "ethnicity", "history", "self/other" are scrutinized as concepts of social dominance and discrimination.

Fox challenges the reader to think beyond these concepts as linear and static explanations of reality. As such, it offers a post-multicultural approach to transcending the limitations and hegemonic norms of identity, hybridity and belonging.

John A. Garcia (University of Arizona, Tucson)

Navigating Latino Immigrant Experiences: Racialization, Ethnic and National Identities Dynamics and Political Incorporation

While the demography and, to a lesser extent, the socio-cultural fabric of American society has been transformed to a more multi-cultural society, the nature and extent of political incorporation of immigrants has been an uneven and contradictory process. In the case of the former, racialization, marginalization, and a social stratification system has served Latino immigrants, more, to distance themselves from the "core" of American society as a means to survive, adapt, and "find their place" in the American social political system. In the case of the latter, enduring American principles of equality, mobility, hard work and "give me your tired, ..." has been contradicted with the experiences of Latino immigrants in their workplace, in schools, in neighborhoods, and state and local ordinances and referendums.

It is this navigation process, some enduring practices and societal *modus operandi* intersect with the experiences of Latino immigrants. That is, America's racial system, class stratification, language acquisition, and cultural assimilation/acculturation processes affect the extent of incorporation for Latino immigrant. Whether it is described as segmented assimilation, cultural isolation, dual pluralism or Americanization, the attributes of the Latino immigrant him/herself, their experiences living in American and American institutions and societal values/behaviors play major roles in shaping their identification(s) and incorporation in the body politic.

Thus the focus of this paper is to exam the dimensions of racial, ethnic, and national identities among Latino immigrants. Does Latino immigrant incorporate a racialized identity after living in the U.S. and/or resist placing themselves into the American racial classification system? Is there movement toward incorporating a pan-ethnic identity at eh expenses or in addition to their own sense of national origin identity? What is the substance or basis of Latinos' understanding of what it is to be American? What are the cultural determinants or factors that contribute to these developments and in what direction are their effects? How much do their institutional

contacts and experiences shape this adjustment of being part of American life as members?

Annick Gendre (Paris)

“Hybrid”, “Hybridity” and “Hybridization” in Literary Criticism: A Trope? A Concept? A Tool? A Paradigm?

In the postcolonial theory, the recent use of the terms “hybrid”, “hybridization”, and “hybridity” seems to reflect an inner conflict. On the one hand, critics aim to break with the visions and discourses peculiar to the colonial past; on the other hand, they seem to share the secret desire to certify that the colonial legacy has been overcome with no trace remaining.

While some various and creative meanings resort to the adjective “hybrid”, the use of the noun “hybridization” raises some difficulties because of its significations in genetics and in molecular biology. The neologism “hybridity” is thus more widely used (even more than its corresponding adjective) in order to describe a quality and/or a process in progress and these uses have to be compared with the ones of some other lexemes such as “mixture, multiculturalism” (Saïd, Hall, Bhabha) and their translations into French, Spanish and German.

As related to a metaphor as well as to a concept, hybridity has raised some cultural issues and has more rarely supported an aesthetic project (Jaina Sanga’s essay about Rushdie). According to Jahan Ramazani, the metaphor of hybridity has played a central role in the definition of the hybridity’s models. The use of hybridity as a textual tool, a figure of discourse without contextualization, has impoverished its meanings. Because rhetoric and poetics have sometimes developed a globalizing speech on a globalized discourse, the role of literary criticism has to be studied.

Hybridity has been constantly used by criticisms in the aim of giving an account of an *unseizable* process. As a paradigm, “hybridity” implies comparative processes and the exploration of the philosophies of otherness (Alfonso De Toro and the thoughts of Felix, Guatarri and Derrida). The “hybrid muse” (Jahan Ramazani) can also respond to the colonial desire (Robert Young), and the dialectic of hybridity to the nomadic identity (Jochen Dubiel). To what extent does the paradigm of hybridity need to stay a hybrid paradigm?

Cornelia Giebeler (University of Applied Sciences, Bielefeld)

Strangeness in Indigenous and Western Thought: Border Feelings from Inside Out and Outside In, Developed in a Biographical Case Study with a Female Spiritual Healer and Her Surroundings in the So-Called “Matriarchal” Zapotec City of Juchitán de Zaragoza/México.

Strangeness can be seen as a concept, which is used on all levels of society organization including the “feelings” of people in recognizing borders between human beings, groups, institutions or nations. Ten years before there has begun a new discussion about epistemological differences between Latin American thinking and the so called “Western Thought”, creating and discovering another border between

cosmovisions – reflecting the historical lines of “Pre-Columbian” science-constructions.

In this contribution, I’ll discuss the concept of strangeness in the constructing process of border lining in intra- and inter- individual and group processes, reflecting the multiplicity of borders and methods of dealing with borderlines but also reflecting the meaning of the term “borders” in relation to strangeness.

The European idea of individual development and the construction of “I” and “self” is very close to concepts of bonding, belonging and strangeness. Ethnicized communities are often denying this concept, proposing constructions of a “we” from the beginning to the end of life and denying the paradigmatic difference of western educational and psychological science between a “me” and the “others”. In processes of identity constructions under conditions of processes called “hybridity”, “creolization”, “melange”, “global flows”, “re- and de-territorialization” the concept of bonding and strangeness may be helpful to analyze identity buildings in the process of integration and de-integration of the Americas.

Strangeness discourses appear in psychoanalytical, phenomenological and interactionist theories represented, for example, by Waldenfels, Erdheim or Znaniecki. Strangeness in my point of view is a concept used on all levels of society organization to describe borders, including people’s “feelings” in recognizing borders among human beings, groups, institutions or nations. In my contribution, I’ll discuss borders in epistemological thought and certain circumstances to overcome borders of thought in everyday life.

My interest is also to figure out how invisible border lines or the appearance of strangeness works in the organization of everyday life. The example will be one of my case studies on the organization of conflictive everyday life in the so-called “matriarchal” society of Juchitán. The case study deals with the coming out of a Zapotec woman as a “*spiritual healer*”. With this example from my biographical and fieldwork material about spiritual healings in Juchitán de Zaragoza en México, I will discuss the gendered healing system in the Zapotec world and the doing gender process in a women-dominated society. Margarita, one of the famous, but nevertheless undercover-working spiritual healers at least got the help of her husband, who left his well-paid work in the oil industry for the healing processes of his wife.

Astrid Haas (Bielefeld University)

The Calculus of Literacy: Jaime Escalante, Richard Rodríguez, and the Latina/o Education Debate between Assimilation and Multiculturalism

The Mexican American writer Richard Rodríguez and the now retired Bolivian mathematics teacher Jaime Escalante are two of the most significant figures in the public discourses about the situation of Latina/os in the United States educational system. Their position vis-à-vis Latina/o education and the educational approaches they have come to represent have crucially informed the educational political debates about affirmative action and bilingual education in the 1980s and ‘90s far beyond educational political circles and the Latina/o community at issue.

Rodríguez became famous for his autobiography *Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez* (1981), an account of his journey from being the

monolingual Spanish-speaking child of working-class Mexican immigrants to becoming a fully assimilated American academic and English-language writer. While receiving widespread critical acclaim, the book also stirred controversy, especially among Latina/o intellectuals and educators, as Rodríguez advocated Latina/o linguistic and cultural assimilation to Anglo-American educational norms and fiercely rejected both bilingual education and affirmative action. Escalante gained distinction for developing an advanced mathematics program for poor minority students in the California public school system from 1974-2001. Up to this date, he is further recognized for fostering Latina/o self-esteem based upon a sense of ethnic identity within the multicultural nation and the value of academic education among Latina/o communities. His story was brought to a larger public through the now already classic semi-documentary film *Stand and Deliver* (1988).

The paper will look at *Hunger of Memory* and *Stand and Deliver* in the context of the recent public discourses on Latina/o in the U.S. educational system. A particular focus will be on their depiction of Latina/o identity formation through education in its situatedness between cultural assimilation, the endorsement of multiculturalism, and ethnic identity politics. Going beyond these texts, the presentation will further examine how Rodríguez and Escalante have become public actors, even icons of opposing political positions, in the ensuing controversies over bilingual education, affirmative action, the ideal of multiculturalism, and Latina/o identity politics.

Jonathan Hart (University of Alberta, Edmonton)

From Vitoria to Obama:

Literature, Law, History and a Hope Beyond Race in the Americas

How do literature, film, art, music, and the media engage in discussions of (post) multiculturalism, cultural hybridity, belonging, and intercultural conflict in the Americas?

The early modern and the post modern have some important points in common about hybridity and attempts to secure the rights of indigenous peoples and those who were not Christians. In this paper I would like to discuss a tradition in literature, law, history and other accounts of a notion that European power, religion, politics, culture or race did not allow Europeans to claim the New World or Americas. Francisco de Vitoria, a Dominican of Jewish converso ancestry who studied and lectured at the University of Paris, became chair of theology at Salamanca in 1526. Vitoria questioned the right of the Pope to set our donations of the lands of the New World. The peoples there had the right to their lands and rulers. Bartolomé de las Casas, Jean de Léry and Michel de Montaigne are others who questioned European cultural superiority. Natives themselves were go-betweens or mediators, like La Malinche, Squanto (Tisquantum), Pocahontas and Etienne Brulé. They raised suspicion but also the possibility of new cultures and hybrids in the Americas. The issue of slavery and civil disobedience or reform were raised by people of European, Native and African descent like "El Inca" Garcilaso de la Vega, Phyllis Wheatley, Thoreau, Lincoln, Mary Prince, Red Cloud, Sitting Bull, Red Cloud, Louis Riel, Martin Luther King, John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Obama and others. The issue of other the Americas from another or alternative point of view that came before multiculturalism and may be there as a utopian vision beyond multiculturalism (but

that has benefited from it) is the subject of this paper. Barack Obama, who has an audacity of hope, comes from such a tradition of being between cultures and his attempt to recognize race in order to get beyond it is a key to future success in the Americas and in the world. The last part of the paper will place Obama in this context.

Markus Heide (Humboldt-University, Berlin)

**Cosmopolitanism in the Americas:
Theories and Cultural Practice Beyond the National and the Ethnic?**

The paper examines the potential of different notions of cosmopolitanism to go beyond the politics of multiculturalism, identity politics and ethnic affiliations.

Controversies over issues such as migration, national borders and human rights have inspired a renewed debate about the Enlightenment concept of world citizenship. As a heterogeneous and contradictory discourse of cultural and political forms of affiliation and belonging beyond the modalities of the nation-state, cosmopolitanism has championed a universal human community, marked (in the Kantian sense) by trade and ‘perpetual peace,’ while signifying (in its Marxian sense) a necessary stage of global capitalist production. Thus, cosmopolitanism has historically been caught between an idealist philosophy of national and cultural transcendence and a materialist assessment of commodity and identity production.

In the context of debates on globalization and transnational cultural studies, a number of scholars have made use of cosmopolitanism as a philosophical, cultural and political framework, first, for countering “traditional” nationalisms (e.g. Julia Kristeva) and, second, for providing a critical addition to the notion of globalization as primarily the borderless flow of capital and the subsequent economically-driven homogenization of the globe (e.g. Anthony Appiah, Ulrich Beck). For these authors, cosmopolitanism contains a utopian potential that is helpful and useful in a world of increasing economic and cultural interconnectedness and mobility. From a normative point of view, David Held considers it the governing ideal of a liberal notion of global democracy. More critically, Sheldon Pollock et al. emphasize that cosmopolitanism not only goes beyond the “territorial imagination” of 19th- and 20th-century nationalisms in the philosophical context of the European Enlightenment, but that it is just as much part and expression of multiple experiences of “minoritarian modernity” as these have emerged from European expansion, colonialism and modern globalization.

The paper will examine different notions and theories of cosmopolitanism – such as Revolutionary Cosmopolitanism, minoritarian and enforced cosmopolitanism, aesthetic cosmopolitanism, expansionist/imperial cosmopolitanism, activist cosmopolitanism – and will contextualize them in the history (and present state) of the Americas.

Jürgen Heinrichs (Seton Hall University, South Orange)

**“Can we? Representations and Realities of Social
and Political Change in U.S.-American Visual Culture”**

I propose to present a paper that explores Barack Obama's rapid political ascent to the presidency of the United States as seen through the lens of media representations and contemporary art practice. In particular, my project charts how art, media, and visual culture functioned to advance and to augment a discourse of "change" at the center of the Obama/Biden campaign. Unlike previous presidential campaigns, Obama's race heavily relied on visual representations, logos, and pictorial formulas that, in turn, drew from American art and popular culture. For instance, posters and buttons featuring the letters "HOPE" appropriated American artist Robert Indiana's iconic "LOVE" prints and sculptures of the 1960s. Close analysis of such representations traces how the campaign utilized art and visual culture to promote political positions. Conjuring up notions of a supposedly multicultural, post-racial social and political order, visual culture played a key role in the success of Obama's campaign. However, critical examination of these visual strategies reveals a wide gap between visual promise and political realities. Thus, my close analysis of visuals associated with Obama's rise to the presidency reveals that "change" largely remains the function of a lofty visual rhetoric, whereas "sameness" continues to govern the political and economic realities on the ground.

Rüdiger Heinze (Technical University, Braunschweig)

Gazpacho & Tomato Soup: Personal Identity, Communal Belonging and (Trans)National Integration in (Post)Multicultural U.S.-American Literature

In a recent *New York Times* review of Jhumpa Lahiri's latest book, a collection of short stories called *Unaccustomed Earth*, the author writes that "except for their names," many of the protagonists of these stories "could evoke any American's ... childhood," that the "generational conflicts ... cut across national lines," and that this "tussle ... has gone on ever since men and women lived in caves." In a similarly universalizing move, Nam Le's short story "Love and Honor and Pity and Pride and Compassion and Sacrifice" pits the marketing demands for "hot ethnic literature" against Faulkner's advice to write about these grand and universal themes rather than "special interest" issues such as ethnicity and multiculturalism.

Both the review and the short narrative capture a pertinent universalizing but post-essentialist moment in current debates around cultural identity and belonging in a host of disciplines, usually accompanied by some prefix such as "trans-" or "post-": the (rediscovered) ideas of a rooted yet universal cosmopolitanism (Appiah 2006), a planetary yet agential perspective that allows for a new view on sameness and difference (Gilroy 2005), the emphasis on the transnational affiliations between local identities (Levitt and Waters 2002), or an insistence that the global is always also local, and vice versa (Appadurai 2001).

However, many so called multicultural literary narratives about personal identity, communal belonging and (trans)national integration in the United States probe the dissonant "tensions between ideals of identity politics and efforts to create a heterogeneous multicultural stage" (Altieri 1998) rather than enthusiastically promoting and embracing cultural convergence, thus echoing Walter Benn Michaels' admonition against "the replacement of the discourse of ideology by the discourse of ontology" (Michaels 2004).

My talk will examine a larger number of (U.S.) multicultural literary narratives across a broad spectrum of ethnicities (from the Americas, but also from Asia and Europe, for example Chávez's *Last of the Menu Girls*, Castillo's *So Far From God*, Islas' *Migrant Souls*, but also Lahiri's and Le's short stories or Eugenides's *Middlesex*) and attempt an overview and typology of the different kinds of (post)multicultural representations and stories of identity and cultural belonging.

Maria Herrera-Sobek (University of California, Santa Barbara)

Barbed Wire Iconography in Chicano/A Art: Aesthetic Activism Against the Drive to Stop Multiculturalism at the Border

Multiculturalism is a fact of life whether one is supportive of its tenets or against them. We inhabit a global society and economy where mass migrations of peoples across Europe and the Americas, as well as other parts of the world, has taken place at an accelerated rate in the second half of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century.

Mass migrations from Mexico and Latin America to the United States, in particular, have transformed the face of the receiving country. This tremendous increase in the Latino population (approximately 45 million to date) has produced a backlash against Latino immigrants and against a resultant multicultural society. It has led to stringent immigration policies such as the building of a controversial 700-mile wall on the US-Mexican border as well as spawned English-Only movements. In addition, there has been an increase of violence against Latinos in the USA.

My study explores issues related to immigration and multiculturalism with its main focus on the response by Chicano/a artists to the anti Mexican immigrant sentiment surfacing in many parts of the United States. This response has taken the form of a series of paintings where barbed wire appears repeatedly as a prominent iconic motif in the pictorial narrative of the artistic work. The iconic use of barbed wire can be translated as an effective semiotic sign of social protest representing the well-known phrase: "man's inhumanity to man." It is a metaphor for pain, suffering, and social injustice. My presentation examines how Chicana/o artists are engaged in the theoretical paradigm I have proposed and denominated as **aesthetic activism** against those who wish to curtail Mexican/Latino immigration and a multicultural society in the United States.

Alfred Hornung (Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz)

Transcultural Life Writing

Multiple migrations in postcolonial times have brought about new conceptions and features in the realm of autobiographical literature and scholarship. The broadly conceived genre of life writing, which includes many forms of self-expression in different media, serves as a readily available platform for the representation of a self in a world of rapid changes. Contemporary authors in the classic immigration countries use their often experimental life writing to situate themselves in their new country of residence, but also to maintain connections to their countries of origin, creating a link between different cultures. The self, which governs these texts, is primarily oriented along ethnicity and gender and differs radically from the belief in a unified self once formulated by European Enlightenment thinkers. Rather, this self derives its flexibility from the transitory and multicultural experiences that also affect the political status of nation states. Transcultural life writers challenge beliefs in national allegiance and geographical boundaries. In this sense, they provide viable models for the interaction of displaced individuals in a multi-ethnic democratic society and project a new relationship with their environment. Transcultural life writing reflects the mutual changes of the genre of autobiography and the status of the nation state in a global age.

In my talk I will give three examples of this genre of transcultural life writing in North America with references to Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean: The Canadian writer Dionne Brand from Trinidad-Tobago and her personal narrative *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging* (2002); Barak Obama's life journey from Hawaii to Indonesia, Africa and the continental United States in *Dreams from my Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance* (1995; 2004), and the Canadian scientist David Suzuki of Japanese descent who uses his life writings, *Metamorphosis: Stages in a Life* (1987) and *The Autobiography of David Suzuki* (2006), for a global concern for the environment. These transcultural life writings can be seen as visions of a transnational effort to create a "cosmopolitan community of world citizens" (Habermas).

Ruth Y. Hsu (University of Hawai'i at Manoa)

Karen Tei Yamashita's *Tropic of Orange* and Sesshu Foster's *Atomik Aztex: Cortez and Mandelbroit* in Asian American Literature

Karen Tei Yamashita's and Sesshu Foster's writing often profoundly challenge dominant popular perceptions of what constitutes Asian American literature, and by extension, conventional notions of ethnic and racial identities. Yamashita's novels offer the opportunity to critique the prevailing belief that Asian American ethnicity is strictly defined within the discursive structure of the American nation-state, rather than having always been forged in a transnational and multicultural context of multiple returns and departures. Similarly, Foster's poetry and prose chart the globalized and hybrid nature of "American" identity formation.

I propose in this paper to examine the fictive characters and thematic concerns to do with the discursive construct of identity in both *Tropic of Orange* and *Atomik Aztex* by exploring figurations of notions of quantum physics found in the

novels. Although *Tropic of Orange* has been analyzed in terms of magic realism, I argue that such ideas as fractals, chaos theory and the butterfly effect are much more in keeping with the overall sensibility of the narrative, particularly in terms of the authorial rendering of the proverbial El Norte, its relation to the political South, as well as of Los Angeles, this postmodern urban space and world city. Thinking about *Tropic of Orange* using concepts from quantum theory also allows readers to re-situate the prevailing configuration of Asian American ethnicity as strictly located within the material space of the American nation-state. Similarly, Sesshu Foster's *Atomik Aztex* upsets prevailing views of identity. Foster's narrative also envisions Los Angeles as the site of temporal and spatial disruption, as it is visited by Aztecs/Aztexs from an alternate universe in which they have conquered Europe. In this alternate Aztex universe, categories of identity define societal or political relations, with lethal consequences for the captives of the Aztex Empire. Foster's speculative novel effectively weaves together different realities, different worldviews, so as to explore the ways in which humans construct and rationalize others, marginalize and at the same time incorporate difference into rituals of erasure. This paper will examine the use of the idea of alternate universes in the d/evolution of Zenzontli, both warrior and meatpacker and the Keeper of the House of Darkness for the Party of Aztek Socialism. Ultimately, as in *Tropic of Orange*, Foster's story problematizes our notions of identity and depicts the finely wrought connections of humans.

Carmen Ibáñez (Rostock University)

Bolivia: el doble carácter de la etnicidad

Los movimientos sociales bolivianos se mantuvieron adormecidos por aproximadamente veinte años, ¿Cuál fue el elemento aglutinador de estos movimientos aparentemente inertes, dispersos? Un factor importante -aunque no el único- fue la etnicidad que apareció como un elemento de cohesión identitaria y que estructuró los marcos de movilización.

Por otro lado, hoy Bolivia atraviesa uno de los enfrentamientos internos más agresivos de los últimos años de su historia, el tema de reformar la administración política del Estado de unitarismo al de autonomías ha sido la chispa que encendió el fuego. Un discurso basado en diferencias étnicas ha sido enarbolado y ha servido de justificación para los pedidos separatistas de grupos radicales. Vemos como el discurso de identidad étnica ha superado las divisiones de clase y ha resultado mucho más poderoso a la hora de articular a sus miembros, dada su capacidad para movilizar y controlar lealtades de grupo.

Bolivia es por tanto un ejemplo concreto de la etnicidad en su doble carácter: como un instrumento de dominación (nosotros y los otros) y un instrumento de resistencia (aglutinador de los movimientos sociales). La ponencia estudia la función concreta que desempeña la etnicidad en determinados momentos de la transformación de identidades en el accionar de los actores políticos y sociales del país.

Yolanda Jiménez Naranjo / Rosa Guadalupe Mendoza Zuany

(Universidad Veracruzana, Xalapa)

**Reconocimiento de la diversidad en el ámbito educativo en México:
legislación, políticas públicas e imaginarios sociales de la escuela intercultural**

Esta ponencia afronta los debates que han llevado al desarrollo de legislación y políticas públicas para el reconocimiento del carácter pluricultural de la nación mexicana, así como los “imaginarios” que este mismo debate ha provocado sobre la relación de los pueblos indígenas y el Estado en el ámbito de su educación escolarizada.

La cuestión indígena en México se refiere fundamentalmente al reconocimiento del carácter multicultural de la población y las implicaciones son complejas. Dos tareas centrales del Estado en su redefinición como “pluricultural” a partir de reformas constitucionales, de la firma y ratificación del Convenio 169 de la OIT, y los movimientos sociales demandantes del reconocimiento de la diversidad, son: 1) legislar para reconocer la diversidad y para delimitar los derechos y obligaciones implicados, y 2) diseñar e implementar políticas públicas que reconozcan la diversidad y atiendan los rezagos a la que la población indígena ha estado sujeta históricamente. La construcción del Estado-nación mexicano – entendida como un proceso continuo – ha estado estrechamente ligada a políticas y proyectos educativos que, por un lado, históricamente han intentado fortalecer la idea de nación, y por otro, apuntan al reconocimiento de la diversidad cultural.

Con el reconocimiento al carácter “pluricultural” de la nación mexicana en un contexto internacional sumergido en este tipo de demandas, el enfoque intercultural en la educación – aunado casi invariablemente al adjetivo bilingüe – se convierte en un paradigma para la gestión de la diversidad, si bien importado de Europa y países latinoamericanos pioneros en su implementación. Este enfoque ha permeado todos los niveles educativos con objetivos que van desde constituirse como mecanismos compensatorios y pertinentes a contextos culturales diversos y atendidos desigualmente, hasta programas que empoderan y devuelven a los pueblos indígenas la toma de decisiones en el ámbito educativo a nivel comunitario e incluso regional.

Las reformas en el ámbito legislativo y de política pública, a su vez, han generado debates que contienen ciertos imaginarios sociales deseables en torno a la escuela intercultural en el contexto de los pueblos indígenas, fruto de los diversificados intereses y anhelos de los actores que participan en la creación y re-creación de estos imaginarios.

Luz Angélica Kirschner (Bielefeld University)

**Sigrid Nunez' *A Feather on the Breath of God:*
Multicultural Identity in the Americas**

In the context of the ongoing discussion about the appropriateness, feasibility, and relevance of multiculturalism for the twenty-first century, *A Feather on the Breath of God*, 1995, the semiautobiographical work by the Eurasian Latina U.S. American Sigrid Nunez, challenges Chinese American identity boundaries as to the extent to which “blood” or “roots” can influence the recognition of a person as Chinese

American. The nameless multicultural female protagonist equally destabilizes the boundaries of quintessential Latin@ and *mestizo* Latin American identities. Through Carlos Cipriano Chang, the character's Chinese Panamanian father, Nunez work redefines prototypical Latin American identity that has been partly constructed on the marginalization of and the scarce attention paid to the histories, cultural contributions, and experiences of non-Catholic, non-mestizo, non-criollo cultures in the countries of the region, that is to say, the Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Confucian, Hindu, and other traditions that are also constitutive historical and cultural elements in the formation of the Latin American countries.

Simultaneously, *A Feather on the Breath of God* engages with the predicament of multiracial children who, because racially impure, are not accepted by their own parents. This paper suggests that Nunez's text describes how the psychological trauma of the unnamed female narrator and the cultural conflict which made her family life so painful, to a significant extent, result from her parents' inability to overcome their cultural nationalism and racism in their daily family life. Seemingly trapped in still common stereotypes about multiracial and multicultural people (schizophrenic, confused, split, unstable, etc.), and notions about organic and essential cultural identities, the parents act as though their daughters could be neither Chinese nor German and make it impossible for their racially and culturally mixed children to find a place in their respective Chinese and German cultures. In this sense, Nunez's narrative can be read as a warning to the disconnectedness and disruption that notions about essential ethnic identities may engender.

Concurrently, in the context of a globalized world that facilitates the emergence of complex identities, this essay proposes that Nunez's narrative contests essentializing concepts of liberal and neutral multiculturalism which construct cultures as discrete, ahistoric, impervious to external influences, and exclusive from other cultures. Nunez's narrative exposes that this ideological response to ethnic dissection which, as Nira Yuval-Davis reminds us, has too often posited that minority cultures simply have to be adjudicated a private space, tolerated, and "basically left alone" as a means to preserve good relations and national stability, fails to foster meaningful cultural interaction or mutual recognition.

Jaroslav Kušnír (University of Presov)

**Transgressing Ethnic Borders:
Gerald Vizenor's *Feral Lasers* (1991) and Sherman Alexie's *Class* (2000)**

The concept of American cultural identity was traditionally based on the essentialist understanding of it and it was related mostly to the WASP population. In their literary works, some of the contemporary Native American authors, especially L.M. Silko, G. Vizenor and S. Alexie problematize the essentialist notion not only of this concept of American cultural identity, but also essentialism associated with the Native American ethnic identity. In their works, many Native American and cross-blood characters occupy a paradoxical position of the interspace between a dominant and marginal, ethnic cultures not only because of their marginal position in their relationship to the major population, but also in their relation to their own ethnic culture because of their problematic status of the outcasts. In my paper I will analyze both authors' use of postmodern narrative techniques, especially metafictional elements, intertextuality,

but also self-irony and postmodern parody. The emphasis will be on the analysis of these narrative technique's role in a creation of borderline characters and problematic status of the essentialist concept of Native American cultural identity understood as both different from the mainstream culture but, at the same time, problematic because of its transient and complex status influenced by a history of interracial relationships. The focus of my comparative analysis will be on Gerald Vizenor's short story *Feral Lasers* (1991) and Sherman Alexie's short story *Class* (2000).

David Latimore (Durham)

The Paradox of Multiculturalism

The rhetoric of multiculturalism implies a blending of ethnic cultural identity into a communal/nationalistic identity that unites a community while also respecting the underlying cultures upon which it is contingent. Paradoxically, multiculturalism assumes a re-narration of ethnic identity through the cultural hermeneutic of the dominant culture into the ethnic identity is subsumed.

Multiculturalism calls the individual out of existing social constructs into a new construct defined by the dominant culture. The rhetoric of the multiculturalism signals this change through its performance practices and rituals that invite individuals to participate in this re-narration of their identity. These efforts are in response to the conflictual history of ethnic identity formation which deploys binary constructs contingent on the concept of "the other". The deployment of binary concepts heightens and sustains the attention to, and importance of, differences resulting in the deeply woven social patterns of conflict and segregation that exist within many societies.

The irony is that multiculturalism ultimately requires the subsumption of socioethnic identity into the dominant culture's unifying narrative on the grounds of reducing ethnic conflict. Yet, there is a long history within the Americas where the call to a united identity allowed the dominant culture to engage in activity in conflict with its explicit philosophical goal. Multiculturalism posits a non-ethnic identity that ultimately enables forms of racism by defining the positive attributes of the dominant culture at the expense of ethnic identities and cultures.

This paper highlights this paradoxical relationship between the proposed versus actual telos of multiculturalism. It goes on to suggest that it is possible to honor ethnic identity and to transform one's understanding of that identity in a way that does not conflict with a more robust understanding of communal identity. The challenge for a community is to recognize the ways in which the complex nature of identity formation allows for the maintenance of multiple identities, and that this maintenance of multiple identities need not conflict with the call to communal identity and participation.

José Carlos Lozano (Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey)

**The Social Construction of a Mediated Transnational Space:
The Use of a Mexican Regional Television Channel in Houston, Texas,
by Migrants from Monterrey, Mexico**

The paper explores the role a regional Mexican television channel has in the maintenance of cultural identity and cultural links with their home city of former Monterrey, Mexico inhabitants who migrated to Houston, Texas. Available through both over-the-air and cable signals, “*Multimedios Televisión Canal 12*”, a Monterrey, Mexico’s very local and successful television channel, facilitates the creation of a transnational mediated space in which migrants from that city are able to keep their emotional bonding and attachment to their home city in their everyday lives while consuming other Mexican and U.S. media and while working, studying and interacting with American institutions and persons in that Texas city. The paper presents the findings of in-depth interviews with 18 informants who migrated in different periods from Monterrey to Houston, as well as an analysis of 4,214 calls originated in the United States to the channel’s call center. The study concludes that in addition to the initial social and familial networks that facilitated the arrival of newcomers and helped them to maintain strong cultural and symbolic ties with their home region in Northeast Mexico, the availability of “Canal 12” in Houston provides migrants with a strong reinforcement of their sense of belonging to their former local community and avoid their emotional distancing from it.

Martin Lütke (Justus-Liebig University, Giessen)

**“Nobody Knows What White People Eat!”:
Whiteness and Cultural Difference in Contemporary North American Comedy**

The object of this contribution to “Multiculturalism and Beyond” is to analyze contemporary comedy in North-American culture with regards to constructions of cultural difference. Arguably more than any other genre in popular culture comedy skit shows and stand-up comedy shows capitalize on doing difference and thus provide American culture with a space to articulate cultural, ethnic, or racial difference in North America. In accordance with the broader culture, comedians construe ‘whiteness’ as the unspoken normative center of American culture, especially as they interrogate the alleged invisibility of whiteness as an ethnicity.

I argue that comedic identity politics and the ongoing demarcation of ‘difference’ – as opposed, for example, to an acknowledgement of ‘hybridity’ – in 21st-century North American comedy have powerfully contributed to the early 21st century ‘comedy boom’. A variety of contemporary comedy programs, ranging from the *Chappelle Show* to the successful ‘youtube.com-comedy-phenomenon’ Jon LaJoie, serve as the source material under scrutiny for the presentation. Generally, the underlying concern of the paper is to disentangle the conflated, yet conflicted, relationship between multiculturalism and ‘whiteness’ as they relate to humor and emerge in comedy lore.

Isabelle Lutterodt (University of California, San Diego)

Walking the Line: American Tradition and the Meaning of Multicultural Identity

What was experienced on November 4, 2008 in the United States was the first moment in many Americans' lifetimes where, across racial lines, we believed we could get to that place Martin Luther King, Jr. talked about. What could not be erased in light of Barack Obama's election as the 44th President of the United States were the opposition's campaign and the overtly racist responses some of the campaign's supporters demonstrated. Not to be ignored, it was reported that on November 5, 2008, white supremacist websites saw an increase in membership, compounding the increase that was reported after Barack Obama secured the nomination as the Democratic Party's candidate. Later in November, headlines noted that racial hate incidents in the United States had skyrocketed since the election.

Compounding these incidents are the background of the recent history of Jena, LA, and response to Hurricane Katrina that reflect our Jim Crow past, as well as the continuing dialogue at the federal level about more strict immigration laws. Therefore, multiculturalism in the United States is not just about people from different parts of the world converging to create a melting pot, but also about the strong desire of residents' to maintain traditions of generations past through cultural distinctions that make cities, states and regions around the country unique, even as they reflect inequality through cultural hierarchy.

In this paper we will discuss the fine line between "American tradition" and "cultural progress" that keeps a truly multicultural state from existing and the ongoing points of science and race, ghettoization and failing education that promote the cultural divide.

Kenneth H. Marcus (University of La Verne)

Modernism in Los Angeles: Arnold Schoenberg and the Cultural Émigrés

Los Angeles has long had a history of ethnic integration and conflict dating back to its founding in 1781 as an outpost of the Spanish colonial empire. In this paper I would like to focus on the 1930s and 1940s, when an unprecedented group of cultural émigrés—mainly Jewish writers, composers, musicians, and filmmakers—came to Los Angeles, permanently transforming its cultural environment, especially in terms of the defining art movement of the twentieth century: modernism. Why did they choose Southern California to settle, many for the remainder of their careers? What talents did they bring, and how did these talents result in a transformation of the city's modernist movement? In part as a result of this immigration, Los Angeles became a center of modernism on the West Coast, a position it held for the rest of the century. I will use the example of modernist composer Arnold Schoenberg and place him within the cultural milieu of similar artists who escaped Nazi Germany and Austria and in effect created a "Weimar on the Pacific," as UCLA literary scholar Ehrhard Bahr has recently put it.

As both a teacher and composer, Schoenberg was able to reach a variety of audiences, and so provides us with an apt example of an immigrant continuously engaged in multicultural communication. Several of his works spoke directly to the problems of cultural difference, and they represent the "hybridity" that often characterized the work of other émigré artists from the period. He was also vocal, similar to Adorno, on the dangers of art becoming a cultural commodity. To understand contemporary hybridity and inter-cultural difference in the Americas, it is

essential to have a historical perspective. This paper seeks to achieve that goal, while commenting on the challenges that modernist artists faced during a vital era for the development of the arts in America.

Krasimira L. Marholeva (Charles University, Prague)

“Transborder” Nationalism and “Hyphenated” Identity: The Czech Community in the USA in the late 19th-Early 20th century (A Case Study)

The paper addresses the question of national identity of the Czech community in the USA in the end of 19th – early 20th century. In order to assess my aim, I will first explore different interpretations of the term (“*national identity*”). Secondly, I will show how the national identity of the Czech community in the USA evolved throughout the second half of the 19th century up to the first decade of 20th century. In doing this, I will use Czech and American periodicals, published in the USA, stored in the two of the Prague archives (*Archiv Ústavu Tomáše Garriguea Masaryka* and *Archiv Naprstkovo Museum*). My approach is based on the assumption that in this case study Czech newspapers served double purpose – on the one side, they contributed to keeping alive national and cultural life and identity of the Czech community, and on the other side, newspapers were a “*mirror*” of this identity, by showing how it evolved throughout the decades. In this sense, I will claim that while the first generation Czech immigrants preserved strong notion of “*Czechness*” (i.e. strong memory of homeland, history, language and culture), the second one should be characterized as, to use the phraseology of 1980s American historiography, “*ethnically ambivalent*”. In this sense, I will demonstrate that two parallel tendencies in the life of the second generation could be observed – on the one side, the inevitable process of Americanization, on the other, preservation of their Czechness.

Accordingly, I will argue that in the turn of the century, the Czech community, living in the USA, possessed “*hyphenated identity*” or, as contemporary Czech historiography (*Alena Jaklová*) defines it, “*double identity*”. In order to support my statement, I am going to demonstrate that two main factors contributed to the preservation of Czech national consciousness – language (through Czech periodicals) and numerous cultural organizations. These associations, in fact, were reflection of the old communal tradition of Czechs and through their establishment they “*moved*” their native homeland to the “*New World*”. In this sense, it is relevant to mention the statement of the Algerian sociologist A. Sayad (“*The Suffering of the Immigrant*”, Cambridge 2004) that to immigrate means “*to immigrate together with one’s history, traditions... with one’s language, religion*”. As Benedict Anderson argues, a sense of shared experience through time and space is an important element of national identity, which leads to the construction of a shared past and future. In the Czech case, shared identity is built through commemoration of the so-called “*founding moments*” or through the medium of what Pierre Nora calls “*lieux de memoire*”. In this sense, I will argue that nationalism of the Czech community during the period in question could be also defined as “*transnationalism*” (*a process by which immigrants build strong connections between their native and their adopted homeland*) – Czech community in the USA preserved strong connections with their compatriots on the other side of the Atlantic. Their “*transborder*” nationalism would become more visible during the First World War, but this already is another story.

Johanne Mayr (Bamberg)

Shared Ground or Contested Territory? Intercultural Representations in New Mexico Novels

In New Mexican history, cultures have been mingling in unique ways unlike in other parts of the U.S. In the 19th and 20th centuries long-time residents, mostly Hispanos and Pueblo Indians, endured the influx of „Anglos“, non-native newcomers from the East. The multi-ethnic setting generated the myth of a multicultural New Mexico according to which a triangle of cultures is living there together in harmony.

My paper compares intercultural representations and motives in New Mexico novels written by authors of different ethnic backgrounds, i.e. Anglo and Chicano, in an attempt to find out whether they embody or deconstruct the myth, how they come to terms with the complexity of ethnic relations or introduce new ideologies. The literary constructions of the self and the other illustrate forms of intercultural conflict and hybridity in this region.

The question whether New Mexican space provides shared ground or confines contested territory refers not only to real land, or figuratively speaking to socio-cultural identity, but can also be explored in its evidence in literature. What does „New Mexico literature“ mean at the turn of the 21st century? Acknowledging the fact that there is no single concept of New Mexican fiction but differing explanatory concepts with regard to various ethnic histories, the divisions might be softened by stressing the intersections. Does it make sense to suggest an integrationist regional model versus separate ethnic definitions in literature? A unifying perspective should not embellish the myth of New Mexico but open up a debate.

Sophia McClennen (Pennsylvania State University, University Park)

Testing the Limits of Identity: Alterlatino Ethics and Latino Ontologies

In a recent interview Chilean-American Ariel Dorfman describes himself as an *alterlatino*: “I have a definition, by the way, that I am going to try to put into the language, the *alterlatino*-these are Latinos who are not Cuban, Puerto Rican or Mexican. Well I’m an *alterlatino*. We have ‘alter modernity,’ ‘alter globalization.’ I like the idea of ‘alter’ and of course ‘alter’ has directly to do with the other, the double, etc...” Dorfman tends not to be considered Latino by the academic community. His work rarely appears on Latino Studies syllabi; even though much of his writing, especially his memoir, includes traditional Latino literary practices like code-switching and Latino themes such as those related to biculturalism. But rather than ask why Dorfman is not considered Latino as a means to redefining and opening up latinidad, this talk moves in a different direction, one less interested in mapping the characteristics of the Latino than it is interested in investigating the politics of the idea of Latino culture. I have two reasons for this departure: first because persuasive arguments that call for reevaluations of the contours of identity formation have already been made and second, and most importantly, because such arguments have often led Latino studies scholars to focus on ontology rather than ethics.

After acknowledging the ethical implications of the first part of Dorfman's description of the *alterlatino*—where the term refers to the other, alter Latinos who hail from cultural backgrounds that don't fit the primary Latino profile of Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans—this talk focuses on the second part of his definition, that of the *alterlatino* as double and other. I take Dorfman's statement even further by asking how the notion of the *alterlatino* can put pressure on the traditional ways that Latino studies has grappled with the notion of the self, the social agent, and the public sphere in terms of a corresponding ethics and politics. What I want to consider is whether a theory of the Latino subject is an *a priori* requirement for a Latino committed ethico-politics. And, if so, then what are the consequences of altering that subject? What happens if the Latino subject only acquires meaning *a posteriori* and thus is always, already politically in process? Is it possible to acknowledge the material history of a marginalized group without reifying that history into a static identity? By testing the limits of Latino identity we can begin to reconsider the role of identity in Latino-committed political projects.

Marietta Messmer (University of Groningen)

**Negotiations of Cultural Hybridity and Inter-Cultural Conflicts
in Chicano/a and Native American Texts**

When multiculturalism first rose to prominence as a theoretical and socio-political paradigm, it was on the presupposition that the most effective strategy against the discrimination of ethnic and racial minorities consisted in the empowerment of largely homogeneous identity-based groups that shared similar histories and experiences of oppression. Frequently, such ontological definitions of identity were characterized by what Spivak has termed “strategic forms of essentialism” as well as binary forms of organization (Self vs. Other, minority vs. mainstream etc.). Timothy Powell reminds us of the initial usefulness of such essentializing binaries which allowed “minority voices not only to be heard but to be esteemed as a critically important point of view” and enabled the implementation of group-based remedial measures such as affirmative action. Yet as the first part of Richard Rodriguez’s autobiography, *Hunger of Memory* (1982) has vividly thrown into relief, this essentializing paradigm underlying the concept of multiculturalism has often forcefully downplayed the multidimensionality of cultural identity and minimized intra-group differences (such as class differences) in favor of establishing clear-cut group boundaries drawn according to illusory notions of racial or ethnic purity. The way Rodriguez feels caught in a binary trap, forced to abandon his Mexican heritage in order to become truly “American,” illustrates one of the most disabling limitations inherent in multicultural forms of identity-group thinking and highlights the necessity to develop more enabling alternatives. One such alternative emerged in the form of Homi K. Bhabha’s notion of hybridity, which – thoroughly grounded in Derridean principles of deconstruction – constituted a powerful critique of monolithic notions of cultural identity and rigidly bounded categories of belonging.

While the concept of hybridity has been appropriated by many critics and, in the process, has acquired divergent meanings for different ethnic communities in both North and Latin America, it is perhaps no coincidence that, in the U.S., this concept has been most emphatically embraced by the Native American community (which is itself becoming more and more hybridized, as Joane Nagel has recently observed) and the Chicano/a community (especially after the publication of Gloria Anzaldúa’s influential albeit not uncontroversial *Borderlands*). Since the 1990s, a wide range of both Native American as well as Chicano/a authors have started to wonder whether the deconstructionist version of hybridity could indeed be regarded as an enabling alternative to multiculturalism, not only in terms of dismantling binary thinking and negotiating multi-dimensional identities, but ultimately also in terms of overcoming inter- and intra-cultural conflicts on a more global scale.

This paper shall explore the utopian potential as well as the perceived limitations inherent in the concept of hybridity by comparing and contrasting texts by Chicano/a and Native American authors, including Louise Erdrich and Michael Dorris’s *The Crown of Columbus* (1991), Richard Rodriguez’s *Hunger of Memory* (1982) and *Brown* (2002), and T.C. Boyle’s *The Tortilla Curtain* (1995).

Salvador Millaleo (Bielefeld University)

Ciberpolítica de la Identidad: De la Ciberguerrilla Zapatista a la Ciber campaña de Obama

El uso intensivo de las tecnologías de la información en la acción política genera nuevos espacios públicos, no sólo para los actores establecidos, sino que también abre la puerta a actores marginalizados y la formación de nuevas identidades políticas. El ciberespacio recombina las lógicas verticales de representación política con las semánticas horizontalizantes de ciudadanía extendida y democracia participativa que han acompañado a Internet desde su nacimiento. Esta recombinación es especialmente problemática en cuanto a constelaciones identitarias que desarrollan ahora sus actividades en el ciberespacio. La ciberpolítica de la identidad ha mostrado una evolución desde una contraesfera pública de identidades excluidas hacia un espacio autónomo donde se renegocia la atribución de capital político de los actores envueltos en ella.

Nina Möllers (Deutsches Museum, Munich)

“Black, White or Chocolate?” Politicizing Creole Identity in New Orleans Then and Now

New Orleans has long been regarded as the epitome of a multicultural city. Home to diverse ethno-cultural groups such as French, Haitians, Germans, Spanish, Irish, Italians, Vietnamese, Cajuns and Creoles, New Orleans presents itself as ethnic “gumbo”, based on the famous Creole dish made up of diverse ingredients. The Creoles, in themselves multicultural, take center stage in this southern melting pot. However, intense battles have been fought over the question which identity markers make up “Creoleness”. Catholicism, French language and cultural orientation are basics many agree on. The “racial” dimension of Creole identity though, proves more problematic. Creoles of Color descending from ›white‹ Louisianans and “black” or “racially mixed” (manumitted) slaves, have continuously challenged the category’s definition as “purely white” and emphasized the hybrid character of their Creole selves. Notwithstanding this everlasting conflict, Creole identity has experienced a renaissance as multicultural category since the 1980s, finding its most vocal expression in the formation of interest groups and institutions such as the Louisiana Creole Heritage Center in Natchitoches. The preliminary culmination of this process is a petition to Congress, asking for the inclusion of the category “Creole” into the Census of 2010. Hurricane Katrina and the slow and insufficient response by local, state and national relief forces, further fuelled the smoldering conflict among Louisianans concerning identity categories and politics. The infamous sentence by New Orleans mayor C. Ray Nagin in view of the social disturbance holding the city in its grip, promising neither a “white” nor a “black” resurrected New Orleans, but a “chocolate city”, is only one example of how multicultural identity constructions find their way into daily politics in New Orleans. In my talk, I want to critically examine Creole identity in this peculiar American city: How it came about, what it comprises, how it is used by activists, politicians and New Orleanians as a driving force for individual and community interests and what its prospects are for the future.

Mabel Moraña (Washington University, St. Louis)

**The Trafficking of *Difference*:
Multiculturalism, Identity politics in the Ideological Crossroads**

The presentation will consider multiculturalism from a critical, transdisciplinary standpoint, focusing particularly on the way this position has assumed in the US since the 1960s. Some introductory comparative considerations will be offered at the end of the paper on multicultural issues in Latin America. What are the factors that trigger the widespread application of multicultural politics in the US? What are the intertwined connections between politics, culture, and social issues? How do 9/ 11 and the election of Barack Obama impact the cultural and political domains from a cultural point of view? In order to approach these topics, the paper makes reference to the copious criticisms multicultural policies have received both from the right and left wings and to the ways in which these issues connect to the broader frameworks such as the decay of national cultures, the challenges of globalization /neoliberalism, the commodification of *difference*, and the need for global integration.

Henry James Morello

Autobiographical Fantasies: Identity Construction in a Virtual World

The advent of the digital age has brought about an identity crisis not seen since the turn of the twentieth-century. At the time, the commercial print age, and rise of the industrial cities were the culprits. In *One Way Street* (1925-6), Walter Benjamin noted that the urban dweller had become alienated by the conditions created by modernity. The radical expansion of the Internet, in a way similar to the mushrooming of the commercial print age, and the migration into cities manifests in people a feeling of just how insignificant they have become in this new landscape. As with the earlier trend to reject anonymous print publishing, it is in this new digital landscape that people have set forth to reestablish their sense of self and expressions of their agency. Through the use of virtual worlds such as Second Life individuals attempt to define their personalities in a world that reaches beyond their neighborhood. This talk examines how people are using the virtual world Second Life as a third space between anonymity and a classical sense of selfhood—a type of "ambivalent anonymity".

Amós Nascimento (University of Washington, Tacoma)

**Syncretism as a Form of Multicultural Politics?
The Case of African Americans in Brazil**

While the German philosopher G.F.W. Hegel identified the “struggle for recognition” [*Kampf um Anerkennung*] as a central question that emerges in modern societies out of the dialectics of and slavery, multiculturalism in the Americas has been viewed as

a contemporary answer to this question. According to Gilberto Freyre, Brazil is the best example of a “racial democracy” in the Americas. Dwelling on recent discussions on Multicultural Studies and African American Studies in the United States and in Brazil, this paper proposes a historical reconstruction of the struggles for the inclusion and recognition of Africans and African Americans within the Brazilian national identity and the recent claims that Brazilian hybridity and miscegenation are good examples of multiculturalism. An important task of this reconstruction is the critique of the ideology of syncretism in Brazil, through which African and African American elements have been negated in favor of a Eurocentric model. In following the movement from Slavery, through Civil Rights to the struggles for Community and Multiculturalism in the Brazilian context, attention is turned to an African American religious system of Yoruba influence (Candomblé). Candomblé is seen as representing a sphere of resistance to this ideology of syncretism and as a cultural alternative to the displacement and uprooting that is implicit in the diasporic process. This particular example prompts us to discuss a new understanding of multiculturalism that questions hybridity, miscegenation, and syncretism.

Irina Novikova (University of Latvia, Riga)

In Search of Russian-Americans – from Cinematic Representations of “Russianness” to Brighton-Beach Anecdotes

My presentation will intersect the discussion of representations of „Russianness” in contemporary American cinema with the discussion of living experiences of Russian-Americans reflected in the oral culture of anecdotes. On the one hand, I will discuss the meanings and connotations of „Russianness”, specifically, the „Russianness” of those who have moved to the USA in the 1990s, perpetuated in the genres of comedy (*Nine Months*), drama (*Dancing at the Blue Iguana; An American Rhapsody*), action movie (*Miami Vice*) and a TV-series (*Alias*). On the other hand, I will talk about the oral culture of anecdotes in the Russian-speaking Brighton-Beach community, which in many ways tells us about a multiplicity of identity markers in the experiences and performances of Russian Americans. At this intersection I will address the concepts of hybridization, multiculturalism and identity politics „in search of translation” in the Russian-American (trans)national social space.

Mariangela Orabona (Università degli Studi di Napoli)

Traces of Memory: The Affective Dynamics Involved in the Artistic Event in Renée Green and Rosângela Rennó’s Work

My analysis is a critical texture of two artistic productions dealing with colonial memory. I will highlight the common features as well the tensions in the work of African American artist Renée Green and Brazilian artist Rosângela Rennó. Using different media and collecting different materials from the historical archive, Green and Rennó question the European colonial model of the archive, dealing with the concept of affected memory. Their art exceeds the boundaries of representation, stressing the importance of art as a *process*, a continuous passage from the visible

to the invisible realm of cultural and gender representation. I will discuss their artistic process in terms of a *passage* from a signifying practice to a territory of affection. This shift is also a new critical approach concerning the politics of representation of cultural and gender difference and the crucial role of art. In this fascinating visual journey I will highlight the affective dynamics involved in the artistic event and the role of memory from two different colonial American contexts.

Sherrow O. Pinder (California State University, Chico)

Multiculturalism and the Problematics of Recognition in the United States

The diversification of American society is reflected and reinforced by the shift from assimilation to multiculturalism. One of the functions of multiculturalism, as a strategy to deal with the problematic race relation in the United States, is to recognize its multiracial and multiethnic communities. Given a certain ineluctability and directionality of multiculturalism's locational dimensions, multiculturalism reinforces cultural "otherness." Cultural "otherness" is viewed as "Un-Americanness," which continues to be alienated from cultural "oneness" or "Americanness." In this paper, my purpose is to show the limitations of multiculturalism to deal with race relations in the United States. Thus, to emancipate multiculturalism from the racist ontology from which it has evolved, an alternative to multiculturalism must be envisioned. Instead of the recognition and celebration of cultural "otherness" as the discursive condition for exchange and acknowledgment of the politicized subject position as the "other," an important goal of multiculturalism should be the recognition of "otherness" as "Americanness." A new form of multiculturalism would be required; a form that does not subscribe to the racial script of America, where racialized groups are the ones responsible for America's "race" problems. Post-multiculturalism, then, is the new possibility. Post-multiculturalism is not about sequentially; it is not leaving behind the past, or erasing the past and present aesthetic practices that maintain the dominant culture. Rather, it is to fully capture the vexed history of "whiteness" in the United States that self-evidently works incongruently to non-whiteness. Instead of celebrating cultural "otherness," post-multiculturalism would embrace a multiethnic identity as an American identity that dislocates the association with "otherness" as "Un-Americanness."

Gonzalo Portocarrero (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima)

El aporte andino a una modernidad posible

La ponencia se centra en el análisis de la obra del antropólogo y novelista peruano José María Arguedas (1911-1969). El argumento que desarrolla es que hay un desfase entre su narrativa y sus ensayos. En efecto, en sus trabajos más conceptuales Arguedas evolucionó desde el convencimiento en torno a la falta de futuro de la cultura andina hasta la constatación de su vitalidad y el planteamiento de sus posibilidades de renovación en el contexto urbano. Así sus primeros escritos antropológicos están dominados por la urgencia de rescatar las expresiones culturales que él cree llamadas a desaparecer por el empuje de la modernidad. No

obstante, poco a poco, y ya hacia el final de su vida, se convence de que la modernidad no tiene porque destruir las tradiciones andinas. Entonces, se plantea explorar los caminos de una hibridación posible.

Pero, a diferencia de lo que ocurre en sus textos antropológicos, en su narrativa casi no se plantea la posibilidad de una desaparición de la cultura andina. Por el contrario, sostengo que Arguedas se empeña en identificar lo más universal y generalizable de la cultura indígena. Y eso lo encuentra en un nivel que podría llamarse epistemológico. Se trata de la importancia dada al cuerpo y la intuición como fundamentos del conocimiento y de una manera de estar en el mundo. Es decir, la apertura de la sensibilidad, gracias a la actitud contemplativa, complementada con una constante reflexión sobre la vivencia hacen posible el ubicarse de una manera más fecunda en la vida. Este es quizá el legado central de la obra de Arguedas, una hermenéutica holística del mundo, hecha desde una imaginación que busca comprender la realidad como una figura de lo posible. En este sentido hay una crítica implícita al racionalismo utilitarista que domina la captación de lo real en el mundo moderno. Este es uno de los “tesoros” de la tradición andina, un legado que podría prosperar en el mundo contemporáneo. Para desarrollar la epistemología del mundo andino tal como está testimoniada por Arguedas me concentraré en el análisis de su novela Los Ríos Profundos.

¿Por qué Arguedas no llegar a tomar conciencia de la novedad que plantea su ficción? Esta es una pregunta difícil de contestar. En todo caso para buscar una respuesta es necesario cotejar sistemáticamente su obra antropológica con su creación literaria. Hay muchas posibles respuestas. Quizá se trata de que Arguedas carecía de los instrumentos conceptuales que le permitieran identificar el aporte específico de la tradición indígena. Quizá también por la inseguridad que produce el pensar que esta tradición podría tener algo que decir al mundo moderno. Especialmente en la época en que Arguedas escribe.

Finalmente lo que Arguedas plantea es una hibridación posible destinada a potenciar la vida.

Gudrun Rath (Constance / Vienna)

Translate Hybridity?

Translation and hybridity of cultures, and the omnipresent Third Space (of translation) have become part of the current paradigm in Cultural Studies. But what exactly is being translated? Wouldn't we need a dictionary to avoid scientific misunderstandings? Or is it the “translational turn” (Bachmann-Medick) that has turned the page and everything and everyone into a wandering translation?

The paper will discuss the interrelations between metaphorical and “literal” use of concepts of hybridity in different theoretical approaches from Cultural and Translation Studies in the Latin American context, from Nestor García Canclini to the Brazilian theorist Silviano Santiago and ask for the interrelations between literary texts, poetics and cultural theory as well as the implications the use of metaphors in cultural theories brings with it.

Olga Ries (Bielefeld University)

Mexicanidad surrealista: el caso de Leonora Carrington y Remedios Varo.

Este estudio analiza los conceptos de identidad nacional, especialmente el concepto de la "mexicanidad" en los trabajos de artistas europeos emigrados a México durante la segunda guerra mundial, específicamente en caso de Leonora Carrington (inglesa) y Remedios Varo (española). Hoy en día ambas artistas gozan de gran popularidad con el público y en la cultura popular, también su presencia museal y mediática contrasta fuertemente con su posición marginal en las décadas de los 40 y 50. El proceso del reconocimiento público, sin embargo, fue largo y difícil, marcado por conflictos con los muralistas. En sus obras, esas dos artistas desarrollaron una imagen de México que radicalmente difiere del discurso muralista y ofrece una ocupación intensa con su entorno político y social. Su análisis nos permite derivar un concepto más intimista, emocional y hasta humoroso de la "mexicanidad" y sus atributos en el siglo XX.

Claudia Roch (Arbeitskreis für vergleichende Mythologie, Leipzig)

Plastic Shamans and AIM-Warriors: Native American Spirituality in the New Age Movement

The relativization of traditional value systems in the Western World provided the basis for the spread of the New Age movement. The postmodern „crisis of meaning“ has caused a hunger for authenticity that led to the appropriation of the religious traditions of other cultures. Since the 1980's, Native American spirituality has been of special interest. In the eyes of New Agers, Native American cultures are seen as emphasizing elements which are missing from contemporary Western society, notably environmental friendliness, a community ethic, and a lack of technologization and industrialization – attributes which combine to create an Arcadian image of Native American life. However, the romanticization of Native Americans and the attempt to imitate their life-ways has led New Agers to be perceived as exploiters of indigenous spirituality. Euro-Americans professing to be medicine people have profited from publications and workshops. Mass quantities of products promoted as „Native American sacred objects“ have been successfully sold by white entrepreneurs to a largely non-Indian market. Native American spiritual leaders and organizations such as the American Indian Movement (AIM) have responded to the appropriation of their religious traditions with public protests. Terms like „plastic medicine men,“ „spiritual thieves,“ and „spiritual colonizers“ are often used in this debate and reveal the emotions felt by those who perceive the sanctity of their traditions violated.

This paper focuses on the appropriation of Native American spirituality by the New Age movement. It explores Native as well as New Age perspectives regarding the use of Native American ceremonies and ceremonial places by non-Native people. The analysis is based on interviews with New Agers and representatives of Native American communities. Opportunities to stop the culturally inappropriate use of ceremonies and sacred sites are discussed as well.

Ilka Ruhl (Berlin)

Crossings:

Cultural Hybridity as Depicted in Chicano Children's Literature on Migration

Latinos constitute the largest and fastest growing minority group in the United States, the majority of which are of Mexican descent. More than half a million Mexicans cross the border to the United States every year in search of employment and a higher standard of living, many of them "illegally". The percentage of children born into these families is steadily increasing.

Since the 1990s, U.S.-American children's literature has stayed abreast of these changes by depicting the migration of children and young adults to the USA and their lives between worlds. Relevant publications range from (bilingual) picture books to juvenile books, collections of short stories and poems, and nonfiction.

In my presentation I will analyze selected picture books by Chicano authors published during the last ten years, focusing on the literary representation of cultural hybridity in a Mexican-U.S.-American context. Guiding questions will include the following: How is cultural hybridity depicted? Are hybrid identities seen as a problem or as an opportunity? What do literary portrayals reveal about the perception of cultural differences? Which stylistic devices and means of visualization are used and to what effect? What is the aesthetic potential of Chicano children's literature on this topic?

Juan Carlos Silas (Universidad Jesuita de Guadalajara)

Educación superior intercultural en México

El 6 de septiembre de 2004, nació una nueva clase de instituciones de educación superior: las Universidades Interculturales mexicanas. Estas instituciones fueron creadas con base en la necesidad de establecer una nueva relación en la coexistencia entre el conocimiento "occidental" y el conocimiento "originario". Estas instituciones presentan características y prácticas interesantes que se abordarán en las páginas siguientes, así como los argumentos, los actores y las políticas para su creación.

La primera parte se enfoca en el concepto de la población india e indígena así como en una breve descripción de las iniciativas que se introdujeron en la educación para la población indígena. La segunda parte presenta un panorama general de los proyectos o programas desarrollados en el nivel de educación superior dirigidos a proveer oportunidades de acceso a este mismo nivel de educación para las comunidades indígenas. El tercer segmento utiliza la taxonomía propuesta por Dietz y García (2006) para el análisis de estos programas. La cuarta parte ofrece una descripción detallada de las universidades interculturales utilizando datos institucionales, esquema de políticas y datos empíricos directos obtenidos por medio de las visitas hechas a la Coordinación General en la Ciudad de México, la "Universidad Autónoma Indígena de México" en el estado de Sinaloa, la "Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural", y la Universidad Intercultural de Quintana Roo.

Paul Spickard (Münster University / University of California, Santa Barbara)

**Chinese Americans, Turkish Germans:
Historical Parallels in Two Racial Systems**

The historical development of the social position of Turkish Germans from the 1960s to the 2000s resembles the development of the position of Chinese Americans from the mid-nineteenth century into the twentieth. This paper explores comparative aspects of similarity and highlights certain salient differences.

Both groups were recruited for temporary work as body laborers—Chinese men in the mines, railroads, and forests of the US West; Turkish men in the mines and factories of Germany's Ruhrgebiet and industrial cities. Following the completion of their initial labor commitments, some members of both groups returned to their respective homelands, but more stayed on—the Chinese moving into agriculture labor and eventually into city labor and small-scale entrepreneurial niches, the Turks into service work and small entrepreneurship.

Neither Chinese nor Turks were initially conceived of by the host society as candidates for membership. The US had a historical self-image as an immigrant nation, but Chinese were nonetheless cast as perpetual foreigners, outside any possibility of entering the social contract, and ineligible to naturalization. That outsider status was not lessened, but rather heightened, by the attempt by some Chinese to bring wives from China and start families in America. Turks also were seen as perpetual foreigners according to the German definition of blood citizenship, at the same time that manifest outsiders like the Volga Deutsche and other Aussiedler were granted easy access to German membership, and even after many Turkish immigrants brought over wives and had children born on German soil.

This study is informed, on the American side, by my growing up in Seattle's Chinatown, living in a Chinese American family, 35 years of teaching Chinese American history, and a deep immersion in the literature thereof. On the German side, it is informed by extensive reading of the scholarly and popular literature on Turkish Germans and immigration policy, as well as by a score of interviews with Turkish German university students. It addresses, in a comparative way, the dilemmas of multiculturalism in two societies that usually think of their racial experiences as quite different from one another.

Juliana Ströbele-Gregor (Berlin)

The Darker Side of Multiculturalism: Misrecognition of indigenous rights and violence in the Amazon Region in Peru

This talk covers the complex relationships among human rights, ethnicity and ecological discourses as well as the development of ethnic discourses and the demands of indigenous socio-political organizations. I will argue that the interaction dynamic among the different protagonist on an international as well as local level has strengthened the ethnicization of politics and has also led to new approaches in development politics. I will demonstrate this new trend by using the example of the development guidelines of the European Union and Federal Republic of Germany.

Here, interculturality, citizenship and the acknowledgement of indigenous rights are key concepts. Using Bolivia as a case study, I will also look at three questions:

- 1) How are these new concepts adapted into development co-operations?
- 2) How is interculturality considered within the political actions of the government of Evo Morales?
- 3) What impact has the term interculturality for the main ethnic political organizations of the country?

Mihaela Vieru (Carleton University, Ottawa)

Whither Multiculturalism in Canada? The Turn that Challenges Postmodernity

This paper offers an interdisciplinary analysis of the recent developments in the policy and ideology of multiculturalism in Canada. It inquires into the Canadian state's rationale for adopting a 'unity' lens in the re-construction of the notion of citizenship within a multicultural society. Internationally recognized as a mark of Canadian identity, the ideology of multiculturalism has shaped social policies in cultural pluralistic societies in a manner that advanced the concepts of diversity, multiple identities, or tolerance to the rank of modern values. Trudeau's vision of Canada incipiently announced the postmodern cosmopolitan values of global citizenship, cultural sampling, and hybridity. Beginning with the 1990s, Canadian official discourse on multiculturalism has increasingly focused on the concept of national citizenship. This has meant a growing emphasis on the notion of unity, and less on that of diversity. I argue that this re-orientation serves two purposes. On the one hand, it secures a niche to escape criticisms that multiculturalism has been a tool in branding Canada's mosaic internationally, while, nationally, it has cast the diverse ethnic and racial groups into symbolic liminal spaces, and constructed them as tolerated within the pre-existent power hierarchy. The alternative récit aims at re-configuring diversity into an interstitial space, within a cohesive multicultural national frame. On the other hand, the turn to unity in national citizenship essentializes 'Canadian Way' around a certain set of values, those speculated by the government, in order to foster attachment to the idea of Canadianness in challenging transnational times. This prevents potential national social and cultural ruptures, resulting both from the global and continental cultural and economic displacements, and from the neo-liberal public policy choices made by Canadian governments. A realization of the continuous imbrication of such cultural, economic, and political processes is necessary for an informed perspective on whither multiculturalism in post-millennium Canada.

Aishih Wehbe-Herrera

(University of La Laguna, Tenerife / University of Edinburgh)

"A History Teacher [Who] Calls Himself Chicano": Negotiating Borders, Masculinity and Ethnicity in Ana Castillo's *The Guardians*

This paper will examine Ana Castillo's *The Guardians* in order to explore how one of the main characters, Miguel, negotiates his identity as a gendered, classed and

racialized subject in the U.S.-Mexican borderlands. I am particularly interested in exploring how Miguel tries to reconcile his *borderland* reality, not only as an inhabitant of such a geopolitical space but also as a man from a particular ethnic background, who tries to map out his position in a complex discursive network in order to lead a fulfilling life. In so doing, I will address issues of hegemony, masculinity and power that will illuminate on the one hand, the gender/racial/economic dynamics that permeate the borderlands, Miguel's community and his sense of self, and on the other, the possibilities of subverting a patriarchal hegemony through the *conscientización* of the characters.

In this respect, *The Guardians* speaks of the potential for transforming the characters' marginal reality through politicization and coalition-building. The strength of their bonding will start a revolution "from below," which will transform their interpersonal relationships and then, their community. In order to relate to the world in more egalitarian terms, Miguel needs to unlearn the cultural traditions that have shaped his masculinity, and that are contradictory and mutually exclusive. The inability to reconcile these unbending allegiances and the arrival of traumatic events in Miguel's life trigger his emotional breakdown. The *conscientización* of Miguel as a gendered subject, along with his politicization as a Chicano, is fundamental for his making sense of these experiences, which will change his self-perception and the way he perceives and relates to others. This seems to be the only way to overcome the emotional alienation and traumatic reality that the characters experience in such geopolitical space. The reformulation of gender identities as multi-ethnic subjects in non-heterosexist terms, therefore, will determine the characters' survival as human beings.

Klaus Zilles (Universitat Ramon Llull, Barcelona)

The Metamorphosis of Identity Politics in North American TV Serial Drama: Notes on Psychology, Creativity and Authorship

This essay examines fundamental changes in the way non-White identity is portrayed in US and Canadian TV series by drawing on the theories first developed by the psychologist Melanie Klein. Kleinian *object relations theory* emphasizes the attainment of a "state of concern" (or the "depressive position") which ultimately enables empathy and complex, realistic perception of other individuals and thus serves as an indicator of psychic maturity. Kleinian psychologists posit that in a mature, psychically healthy human the capacity to view others "fully" and not as one's own projection will eventually generate a desire to make amends for the destructive, demonizing fantasies one has entertained toward others. In view of the recent emergence of a new *auteurism* in North American TV series, I submit that object relations theory will serve to shed light on what I believe are profound and rather recent changes in identity politics in popular TV serial drama. Writers and creators assert their authorship, displaying conceptions of the human nature that are ultimately informed by what Kleinians call the "depressive position" and which enable artists and creators to create fictional characters in a way that is neither marred by guilt-ridden political correctness, nor by carelessly stereotyped character treatment. A series of close readings of sequences featuring non-White characters in the currently aired shows *Lost*, *Dexter* and *Regenesis* will reveal that a psychically mature artistic

disposition will lead to the creation of audiovisual texts that eschew polarized, antagonistic visions of non-White identity and thus avoid biased portrayals of minority groups or individuals.