

SURVIVING THE LONG WARS
EDUCATION GUIDE

Created by: Liliana Macias, 2023

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Provisional Land Acknowledgment

We honor the original peoples of the Chicagoland area – the Three Fires Confederacy, Potawatomi, Odawa and Ojibwe Nations, as well as other Tribal Nations that know this area as their ancestral homelands, including the Menominee, Ho-Chunk, Miami, Peoria, and Sac and Fox and their descendants. Further, we acknowledge this land is the current home to one of the largest urban Native American communities in the United States. Native people are part of Chicago’s past, present, and future. Finally, we are reminded that a land acknowledgment—especially by non-native peoples should not just be a rhetorical gesture but must instead be the animating force and material ground from which any critique of violence, imperialism, militarism, and warfare that we forward in this project is possible. To acknowledge is to act; we encourage everyone to consider the multitude of ways to translate knowledge and thoughts into active support for Indigenous peoples and communities locally, nationally, and around the world.

Surviving The Long Wars Education Guide,

Introduction

Surviving The Long Wars began in the Fall of 2022 with a [virtual scholarly seminar series](#) at the nexus of critical ethnic studies, Native/Indigenous studies, and Middle Eastern Studies on the histories and futures of Native rebellion alongside contemporary US militarism and warfare. The project culminates in the second Veteran Art Triennial and Summit, in Spring of 2023, with programming and exhibitions at the Chicago Cultural Center, Hyde Park Art Center, and Newberry Library.

Inspired by the powerful artwork of Indigenous and Native American artists responding to the US “Indian Wars” and artists of the Greater Middle East reacting to the “Global War on Terror,” the second Veteran Art Triennial & Summit focuses on how these artistic responses complicate and entangle with the artistic practices of veterans. The featured artworks, projects, and programs hold space to begin nuanced conversations on the impact of war.

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How to Use this Guide

This education guide is a resource for educators to explore the themes of *Surviving the Long Wars* with their students. This guide focuses on the ideas of intimate connections, resilience, and solidarity across differences. The exhibits point to connections across histories of anti-colonial struggle. They do not offer a comprehensive survey of any of the military conflicts or communities harmed by these wars. Instead, it is an invitation to analyze these connections for future coalition building.

This guide consists of two sets of guiding questions that meet the arts and social science learning standards approved by the Illinois Board of Education. These guiding questions are meant to support educators and students in the development of their critical thinking skills.

Alongside the guiding questions, we provide a glossary of terms frequently used throughout the Triennale. The aim of both the questions and the glossary is to generate fruitful conversations and a critical analysis of the works presented.

Visual Guiding Questions

The Veteran Art Triennial & Summit offers an opportunity to explore the often-overlooked history of Indigenous struggle in Turtle Island (commonly known as the continent of America) and its connections to the *Global War on Terrorism*. The following questions are an opportunity to invoke a deep discussion of the themes of the Triennial. These questions explore multiple, overlapping histories that shape our understanding of warfare, as well as the alternative visions of peace, healing, and justice generated by diverse communities impacted by war. The goal of these questions is to inspire conversations of the future of coalition building and community involvement both within and beyond the classroom.¹

The Visual Arts

The Triennial exhibition features artwork by artists who identify as Native American, Black, South Asian American and/or as veterans. The artworks presented are in response to the ongoing legacies of US settler colonialism, deconstructing the foundations of US exceptionalism, and critiquing varying facets of warfare. The following questions are intended to help uplift much needed alternative visions of peace, healing, and justice.

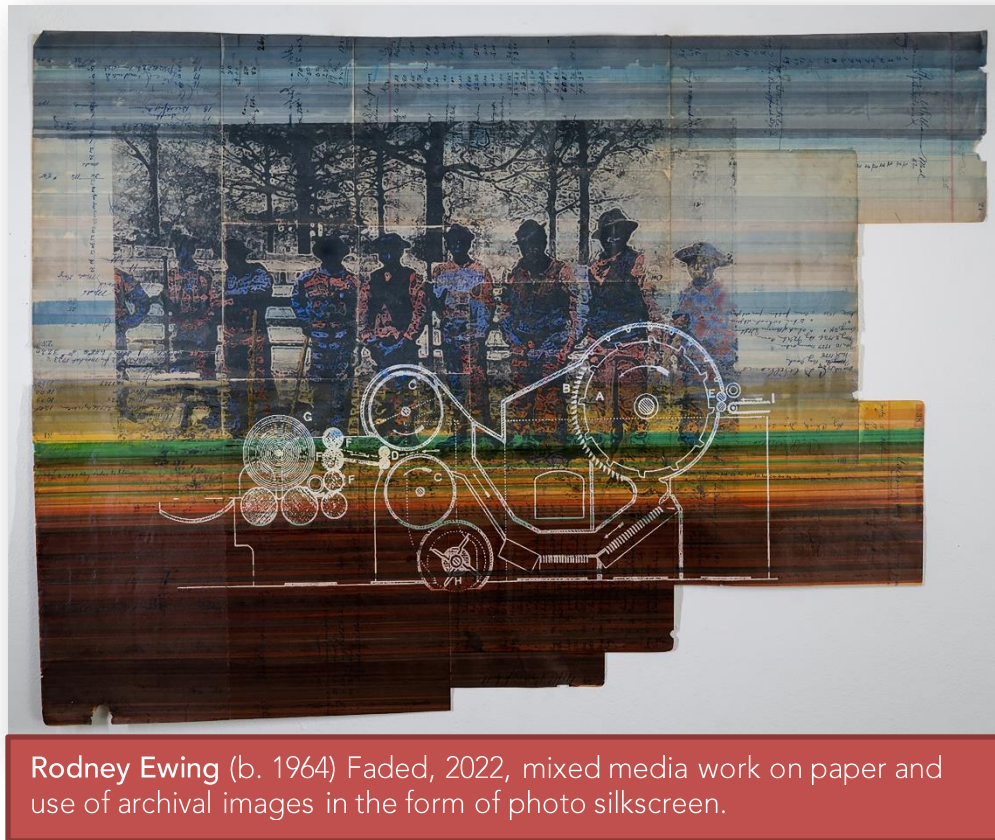
¹ Illinois Arts Learning Standards - Illinois State Board of Education, www.isbe.net/Documents/Visual-Arts-Standards.pdf. Accessed 25 May 2023.



Miridith Campbell (Kiowa, b. 1966), *Counting Coup*, 2002, U.S Cavalry coat, seed beads, buckskin, Image courtesy of the artist.

Layered Histories:

- **Visualize:** Analyze the image of Miridith Campbell's work *Counting Coups*.
 - What do you see?
 - What makes you think that?
 - What else do you see?
- **Learn:** Read Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz ["U.S Settler-Colonialism and Genocide Against Native Americans"](#)
 - Having gained some historical perspective from Dunbar-Ortiz, return to Campbell's work: In what ways does their work influence perception and understanding of the themes of survival, resilience, transformation, and intimacy?



Enduring Understandings:

- **Visualize:** Analyze the image of Rodney Ewing work *Faded*.
 - What do you see?
 - What makes you think that?
 - What else do you see?
- **Learn:** Read [“Afro-Indigenous Relations in a Reimagined Future”](#) by Kyle T. Mays
 - How does art help us understand the lives of people in different times, places, and cultures?
 - How does art preserve aspects of life? Think about the use of archival images used by Rodney Ewing in his work.
 - Think about how knowledge of culture, traditions, and history influences personal responses to art. Examine how the long wars have influenced the culture, traditions, and history of those

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involved. How are themes of anti-colonial resistance and survival part of this history and culture?



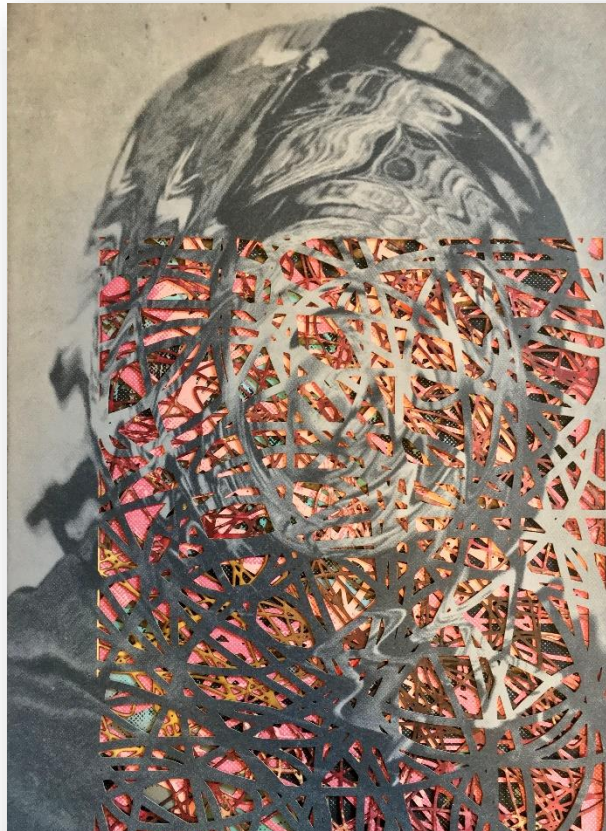
Gregory Rick (b. 1981), *Black and Native Victories*, 2017, Accordion book, ink, gouache, photo-transfer, and acrylic on handmade paper, Image courtesy of Fred and Louise Neal.

Native and Black Futures:

- **Visualize:** Analyze the image of Gregory Rick's work *Black and Native Histories*.
 - What do you see?
 - What makes you think that?
 - What else do you see?

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- **Learn:** Read [“Other Intimacies: Black Studies and Notes on Native/indigenous Notes”](#) by Tiffany King
 - How does Rick’s art practice and King’s scholarship center personal awareness of social, cultural, or political beliefs and understandings?
 - How is Native sovereignty and Black liberation struggles connected to settler colonialism? How is their work central to the struggle for safety, freedom, equality, and justice?



Monty Little (Diné, b. 1983), Vellum of Cumuli, 2022, Laser cut photopolymer plate, screenprint, oil painting, and monotype on collaged paper, Image courtesy of artist.

Contemplating Justice:

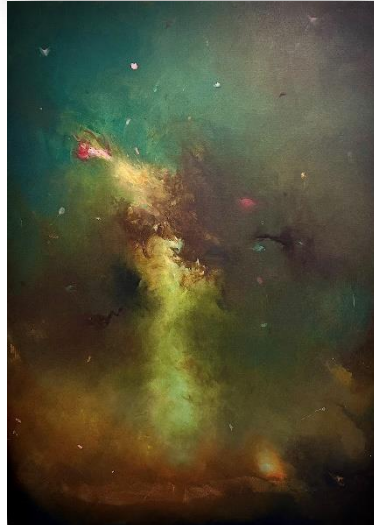
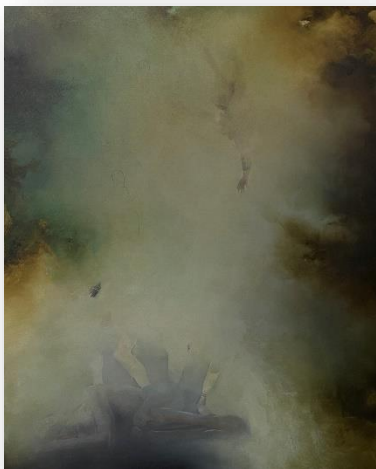
- **Discussion:** What is Justice?
- **Listen:** Kelly Hayes [“Indigenous Abolitionists Are Organizing for Healing and Survival”](#)

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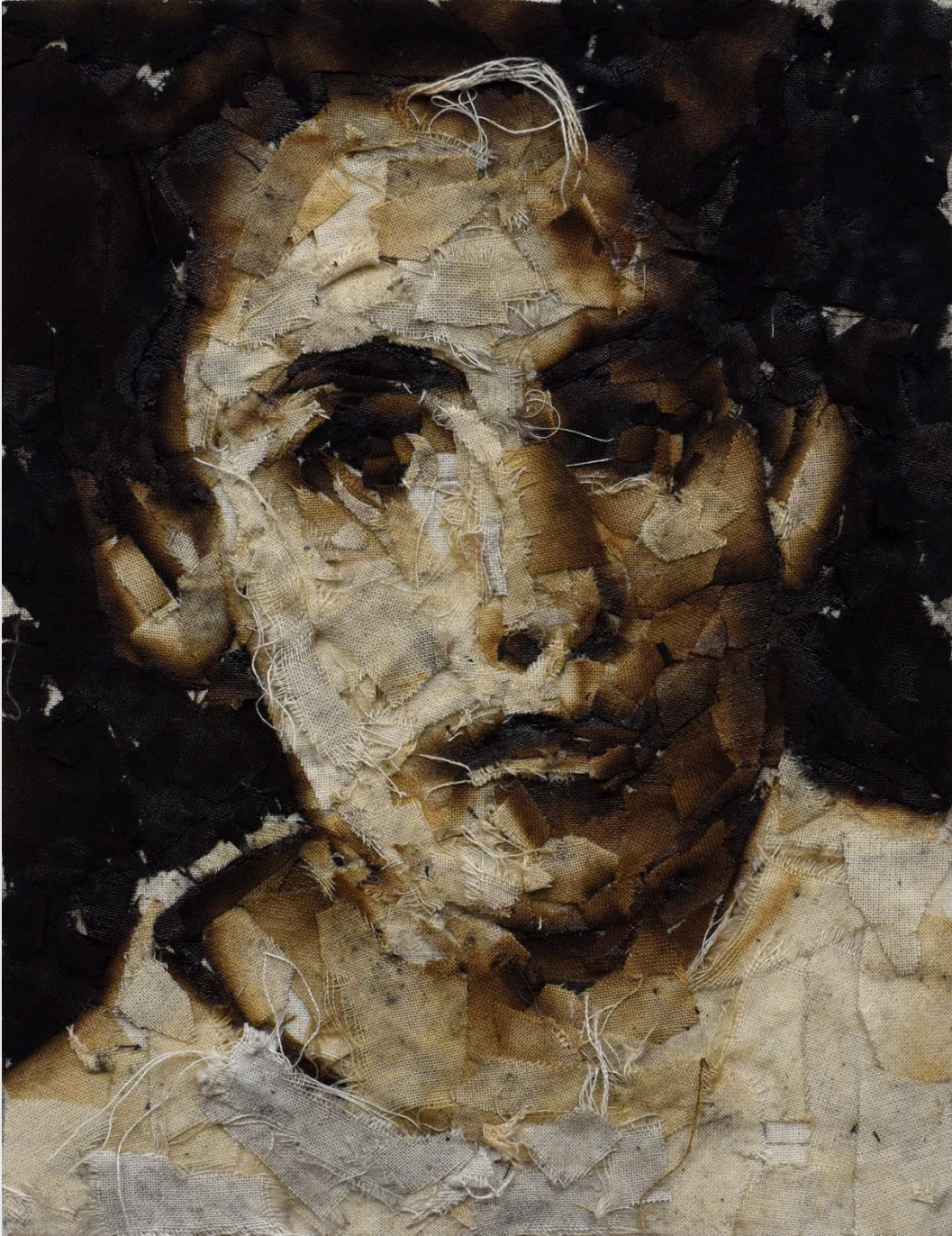
- How does the artwork in *Surviving the Long Wars* expose the varied historical roots of justice? How are artists defining justice through their work?

Bridging the Continuum History: Inspired by the powerful artwork of Indigenous and Greater Middle East artists responding to the “American Indian Wars” and the “Global War on Terror,” the featured artworks create opportunities to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of war and the continuity of occupation.

- **Watch:** Laleh Khalili [“Tomahawks, Chinooks, and Geronimo: Settler Colonial Fantasies of U.S Navy Seals”](#)
 - How does Khalili connect Settler Colonialism and the War on Terror?
- **Analyze:** Images of war were painted before they were photographed. How does Bassim Al Shaker’s (b.1986) oil on canvases shape a point of view of war?



Bassim Al Shaker’s
(b.1986) oil on
canvas. 2022. From
the top, left to
right; Nightmare.
Photon.The
Darkness. Alive.
Disaster.





Hanaa Malallah (b. 1958), *She/He Has No Picture*, 2019, Burnt canvas collage on canvas with laser cut brass plaques, Photo Credit: Roger Fawcett-Tang.

- **Read:** Laleh Khalili [“The infrastructural power of the military: The geoeconomic role of the US Army Corps of Engineers in the Arabian Peninsula”](#)
- **Analyze:** Observe the details of both the close-up and the full image of Hanaa Malallah’s canvas collage.
 - What do you see?
 - What makes you think that?
 - What else do you see?
- **Learn** the story behind the *She/He Has No Picture* (2019) [here](#).
- **Re-analyze:** Go back and observe Malallah’s work again. How does learning the history behind this work change the way you see and feel about this artwork?

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Alternative Visions: An invitation to reflect on the ideas of intimate connections, resilience, and solidarity across differences; the central themes of *Surviving the Long Wars*. While the exhibit points to connections across histories of anti-colonial struggle it does not offer a comprehensive survey of any of the military conflicts or communities harmed by these wars. Instead, it is an invitation to reflect on these connections for future coalition building around justice, peace, and healing.

Visions: *How are movements for justice created? How is healing a central outcome of justice? And how are justice and healing pathways to peace?*

- **Listen:** Harsha Walia [“Millennials Are Killing Capitalism: Harsha Walia's Border & Rule on Racial Capitalism, Border Imperialism and Global Migration”](#)
- **Read:** Kyle T. Mays [“Native American Hip Hop: Rhymes and Stories from the City to the Rez”](#)
- **Watch:** Nick Estes [“Operation Wounded Knee, 1973: The Militarization of Policing in Indian Country”](#)



Ruth Kaneko (Kanaka Wahine, b. 1985), *Sutured*, 2019, Mixed media, Image courtesy the artist.

Artist Statement:

As a Kanaka wahine (native Hawaiian woman) and a U.S. Army veteran, Ruth embodies the contradiction of what it means to be both an “American” and a Native Hawaiian living in an occupied territory. Her personal genealogy is inextricably sutured to the genealogy of the lāhui (nation of Hawaiian people), yet her experience is connected with her time in service as a combat medic. These conflicting identities and divided loyalties create ambivalence. Ruth’s exploration of these themes in her art practice attempts to weave together her experiences of trauma and resilience in ways that honor the complexity of her life.

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Glossary

This glossary is made up of commonly used terms throughout the Triennial. Definitions were summarized, gleaned or synthesized from various sources and documents. The most common sources used are the Encyclopedia Britannica, Merriam-Webster Dictionary, and Oxford Languages Dictionary. Definitions from other sources are notated and the source is cited as a footnote. Some of the terms found in this glossary are disputed or unsettled. This invites participants to research the conversations around the terms and critique the definitions presented.

Art as Healing: Art-making as an activity practiced as a means of processing stressful or traumatic experiences.

Art as Resistance: Art-making as an act of practice of defiance.

BIPOC: An abbreviation of Black, Indigenous and People of Color. The term is used to describe the specificity of **Black and Indigenous people's** experiences of white supremacy and (ongoing) colonialism in North America, while signaling the possibility of coalitions across racialized communities.²

Counter Insurgency: Organized military activity designed to combat revolt against a government that is less than an organized revolution and that is not recognized as belligerency.

Decolonization: The act or practice of freeing (a people or area) from a foreign nation or state.

Doctrine of Discovery: The principle by which "European nations acquired title to the lands they "discovered" and the Indigenous inhabitants lost their natural right to that land after Europeans arrived and claimed it."³

Genocide: The deliberate and systematic extermination of an ethnic or national group.

²Garcia, Sandra E. "Where did BIPOC come from." *The New York Times* 17 (2020): 2020.

³Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. *An indigenous peoples' history of the United States*. Vol. 3. Beacon Press, 2014.

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Greater Middle East: A term used to describe Arab states and other Muslim-majority countries such as Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey.⁴ According to historian Andrew J. Bacevich, "a vast swath of territory stretching from North and West Africa to Central and South Asia," from Morocco to the western edge of China.⁵ -See **Greater Middle East, Near East, Southwest Asia, SWANA**

Global War on Terrorism: The American-led global counterterrorism campaign launched in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

Indian Country: A land or territory controlled or inhabited by American Indians; (also in extended use) a place with hostile inhabitants, a dangerous area; in later use chiefly as a mass noun.

Indian Warrior Syndrome: "A stereotype that has endured through the centuries to the present day: that indigenous have an innate talent as warriors, not learned but instead of granted by genetic inheritance."⁶

Indian Wars: The colonization of the Northern Hemisphere between 1500 and 1900 produced nearly 150 separate conflicts between colonial powers and Native American communities.⁷

Indigenous Communities: "Are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions, and legal system."⁸

⁴Kapadia, Ronak K. *Insurgent Aesthetics: Security and the Queer Life of the Forever War*. Duke University Press, 2019.

⁵ Bacevich, *America's War for the Greater Middle East*, xxii

⁶Alexandria, H. *Indian Wars, Indian Scouts* (pg 59) in Campbell, Ben Nighthorse, Jefferson Keel, Kevin Gover, and Debra A. Haaland. *Why we serve: Native Americans in the United States Armed Forces*. Smithsonian Institution, 2020.

⁷ Urlacher, Brian R. "Introducing Native American Conflict History (NACH) Data." *Journal of Peace Research* 58, no. 5 (2021): 1117-1125.

⁸ Cobo, Jose Martinez. "Problem of discrimination against indigenous populations." *Special Rapporteur to the UN Sub-commission on the Prevention of Discrimination of Minorities, UN document E/CN 4* (1986).

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Land Back: "Taking land back under Indigenous control and protection that was never legally ceded in the first place."⁹

Ledger Art: "Histories produced between 1865 and 1935 on the pages of ledger books obtained from U.S. soldiers, traders, missionaries, and reservation employees."¹⁰

Manifest Destiny: The doctrine or belief that the expansion of the United States throughout the American continents was both justified and inevitable.

Middle East: The lands around the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea, encompassing at least the Arabian Peninsula. Use of the term Middle East nonetheless remains unsettled. (See Greater Middle East, Near East, Southwest Asia, SWANA)

Maroons: Descendants of Africans in the Americas and Islands of the Indian Ocean who escaped from slavery and formed their own settlements.

Native and Indigenous North America: Native American, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and other Indigenous communities of Turtle Island (North America)

Near East: Nominally understood to be the area that was coexistent with the Ottoman Empire. The preferred term of some agencies (notably the United States State Department and certain bodies of the United Nations) instead of the Middle East. (See Greater Middle East, Middle East, Southwest Asia, SWANA)

Early American Indian Wars: Centuries-long Indigenous resistance against settler colonialism on Turtle Island (United States).

Orientalism: Western scholarly discipline of the 18th and 19th centuries that encompassed the study of the languages, literatures, religions, philosophies, histories, art, and laws of Asian societies, especially ancient ones through the colonial gaze.

⁹ Manuel, Kanahus, and Naomi Klein. "'Land Back Is More than a Slogan for a Resurgent Indigenous Movement.'" *The Globe and Mail* (2020).

¹⁰ Gercken, Becca. "Manifest Meanings: The Selling (Not Telling) of American Indian History and the Case of 'The Black Horse Ledger'." *american indian quarterly* 34, no. 4 (2010): 521-539.

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Red Power Movement: North American movement advocating greater rights and political power for the original people (Native Americans) of Turtle Island.

Resistance: An act or practice of defiance to oppression.

Resilience: The ability to recover from or adjust to violence and trauma.

Settler Colonialism: The physical dispossession of Indigenous bodies and land while the settler state is emerging and quickly growing.¹¹

Solidarity: Unity (as of a group or class) that produces or is based on a community of interests, objectives, and standards.

South Asia: A subregion of Asia, consisting of the Indo-Gangetic Plain and peninsular India. It includes the countries of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka; Afghanistan and the Maldives are often considered part of South Asia as well. (Britannica)

Southwest Asia: A subregion of Asia, bounded on the west by the Mediterranean Sea, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Red Sea and on the south and southeast by the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. The region reaches the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea to the north. Southwest Asia is often, but not always, coterminous with the Middle East; the latter is a more variable term that often includes parts of the African continent, while the term "Southwest Asia" is restricted to the continent of Asia. (See Greater Middle East, Middle East, Near Asia, SWANA)

SWANA: The contiguous region, including MENASA (Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia) or SSWANA (South and Southwest Asia and North Africa).¹²

¹¹ Mays, K. T. (2017, June 9). "I ghost dance over drums/my music speaks to the young". Arts in a Changing America. Retrieved from <https://artsinachangingamerica.org/ghost-dance-drumsmy-music-speaks-young-kyle-t-mays/>

¹² Kapadia, Ronak K. *Insurgent Aesthetics: Security and the Queer Life of the Forever War*. Duke University Press, 2019.

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Transformation: An act, process, or instance of a change in character or condition; to change in composition or structure.

Turtle Island: The name many Algonquian- and Iroquoian-speaking peoples mainly in the northeastern part of North America use to refer to the continent. In various Indigenous origin stories, the turtle is said to support the world and is an icon of life itself. Turtle Island, therefore, speaks to various spiritual beliefs about creation and for some, the turtle is a marker of identity, culture, autonomy and deeply held respect for the environment.¹³

¹³ Robinson, Amanda. "Turtle Island." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Historica Canada. Article published November 06, 2018; Last Edited November 06, 2018.