

History 134: History of Latin America

History and Latin America

Decoding the Discipline and More


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Today's objectives

- Completing a brief historical assessment 
- Understanding what learning is
- Decoding the discipline of history
- Practicing primary and secondary source analysis





Beginning with two pictures



Laurentius de Voltolina, *Liber ethicorum des Henricus de Alemannia*

A lecture at a medieval university (c. 1350s) showing the lecturer reading a text from the lectern to students in Bologna, Italy.

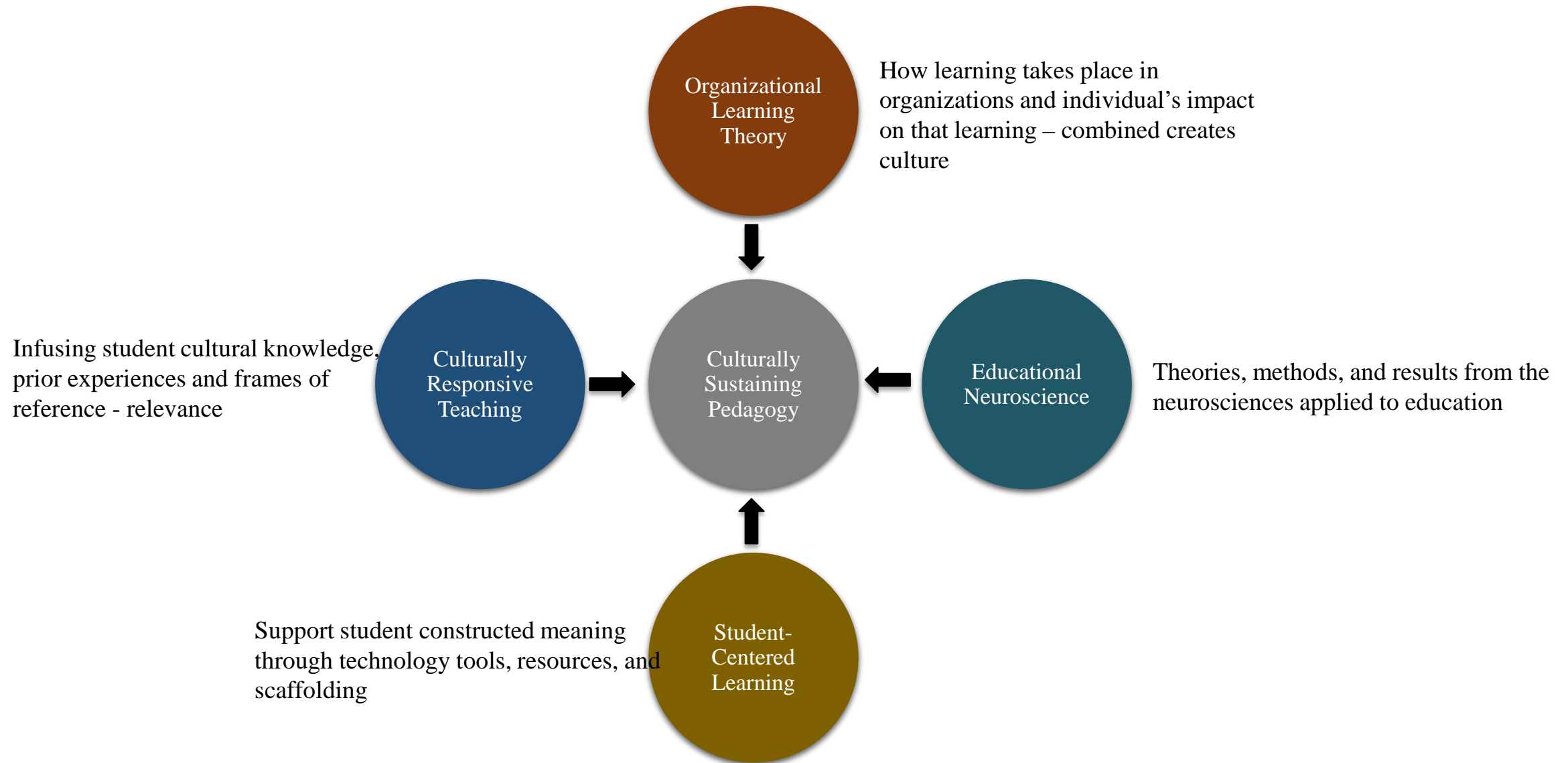


SOC 127

El Camino College Behavioral and Social Sciences classroom.



Providing a framework for change





What is learning?

Before addressing course content it is important that we first focus our discussion on what learning is. Why?

Because “any set of learning principles is predicated on a definition of learning.” So what exactly is learning?

- “Learning is a process, not a product.”
- “Learning involves change in knowledge, beliefs, behaviors, or attitudes.”
- “Learning is not something done to students, but rather something students themselves do.”

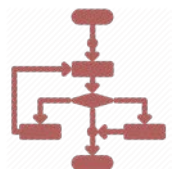




What impacts individual learning



“Students’ prior knowledge can help or hinder learning.”



“How students organize knowledge influences how they learn and apply what they know.”



“Students’ motivation determines, directs, and sustains what they do to learn.”



Why student-centered learning?



“Student-centered learning is rooted in situated learning theory, which explains that knowledge, thinking, and the contexts for learning are inextricably tied and situated in practice.”



“Individual beliefs and experiences provide uniquely personal frameworks for new understanding.”

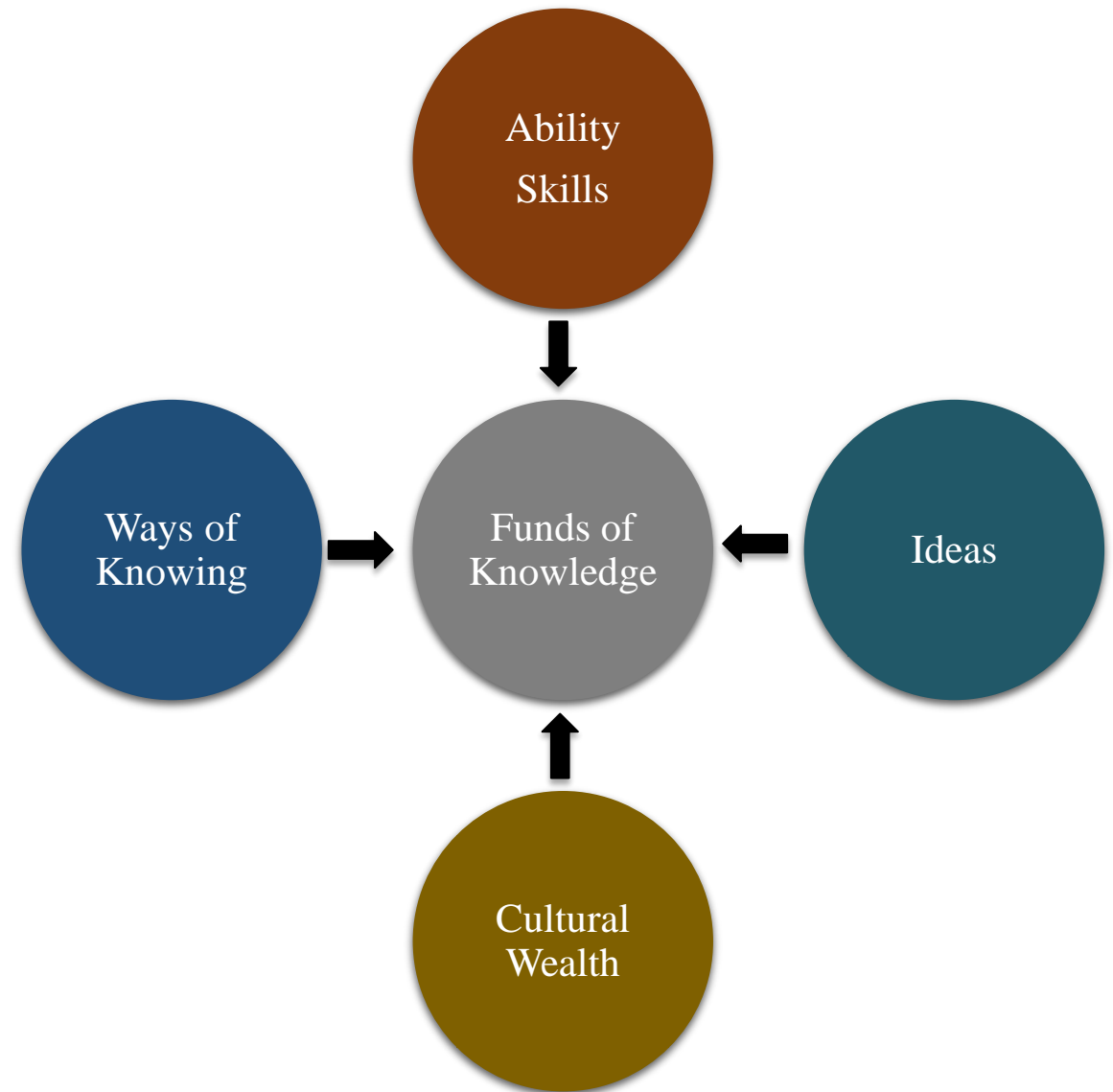


“Student-centered learning environments focus on enriching and extending learning through a variety of perspectives, resources, and representations.”



Student Funds of Knowledge

“In order to draw on students’ funds of knowledge teachers can create activities, projects, and lessons that allow for students to further the different types of knowledge that they have gathered from the home and their lived experiences and connect it to what they learn in school.”





Semester's objectives and methodology

To approach the study of Latin America from a **discipline specific perspective – History** and a **student centered perspective**

Understand events in Latin American History within their **historical context**

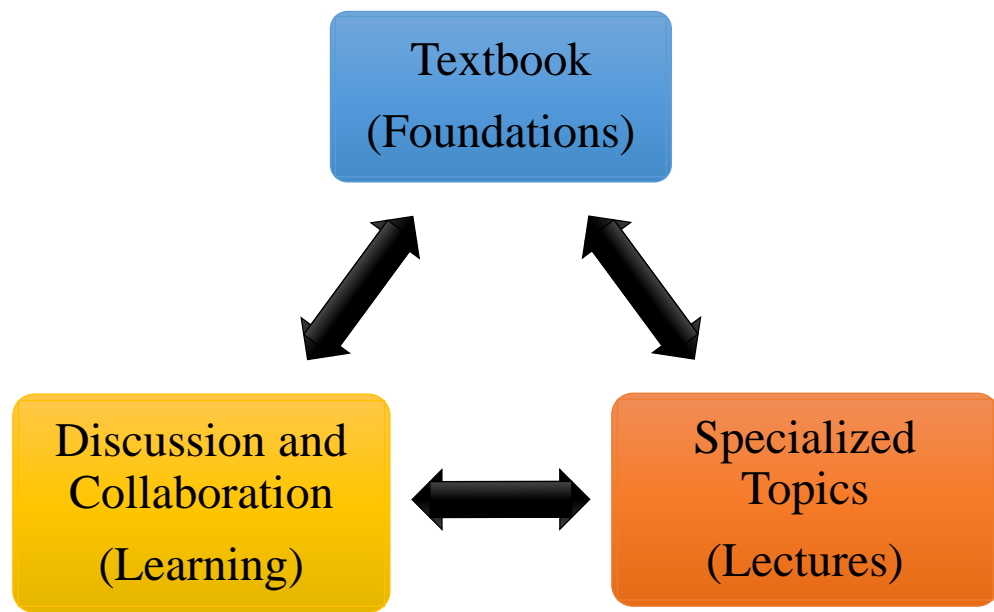
Adopting a **historical-critical** approach - to understand *the meaning* of the texts in their historical context

- Try to understand what the original authors *intended*
- Try to understand what original readers likely *understood*
- Try to understand **historical causation**





Course structure



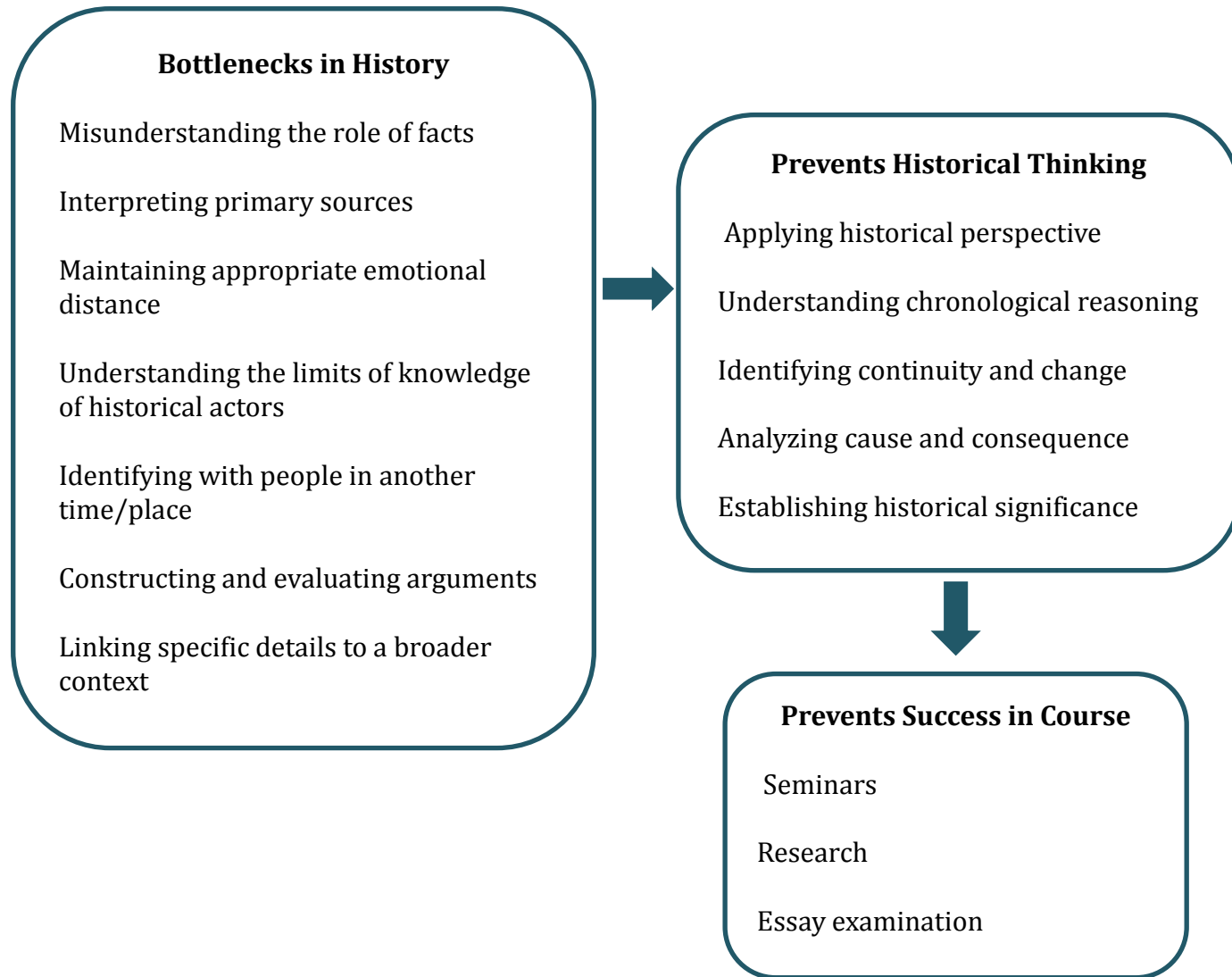


Decoding the discipline

One way to **decode a discipline** is to introduce students to **threshold concepts**.

Threshold concepts are not content knowledge or core concepts, but instead “represent a **transformed way of understanding, or interpreting, or viewing** something without which the learner cannot progress.”

Unfamiliarity with a discipline’s threshold concepts can create **student bottlenecks**: procedural, epistemological and emotional.



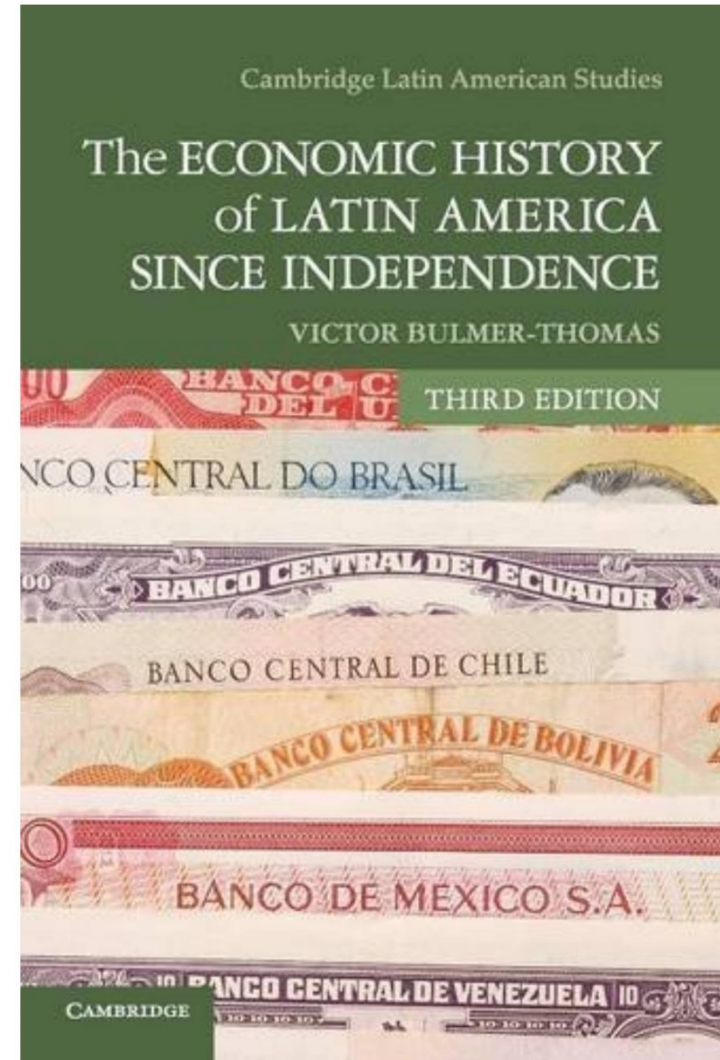


Constructing historical knowledge

In creating historical knowledge historians analyze and evaluate evidence that has survived from the past to the present. This evidence, termed **primary sources**, can take the form of written documents and artifacts. 📄

In reconstructing the past, historians also use “the findings of writers who were not participants in a historical episode but have investigated primary evidence of it.” These accounts are referred to as **secondary sources**.

Historiography is defined by Professor Peter Conolly-Smith as “the history of the history of the event: the way it has been written, the sometimes conflicting objectives pursued by those writing on it over time, and the way in which such factors shape our understanding of the actual event at stake, and of the nature of history itself.”





Historiography

1930

- Race and Culture
- Climate
- Roman Catholicism vs Protestant work ethic
- Racially, culturally, and environmentally “determined”

1940-60

- Backward mentalities
- Traditional social structures
- Needed to be modernized
- Maintained stereotypes

1960-90

- Historically subordinate position in the global economy
- Core and periphery
- Latin America not able to modernize because of this
- Dependency Theory
- World System Theory

Present

- Cultural emphasis
- How race, class, gender, and national identities are “constructed”

This Course?

- Eclectic
- Primary Source driven



Chronometry

Chronometry and eras in the Western Tradition

- Measurement of *time* and of dating
- Methods have *changed* over time

Dionysius Exiguus (470-544) – first to divide time using the life of Christ dating his birth to **A.D. 1**

Pope Gregory XIII (1502-1586) – reformed the Julian calendar

- B.C and A.D. (*Anno Domini*) – before Christ and in the year of our lord
- B.C.E and C.E. – before the common era and common era



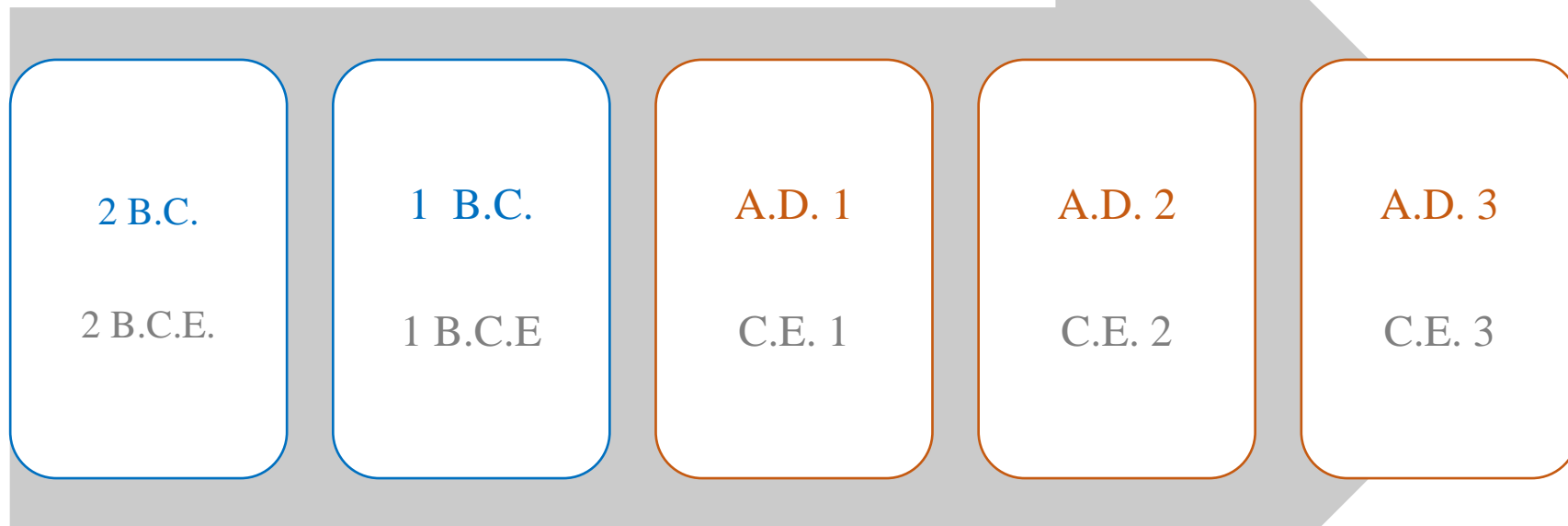
Duccio de Buoninsegna (c. 1255-1319)



Constructing historical knowledge

In A.D. 525 **Dionysius Exiguus** of Scythia Minor introduced the A.D. system, counting the years since the birth of Christ.

Before Christ



The designation of B.C. was added by the **Venerable Bede** when he published his *Ecclesiastical History* in 731.

✓ *In sixth century Europe, the concept of "zero" was still unknown. Thus, the year 1 B.C. was followed by the year A.D. 1.*



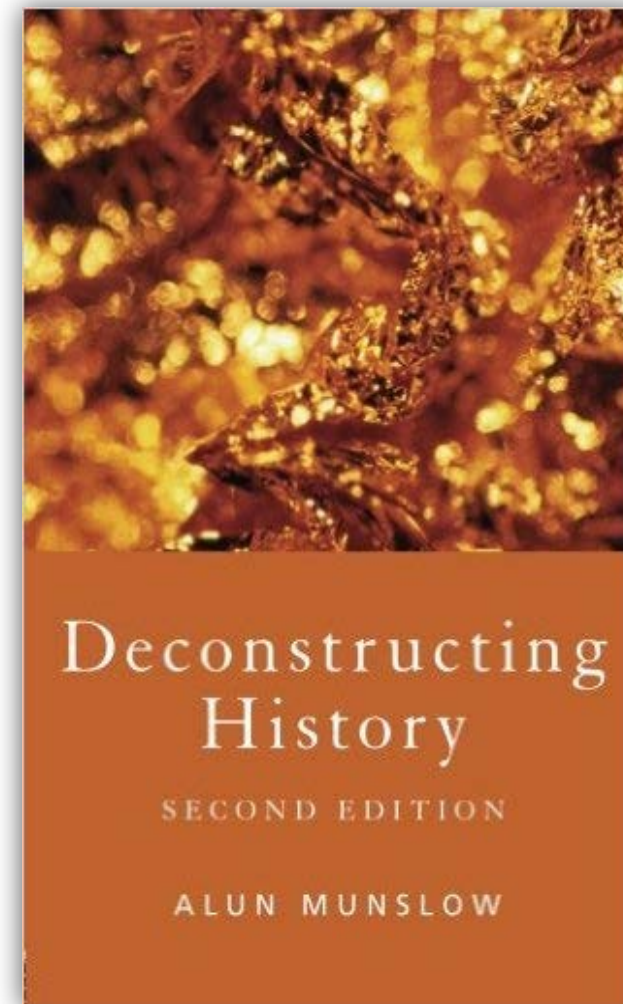
What is studying history? 📄

“The most basic function of the historian is to understand, and explain in a written form, the connections between events and human intention or agency in the past.”

“I will argue that the genuine nature of history can be understood only when it is viewed not solely and simply as an objectivised empiricist enterprise, but as the creation and eventual imposition by historians of a particular narrative form on the past.”

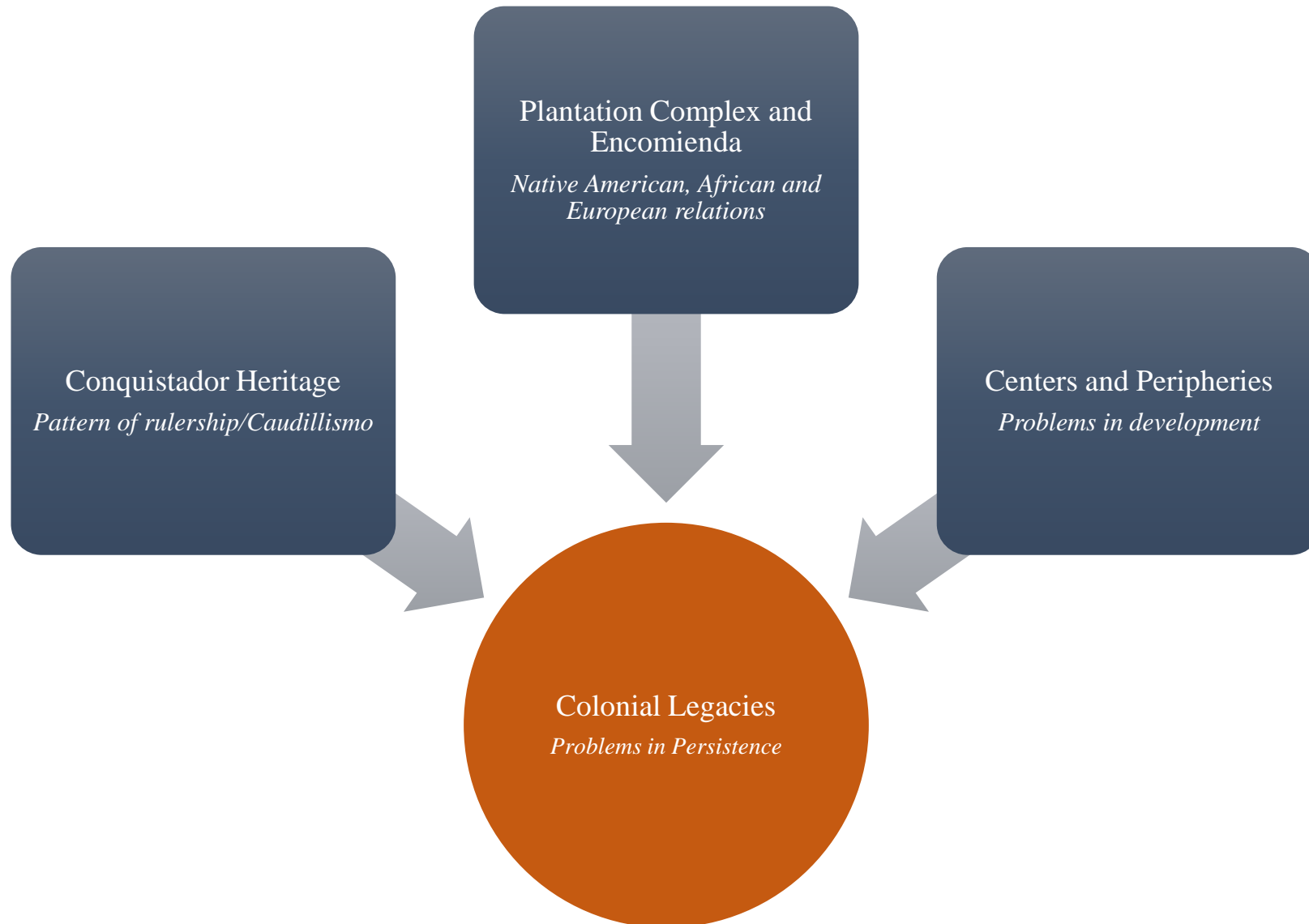
“Instead of beginning with the past we should start with its representation, because it is only by doing this that we challenge the belief that there is a discoverable and accurately representable truthfulness in the reality of the past.”

“I will argue that history is the study not of change over time per se, but the study of the information produced by historians as they go about this task.”





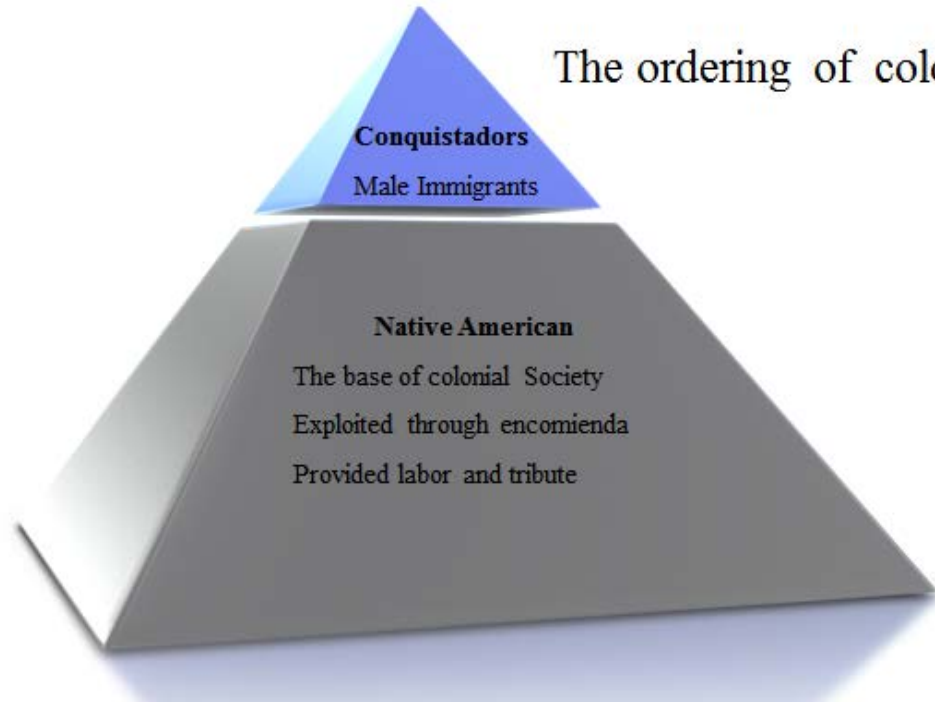
Latin America and problems of persistence



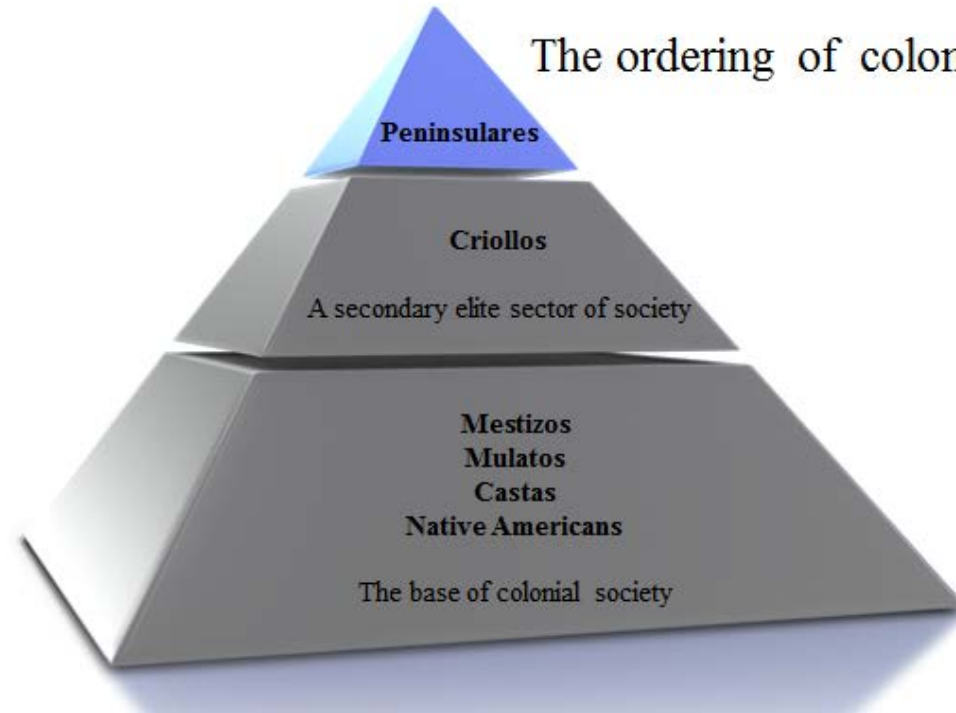


The ordering of the social world

The ordering of colonial society – to c. 1550



The ordering of colonial society – after c. 1550





The impact of race

