

FOUNDATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

WEEK ONE – INTRODUCTION TO FOUNDATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

VIDEO- WHAT IS TRANSCULTURATION?

- ❖ **Transculturation**- the phenomenon of merging and converging cultures
 - Often the result of colonial conquests
 - Reflects natural tendency of people to resolve conflicts, rather than exacerbate them
- ❖ Covers war, ethnic conflict, racism, multiculturalism, interracial marriage → concepts dealing with more than one culture
- ❖ Language/ other communication issues can be a barrier → can be overcome in a single generation
- ❖ The processes of coexistence begin with hostility → degrees of hostile conflict vary from genocide to varying political views within the same community
- ❖ In some social situations, people divide into separate groups

VIDEO – HOW NOT TO BE IGNORANT ABOUT THE WORLD

- ❖ Everyone is aware that there are countries that are disadvantaged (e.g. women)
 - When people answer questions on disadvantage, they answer according to the worst places, forgetting about the majority
- ❖ The first thing to think about the future is to know about the present
- ❖ One of the most pre-conceived ideas is about world income distribution
 - Percent of poverty has decreased, but still have a massive group in extreme poverty
- ❖ The problem isn't that people don't listen to media, the problem is the media don't know themselves
- ❖ Our neighbourhoods are not representative of the world → leading to personal bias
 - At schools, we get taught outdated worldviews → what teachers were taught at school; they are teaching outdated facts in an everchanging world
 - New bias – unusual events are more interesting, news stories are exaggerated
- ❖ Skewed sources of information are hard to get away from
- ❖ We seek causality where there is none – *get an illusion of confidence*
- ❖ Misconception – everything is getting worse; *rule of thumb- most things improve*
- ❖ Misconception – rich or poor; *rule of thumb – one hump*
 - Most people are in the middle; no longer a defined disparity between being one spectrum
- ❖ People exaggerate the problem further than it always is → quick to think the worst
- ❖ Is this important? – if you have a fact-based worldview of today, you may have a chance of what is coming next in the future – look at projections, and where to go from here

WEEK TWO – THE INTERNATIONAL STARTS HERE

VIDEO – HIST208 - TRANSCULTURATION

- ❖ **Transculturation** – the cultural mix- up that will take place amongst various ethnic groups
 - Involves the regular interaction of different ethnic groups slowly overtime → a subtle change, more of an evolutionary change
 - Assumes that various groups do not mix cultures equally → one group dominates the others
 - Those at the top of society can force the lower groups to adapt to their culture → they change it in small and subtle ways that are usually not noticed by those at the top
- ❖ The culture may look like some specific culture, but it will be something completely different and new

READING – ON THE SOCIAL PHENOMENON OF ‘TRANSCULTURATION’ AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN CUBA

- ❖ **Acculturation** – *the process of transition from one culture to another – appropriate the new cultures*
- ❖ Without understanding how the different cultures came to be, it is impossible understand a nation in economic, legal, ethical, religious, artistic, psychological etc. spheres
- ❖ Cultures are faced with the difficulty of disadjustment and readjustment – deculturation
- ❖ *American Indies and Europe ‘New World’* – two worlds that discovered each other and collided head-on → one perished; transculturation failed for the natives, and was profoundly cruel for new arrivals
 - Societies were not completely erased e.g. Cuba – *Ortiz is very quick to erase the culture; these people were not able to translate their lives to more than Cuba*
- ❖ Idea was to gain riches and power here, and then return to their native land → undertaking would be bold, swift and temporary
- ❖ Men, economies, cultures and ambitions all became foreigners
- ❖ The whites brought with them, their diverse cultures – money, markets and centralised governments
 - Negroes were of different regions, race, language, culture, classes etc.
 - No other human element has suffered such a profound and repeated change of surroundings, cultures and class → transferred from their own culture to a ‘more advanced’
 - They were forced to leave their free and easy tribal ways, to slavery
- ❖ People lived together in the atmosphere of terror and oppression – *all in transculturation*
- ❖ **Transculturation** – *the different phases of the process of transition from one culture to another (not merely acquiring another culture)*
 - The creation of a new cultural phenomena
 - Something of both cultures, but is always different from either one
- ❖ **Deculturation** – *the loss or uprooting of a previous culture*
- ❖ **Neoculturation** – *how these cultures are defined*

LECTURE NOTES

- ❖ The importance of thinking about our place in the world – *international begins here, who we are now*
- ❖ How can we be ethically doing this in the best way that acknowledges the complexities – how do we think ethically about history? Who benefits? How can we understand the history of sociocultural, racial- ethnic and customary mixings between people?
- ❖ Transculturation is a product of history
 - What does history mean? Different people have different viewpoints – it is about narrative, not about facts in isolation
- ❖ Historical records can be disputed, revised, rewritten → stories can be told from positions of strength and subordination
- ❖ The two crops represented the two anti- racial groups on the island → frustrated by the concepts available to him on the time – *idea that when two cultures meet, the weaker culture is dominated by the stronger culture, and forms into it*
- ❖ The process of cultural acquisition → where two cultures meet, they acquire some part of the other
- ❖ Process of partial cultural destruction, uprooting and loss (deculturation)
- ❖ Productions of ‘new cultural phenomenon’ - *neoculturation*
- ❖ Whenever two cultures meet, no matter how unequal the societies are, something will happen, and every part of that culture will be changed in positive and negative ways - *no single element or group can fully supersede or overdetermine others (none remain unchanged)*
- ❖ We are quick to assume the national, and yet a huge part of everything in our lives is really a part of the international

