“National Diasporas: The Scattering of Seed”
Sponsored by
THE INSTITUTE FOR THE HUMANITIES, MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY
A Half-day Conference for High School Students and for Teachers
Friday, March 25, 2011 9:00 am to 12:30 pm

The history of the world is punctuated by numerous examples of the scattering of people sharing national and/or ethnic identity from their homeland to a place of permanent relocation on foreign soil. From the ancient Jewish diaspora to the nineteenth-century Irish migration to the modern influx of Latinos to the USA, common characteristics present themselves as well as common causes. Diasporas from multiple continents, both ancient and modern, both enforced and voluntary, will be considered and probed in this year’s World Cultures Day, a half-day event for high school students and for teachers.

Teachers and students will be able to choose the lectures they would like to attend in each of the three sessions. Note, however, that large school groups, of 10 or more, may have to be divided. Selections should be made on the enclosed registration form—see page 3.

Session I 9:30—10:20
“Dispersion and Unity: Two Thousand Years of Jewish Diaspora”
This session will explore the role of historical, political, and cultural context in shaping identity, normalization, and national aspirations. Concepts such as group and individual agency, sovereignty, and democracy will be discussed through exploring the case of the Jewish nation vis-à-vis experiences of discrimination, marginalization, persecution, and redemption in Jewish traditions.

Speaker: Professor Jaime (Haim) Grinberg, Educational Foundations and Jewish American Studies, Montclair State University

“Films, Food, and Memory in the Forging of a Pan-Indian Identity”
The Indian diaspora exists as an extraordinarily diverse agglomeration, divided by numerous fault lines including those of nationality, religion and caste. However, despite the differences, a set of cultural symbols provides a degree of cohesion and a sense of community. This talk will explore the role of films, food, and historical memory in fashioning a flexible yet resilient identity for the Indian diaspora.

Speaker: Assistant Professor Neeraj Vedwan, Department of Anthropology, Montclair State University

Session II 10:30—11:20
“Of Migrations and Diasporas: The African Case”
This presentation will focus on arguing that the conditions that led to the formation of African Diasporas worldwide are atypical, and perhaps unique, and can never be entirely separated from the history of European colonialism in Africa. These conditions are best described through three major waves of migration. The first wave of large-scale transplantation of Africans into other continents occurred as a result of both the Arab-induced slave trade on the east coast since the 7th/8th century AD, and later, the European-induced transatlantic slave trade, which began with the arrival of the Portuguese in the 15th century. A second wave of Africans who migrated outside the continent between the 1930s and 1990s was mostly made of students who went or were sent to Europe to study at academic institutions in the Metropole, that is, in the European countries that colonized their nation. Thirdly, in the 1990s, because of horrible economic and political conditions at home, a massive number of Africans of all socioeconomic backgrounds began to migrate of their own volition to wherever opportunities presented themselves, the United States increasingly becoming a premier destination for this last wave of migrants seeking their American dream.

Speaker: Associate Professor Daniel Mengara, Department of French, German & Russian, Executive Director, SORAC (Society of Research on African Cultures), Montclair State University
“Just Like Parsley: Italians and the Italian Nation in the Diaspora”

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the unification of Italy, this presentation addresses the complex formation of the Italian nation. Soon after small regions and states had coalesced into a single country (1861), Italians started leaving their place of origin and continued to do so for roughly a hundred years, as part of what became one of the largest emigrations in modern history (26 million ca.). Whether made up of seasonal, permanent, or temporary immigrants, Italian communities grew everywhere - "just like parsley," as the Italian proverb goes - and were concentrated primarily in Western Europe, South and North America. By "becoming Italian" in the diaspora, these immigrants contributed to build Italy as well as other nations through a mobile culture based on labor, politics, and artistic creativity.

Speaker: Associate Professor Teresa Fiore, Inserra Chair in Italian and Italian American Studies, Montclair State University

Session III   11:30—12:20

“The Wandering Celt: The Celtic Diaspora in Europe, Britain, and America”

When most people hear the word "Celtic," it conjures up misty notions of historical romance rooted in Ireland and Scotland. But both the history and mythology of the people we call the Celts indicate that they originated in central Europe in prehistoric times and have moved progressively westward in a series of migrations which, as the Irish influx to America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries suggests, may still be underway. In this presentation, Dr. Gill will discuss the recurrent theme of wandering and migration in the history, mythology, and psyche of the Celtic people, and the indelible impression they have left on each stop of their historical and imaginative itinerary.

Speaker: Assistant Professor Glen Gill, Department of Classics & General Humanities, Montclair State University

“Latino USA: The Changing Face of American Culture”

The exploding Latino population is one of the most incredible transformations of American life and reality in our country's history. We will consider the roots of this dramatic shift and the cultural impact of Latin American migration to the U.S. Latin American migration is one of the most compelling stories of this generation, yet it is also extremely divisive. We will consider what this change means for our nation.

Speaker: Associate Professor Katharine McCaffrey, Department of Anthropology, Montclair State University

Registration Information

- Given the stricter requirement by the State—that teachers must submit a request to their district for permission to attend a workshop at least 45 days in advance of the program date—we hope that you will remember to request permission and Save the Date Now!

- A copy of this program flier and registration form can be found on our website: [http://chss2.montclair.edu/institutionforsitehumanities](http://chss2.montclair.edu/institutionforsitehumanities).

- The registration fee is $15 per student or teacher.

- Teachers who wish to receive 3 hours of Professional Development Credit, please add $20 to the registration fee. (The Institute for the Humanities is an approved provider of the State Mandated Professional Development Credit Hours.)

- Registrations can be mailed via “snail mail,” or faxed to our office (973.655.7207). Check or purchase order must be mailed under separate cover.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: Thursday, MARCH 17, 2011

Contact the Institute for the Humanities via e-mail or phone:

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