In this course we will discuss the archaeological study of ancient cities and civilizations. For the vast majority of humanity’s history, we lived in relatively small communities in non-urban settings. We did not live in highly populous, urbanized, and politically centralized societies that researchers refer to as “civilizations”. Today, of course, the world is a far different place. This seminar will give us space to discuss the origins of civilization and the pivotal changes that led to our contemporary world. These changes relate to the advent of social inequality, agriculture, and other kinds of phenomena. How and when did such major cultural transitions occur? This course explores these questions, and will highlight case studies from across space and time. In addition to seeing links between past and present, we will also contemplate how those histories can help us anticipate our shared future.

This course will review historical and contemporary challenges regarding environmental issues in the region.

Currently Mexico has some of the highest rates of gender and sexuality-related violence in the world. Not only do women and LGBT individuals in the region live in a context of everyday precarity, but many choose to flee as refugees and seek asylum on the basis of their gender and sexuality. To make successful asylum claims, however, it is necessary that there is ample documentation and evidence of the persecution they flee. In this course we will learn about the contexts of violence for women and LGBT groups in Mexico. Students will also learn how to do human rights documentation work, focusing individual reporting projects on a particular country and form of persecution. Together, the class will create an archive of human rights reports about gender and sexuality-related violence in these countries.

In this course we will discuss the representation of cultural identities through the analysis of international films in which food is the central topic and/or the narrative subtext. Food will be considered as an important symbol or signifier of cultural identity, nationality, cultural mixing, and migration. In exploring the relation between cuisine and culture, issues of class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and religion will also be examined. Among the films to be watched and discussed are Tampopo (Japan), Like Water for Chocolate (Mexico), Eat Drink Man Woman (Taiwan), The Lunchbox (India), Chef (USA), The Hundred-Foot Journey (USA), In search of General Tso (Taiwan).
From Thor to the Vikings: Images of Nordic History in Pop-culture
Tuesday 4:00 PM       Scott Mellor (samellor@wisc.edu)       Van Hise       Section: 008       Class: 27058

Images from Nordic Mythology and History abound, from the Marvel Movies to TV series on the Vikings. This class will look at the appropriation and reappropriation of these images from the Romantic period in the 19th century through to today; both the good, movies and comic books, and the bad, white nationalism.

GLOBAL BADGERS
Wednesday 4:00 PM      Charo D’Etcheverry (d’etcheverry@wisc.edu)      Richardson       Section: 032       Class: 37453

Welcome (back) to the ILC! We’ll use this fall-semester course to get acquainted with badgers as fauna & folklore around the world AND with bits of the world here on our badger campus. Expect to alternate sessions devoted to discussion, e.g., about Japan’s mischievous badger, the tanuki, with mini-field-trips to places like SOHE textile collection, Chazen print room, etc. I can’t wait!

VIOLENCE AND RESISTANCE IN AFRICAN CINEMA
Monday 3:30 PM      Luis Maduriera (maduriera@wisc.edu)      Carson Gulley       Section: 015       Class: 23131

African cinema, like its Hollywood counterpart, often features violence. Rather than being gratuitous, however, violence in African films can often bring into sharp focus social and political conflicts. In order to analyze the crucial role that violence plays in these films, we’ll explore how they represent the links between history, culture and gender. Since the history of contacts between Africa and Europe is founded on violence (slavery, racism and colonialism), we’ll look into how open, even violent resistance to colonial violence is portrayed, at times even justified. Here are some of the key questions we’ll consider: to what extent were these anticolonial struggles reducible to “war between men” over territory that is gendered female and women’s bodies that are imagined as territories. What other kinds of violence (gender, economic, ethnic, judicial …) may be pushed to the margins, silenced or even legitimized? Do specific facets of colonial violence reemerge only in slightly modified form in the post-colonial period?