



## CEU SUMMER UNIVERSITY

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*Cultural Studies/Cultural Theory*

### **CULTURE AS RESOURCE: CULTURE AND DEMOCRACY IN THE GLOBAL SYSTEM**

**July 17- 28, 2006**

**Course Director:** Imre Szeman, *McMaster University, Institute on Globalization, Canada*

**Faculty:** Nicholas Brown, University of Illinois-Chicago  
Eric Cazdyn, University of Toronto  
Maria Elisa Cevalco, University of São Paulo  
Eva-Lynn Jagoe, University of Essex  
Prem Kumar Rajaram, Central European University  
Will Straw, McGill University  
Erna von der Walde, University of Essex

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#### **BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

Viewed through the lens of cultural studies, globalization (both as rhetoric and reality) has had two broad effects on how researchers, policy makers, and those engaged in the production of culture view culture today. *First*, as with all of the other phenomena associated with globalization, the collapse of space and time as a result of (among other things) new technologies of cultural diffusion, has meant that cultural critics have to contend with a world in which culture and cultures bump up against one another with more frequency and intensity than ever before. From this perspective, the interesting questions to pose about culture today seem to have to do primarily with the results—whether positive or negative, emancipating or threatening—of the modes and forms of hybridization, standardization, and bricolage that are the results of the globalization of culture.

Such a perspective tends to conserve *older* ideas of culture even as they attempt to embrace the new realities of globalization—ideas concerning the function and meaning of culture that extend back to the modern origins of the concept, where it was imagined to be (relatively) autonomous vis-à-vis the market or other spheres of society, linked to the national soil or ‘context’ in which it is produced, and defined mainly by its function as “the independent and abstract noun which describes the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity” (Raymond Williams). However, if there is any content at all to the idea of globalization, it is that the levels into which we have long separated the study of the social (always artificial to begin with) have been shown now to be definitively unworkable. In describing globalization as “complex connectivity,” the sociologist John Tomlinson suggests that “the complexity of linkages established by globalization extends to phenomena which social scientists have laboured to separate out into the categories into which we now, familiarly, break down human life: the economic, the political, the social, the interpersonal, the technological, the environmental, the cultural, and so forth. Globalization arguably confounds such taxonomy” (13). The *second* analytic perspective on culture in the era of globalization thus asks what it means for cultural production and cultural analysis if culture is now (for complex reasons extending well beyond the epistemic ones identified by Tomlinson here) no longer relatively autonomous, but truly collapsed into other phenomena. The cultural critic Fredric Jameson has suggested that today the “sphere of culture itself has expanded, becoming coterminous with market society in such a way that the cultural is no longer limited to its earlier, traditional or experimental forms, but is consumed throughout daily life itself, in shopping, in professional activities, in the various often televisual forms of leisure, in production for the market and in the consumption of those market products,

indeed in the most secret folds and corners of the quotidian.” What does it mean for contemporary cultural analysis if we are to take such an insight seriously?

The first half of this course will pursue this question—taking up the second analytic perspective on culture in globalization—by considering the problems and possibilities of culture and cultural politics today. During the second week, the class will consider what the transformations of the concept of culture mean for how we understand the links between culture and *democracy*. Though democracy is most commonly discussed in relationship to narrowly political structures and phenomena, the importance of culture to democratic life (as well as the cultural determinants of democracy itself) has long been recognized. Indeed, the relative autonomy of the cultural sphere has been seen as a crucial element of democratic polities, whether democracy is understood to refer to a specific kind of state formation or to more radical political possibilities (democracy as the ‘rule of all over all’). One of the contemporary transformations of culture has been from a sense of “art as the process through which the individual gains freedom by externalizing himself” (Adorno) to the evocation of culture as a primary mode by which cities and countries might “spur economic growth through urban cultural development projects and the concomitant proliferation of museums for cultural tourism” (Yúdice). Art, architecture and film (for instance) have become primary ways for cities to develop their economies and to achieve the status of ‘creative cities,’ which the writer Richard Florida has argued is essential for the economic growth today. The imagined autonomy of culture has been essential to envisioning it as a potential space for critique or as a defining component of the public sphere or civil society required for democracy. If culture has become merely a resource for the development of urban (and national) economies, does culture have a role to place in actualizing democratic futures? Can a strictly market culture breed democratic life?

## COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

### *Week One: Culture After Globalization*

Unless otherwise noted, all readings are included in the course materials available in advance of this class through the CEU Summer University website. It is recommended that students familiarize themselves with the readings before they begin the class.

Although one resource person will be primarily responsible for leading each class, other faculty members will be present in each and every session to participate in the discussions with the students. Please also consult the schedule for this course to see exact times when sessions are planned each day.

#### **Monday, July 17th**

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##### **1. Introduction**

*Dr. Imre Szeman, McMaster University*

Overview of expectations and course requirements; from colonialism to post-colonialism; the persistence of cultural imperialism; the politics of culture and the idea of culture as the exercise of political/ideological control by other means (Lecture/Discussion).

Reading: Imre Szeman, “Culture and/in Globalization.” In *Concepts of Culture: Art, Politics, and Society*. Ed. Adam Muller. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005: 157-179.

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##### **2. Library and Computer Lab Orientation Session**

*CEU Staff*

Introduction to the library and computer facilities available to SUN students at the Central European University.

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##### **3. Presentation of Student Research Interests**

*Dr. Szeman*

During this session, students will briefly introduce themselves, discuss their current research interests and their expectations for the course. (Group Discussion)

## Tuesday, July 18th

### **4. Cultural Transnationalism**

Dr. Nicholas Brown, University of Illinois-Chicago

How do cultural forms operate across economic and geopolitical fault lines? What are the prospects of a 'critical' cultural transnationalism that might allow for the possibility of imagining difference globally? (Lecture/Discussion)

- Readings:
- Roberto Schwarz, "Misplaced Ideas." *Misplaced Ideas* (New York: Verso, 1992)
  - Fredric Jameson, "Third World Literature in the Age of Multinational Capitalism." *Social Text* 15 (1986): 65-88.
  - Paulin Hountondji, "Recapturing." *The Surreptitious Speech*. Ed. VY Mudimbe (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992): 238-42.

### **5. The Politics of Culture and/in the Periphery I**

Dr. Maria Elisa Cevasco, University of Sao Paulo

Does culture function the same way in the periphery and in the center? How has globalization altered the classical scheme of imported ideas? What is the cognitive potential of cultural critique as viewed from the periphery? (Lecture/Discussion)

- Readings:
- Roberto Schwarz, "Nationalism by Elimination." *Misplaced Ideas* (New York: Verso, 1992)
  - Fredric Jameson, "Culture and Finance Capital." *The Cultural Turn* (London: Verso, 1998). Also in *Critical Inquiry* 24.1 (1997): 246-265.

### **6. Group Work: Student Research Teams**

Dr. Szeman

One of the requirements for the course is for small groups of students (2-3 max.) to make a short presentation (<30 minutes) on the final day of the class. This session will give students the opportunity to form their groups (based around the research interests discussed at the end of the first day) and, in conjunction with the faculty, to settle on some research themes they will develop together during the course. The class is only two weeks long; there is limited time to engage in original research during the course. Through serious engagement with their peers, the aim of these groups is to give students the opportunity to (a) further develop, modify, expand, etc. their research aims and orientations, and (b) to do so through exchange with students from different research traditions. (Group Discussion)

## Wednesday, July 19th

### **7. The Politics of Culture and/in the Periphery II**

Dr. Eva Lynn Jagoe and Erna von der Walde, University of Essex

If culture, as Jameson suggests, has become coterminous with market society, in the periphery, where over 800 million people live under the poverty line of \$2 a day, what can we say about the market and culture? Does it mean that those excluded from the benefits of the market are excluded from partaking in culture? Is culture only to be produced for the market or consumed in the market? Does the relation between market and culture in the periphery require another definition of culture and of globalization? What can be consumed in the periphery? (Lecture/Discussion)

- Readings:
- Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy." *Modernity at Large* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota Press, 1996).
  - Arjun Appadurai, "New Logics of Violence." Available at: <http://www.india-seminar.com/2001/503/503%20arjun%20apadurai.htm>
  - Subcommandante Marcos, "The Seven Loose Pieces of the Global Jigsaw Puzzle." *Chiapas Revealed*, Feb. 2001, 14-21. Available at: <http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/pdf/revealed1.html>

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## 8. *The Politics of Culture and/in the Periphery III: The Migrant as Cultural Resource*

Dr. Prem Kumar Rajaram

This lecture examines the representation and response to migrants and refugees in Europe. Responses to migrants and refugees point to complex patterns of identity and identification that assert the nation state as the fundamental organizer of social, juridical, political and cultural life in the face of what may appear to be the fragmentation of territorial political communities as manifest in increased flows of migrants and refugees. The lecture focuses on problems of recognition (and of allied concerns of multiculturalism, reciprocal trust and obligation); of the response of territorially limited political communities to globalized migration; and of a trope of difference by which the borders of a nationally delimited community are outlined and vindicated. (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings: • Aihwa Ong, "Cultural Citizenship as Subject Making." *Current Anthropology* 37.5 (1996): 737-762.  
• Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, "Methodological Nationalism." *Global Networks* 2.4 (2002): 301-334.

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## 9. *Politics of the Popular I: Music and Globalization*

Dr. William Straw

The rise of popular music in the twentieth century; importance of technological innovations; world music; file sharing and copyright issues; fan communities; from the Walkman to the I-Pod. (Lecture/Discussion).

Readings: • Steven Feld, "Pygmy POP: A Genealogy of Schizophonic Mimesis." *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 28 (1996): 1-35.  
• Shuhei Hosokawa, "'Salsa No Tiene Frontera': Orquesta de la Luz and the Globalization of Popular Music." *Cultural Studies* 13.3 (1999): 509-534.

### **Thursday, July 20th**

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## 10. *Politics of the Popular II: Commodity Cultures*

Dr. Nicholas Brown

Is popular culture complicit with commodity culture and the spread of what has been characterized as 'consumer culture'? Do forms of popular culture—once imagined as potentially democratizing social experience—now offer any critical relation to the market? Or is popular culture and market culture one and the same? (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings: • Theodor Adorno, "On the Social Situation of Music." *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2002): 391-436.  
• Theodor Adorno, "On Jazz." *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2002): 470-495.

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## 11. *Group Work: Student Research Teams*

Dr. Szejman

In conjunction with faculty members, students engage in work on their group presentation projects.

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## 12. *Archeologies of the Future and the Globalization Debate*

Dr. Eric Cazdyn

We will focus on a key chapter of Fredric Jameson's new book *Archeologies of the Future* and how it relates to what is called the globalization debate. Special attention will be granted to the problem of representation (both aesthetic and political) as well as the question of temporality. (Lecture/Discussion).

Readings: • Fredric Jameson, "The Future as Disruption." Chapter 13 of *Archeologies of the Future* (New York: Verso, 2005)

## **Friday, July 21st**

This day is devoted to individual and group work, library research and reading. Faculty members will be available for consultation during extended office hours.

### *Week Two: Culture and the Promise of Democracy*

## **Monday, July 24th**

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### **1. 'Relative Autonomy' and the Space of Critique**

*Dr. Imre Szeman*

The idea that culture or the aesthetic offers a space outside of the social that allows for a critique of it has been a key component of aesthetic philosophies and avant-garde movements since the late eighteenth-century. One of the key insights that have emerged from globalization discourses is that the idea of the autonomy of culture is unsustainable. Can we imagine a politics of culture without assuming that (some forms of culture) are relatively autonomous from the social order more generally? What are the critical powers of culture in the era of globalization? (Lecture/Discussion)

- Readings:
- Malcolm Bull, "Between the Cultures of Capital." *New Left Review* 11 (2001): 95-113.
  - Peter Bürger, "On the Problem of the Autonomy of Art in Bourgeois Society." Ch. 3 of *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1985)

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### **2. The Politics of Modernism**

*Dr. Nicholas Brown*

What was cultural modernism? Is there a unifying thread that can tie together apparently diverse modernisms? What does it mean for modernism to have ended? (Lecture/Discussion)

- Readings:
- Jean-François Lyotard, "What is Postmodernism?" in *The Postmodern Condition* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984): 71-82. Also in Peter Brooker, ed. *Modernism / Postmodernism* (London: Longman, 1992): 139-150
  - Paul DeMan, "Literary History and Literary Modernity." *Blindness and Insight*. (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1983). Also available in *Time and the Literary*. Ed. Karen Newman et. al. (New York: Routledge, 2002): 145-168.
  - Franco Moretti, "The Long Goodbye." *Signs Taken For Wonders: Essays in The Sociology of Literary Forms*. (New York: Verso, 1997).

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### **3. Cultural Politics Now and Then**

*Dr. Maria Elisa Cevasco*

The function of culture at the moment of cultural studies, the politics of "culture is ordinary", culture and democracy at the age of culture as commodity. (Lecture/Discussion)

- Readings:
- Raymond Williams, "Culture is Ordinary." Widely anthologized. Available in: Ann Gray and Jim McGuigan, eds., *Studies in Culture: An Introductory Reader* (London: Arnold, 1997): 5-14.; In R. Williams, *Resources of Hope* (New York: Verso, 1989). In R. Williams, *The Raymond Williams Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001)
  - Michael Denning "The Socioanalysis of Culture." *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds* (New York: Verso, 2004).

## Tuesday, July 25th

### **4. Contesting the Commodification of Culture**

Dr. Eva Lynn Jagoe and Erna von der Walde

Topics: Sidestepping the Market, Sidestepping the State; Political Art; Installation Art; Performance Art; Community Art Projects. (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings: • Néstor García Canclini, "Narrating the Multicultural." *Consumers and Citizens: Globalization and Multicultural Conflicts*, trans. George Yúdice (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2001): 77-86.

### **5. Bio-Economics and Culture Today**

Dr. Eric Caşdyn

This session explores the emergence of a new kind of politics of subjectivity and the body: bio-economics. Bio-economics relates to the economic imperatives that now supersede all other considerations. Whereas modern biopolitics was geared toward the nation-state, toward constituting national subjects from the body up, bioeconomics is geared toward global power structures, toward constituting global subjects who are at the mercy of their diseased bodies. Topics: border politics, biotechnology, the body, the culture of pharmaceuticals (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings: • Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998): 119-135.  
• Eugene Thacker, "The Global Genome." *The Global Genome* (MIT Press, 2005): 3-11.

### **6. Group Work: Student Research Teams**

Dr. Sżeman

In conjunction with faculty members, student will engage in work on their group presentation projects.

## Wednesday, July 26th

### **7. Cultural Democracy**

Dr. William Straw

"Cultural democracy" takes different forms in different national and local contexts. The politics of the popular may turn to the state as an agent of intervention in some contexts, and uniformly resist any such intervention in others. This class will look treat the politics of popular culture as phenomena whose terms and stakes are posed differently across the globe. (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings: • Enrique Bastamante, "Cultural Industries in the Digital Age: Some Provisional Conclusions." *Media, Culture and Society* 26.6 (2004): 803-820.  
• Mark Betz, "The Name above the (sub)title: Internationalism, Coproduction, and Polyglot European Art Cinema." *Camera Obscura* 16.1 (2001): 1-45.

### **8. Cultural Geopolitics**

Dr. Prem Kumar Rajaram

This lecture attempts a reading of images and events of the global war on terrorism alongside colonial period literature and imagery. The principle intention is to investigate the subjectivities and assumptions of narratives and images of the 'global war on terrorism'. It traces the cultural underpinnings of what may be called the new imperial wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and against the spectral figure of the terrorist, taking note of how places and subjects are constructed in ways that make them amenable to particular sorts of 'imperial' adventuring. (Lecture/Discussion)

Readings: • Gerald Toal, "Just Out Looking for a Fight": American Affect and the Invasion of Iraq." *Antipode* 35.5 (2003): 856-870.  
• John Agnew, "American Hegemony into American Empire?" *Antipode* 35.5 (2003): 871-885

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## 9. Course Review

*Dr. Szeman*

The closing session of the course will allow faculty and students to engage in thorough discussion over the issues and themes discussed in the course—and those not (yet) discussed as well!

**Thursday, July 27th**

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## 10. Student Presentations

*All Faculty*

The final day of the course is devoted to presentation of the small group research projects that students will have developed during the course. Precise instructions, expectations and requirements for the small group project and presentation will be handed out on the first day of class.

### INSTRUCTORS

**Imre Szeman**, McMaster University (*Course Director*); **Nicholas Brown**, University of Illinois-Chicago; **Eric Cazdyn**, University of Toronto; **Maria Elisa Cevalco**, University of São Paulo; **Eva-Lynn Jagoe**, University of Essex; **Prem Kumar Rajaram**, Central European University; **William Straw**, McGill University; **Erna von der Walde**, University of Essex

The instructors for this course are drawn from around the world and represent a range of theoretical perspectives and research expertise, including specific expertise in Japan (Cazdyn), Africa (Brown), Latin America and Spain (Jagoe and von der Walde), the Caribbean (Szeman), Australia and South-East Asia (Rajaram) and Brazil (Cevalco). Collectively, the team also represents a range of disciplinary backgrounds. Team members hold degrees and/or academic positions in communication studies, comparative studies, cultural studies, East Asian Studies, film, international relations, literary studies, philosophy, and politics.

### STUDENT ASSESSMENT

We will assess the in-class work of each participant and will ask for a **theoretically-informed position paper on at least two of the assigned readings**. We will also assess the participants on the **group-presentations** that they will be responsible for developing over the course and presenting on the afternoon of the final day. In addition, we want to encourage participants to use this intensive two-week period of reading, analysis and discussion to set out the beginning of a publishable research essay. The resource personnel will make themselves available after hours throughout the two-week period in order to give participants feedback and to help mold their research papers.

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