

HI2B2-15 Go-Betweens: Crossing Borders in the Early Modern World

21/22

Department

History

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Guido van Meersbergen

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This 15 CATS second-year module option investigates global interactions in the early modern world (1400-1800) through the figure of the go-between. Each of the men and women – diplomats and traders, mestizos and missionaries, converts, slaves, and captives – offer a window onto a world in which societies and life trajectories were increasingly shaped by trans-regional connections, and where all kinds of borders were regularly being crossed.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

By following individuals as they met and mingled across the globe, students will deepen their understanding of the role of human agency in the macro-processes of religious change, commercial expansion, imperial conquest, and economic integration that marked the early modern period. Examining African, Asian and Native American actors and sources alongside European ones, this module encourages students to develop a non-Eurocentric perspective that pairs a global outlook with close attention to practices of mediation on the ground. The module draws on insights from global history, cultural history, micro history, economic history, and literary criticism

to interrogate the making and unmaking of political, social, racial, and sexual boundaries. We will explore questions such as: what does it mean to speak of “cultures” that “encounter” one another? How does one define a “go-between” who “mediates” in a “middle ground”? And in what ways are current views of the early modern past shaped by our globalised present?

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Week 1: A Brokered World? Go-Betweens and Spaces of Mediation

Week 2: Individuals and Communities

Week 3: Middlemen and Middlewomen

Week 4: Conquest and Collaboration

Week 5: Travel and Religious Exchange

Week 6: Reading week - no seminar

Week 7: Intimacy and Mestizaje

Week 8: Captives and Converts + Workshop Session

Week 9: Diplomats and Communication

Week 10: Objects, Images & Transculturation

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the processes which made the early modern world increasingly interconnected.
- Communicate ideas and findings, adapting to a range of situations, audiences and degrees of complexity.
- Generate ideas through the analysis of a broad range of primary source material, including textual and visual sources.
- Analyse and evaluate the contributions made by existing multi-disciplinary scholarship.
- Act with limited supervision and direction within defined guidelines, accepting responsibility for achieving deadlines.

Indicative reading list

<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history/students/modules/hi2b2/bibliography/>

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Subject specific skills

See learning outcomes.

Transferable skills

See learning outcomes.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	9 sessions of 2 hours (12%)
Other activity	2 hours (1%)
Private study	130 hours (87%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

History modules require students to undertake extensive independent research and reading to prepare for seminars and assessments. As a rough guide, students will be expected to read and prepare to comment on three substantial texts (articles or book chapters) for each seminar taking approximately 3 hours. Each assessment requires independent research, reading around 6-10 texts and writing and presenting the outcomes of this preparation in an essay, review, presentation or other related task.

Other activity description

Workshop session

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time
Seminar contribution	10%	
1500 word applied task (digital group project)	40%	
3000 word essay	50%	

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback provided via Tabula; optional oral feedback in office hours.

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History

This module is Option list B for:

- UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
 - Year 2 of V100 History
 - Year 2 of V100 History