

Methods of Area Studies
Hist/FL/Geog 5024 Fall 2003

Course instructors:

S. Farquhar Monday, Wednesday 2:30-4:00 // 305 Major Williams farquhar@vt.edu

T. Ewing Wednesday 11:00-12:00, Thursday 12:30-1:30 // 439 Major Williams etewing@vt.edu

Visiting faculty: A. Becker, J. Bixler, J. Folkart, L. Grossman, R. Stephens, and F. Teulon

Objectives

This course will introduce students to recent theoretical and methodological issues of interest in the three major fields of history, literary studies and geography with the aim of exploring the potential for interdisciplinary research in the Area Studies M.A. program and the humanities. By exploring issues of writing/discourse in historiography, literature and mapping we hope to provide students with conceptual and comparative models for their own research agendas. Through readings and discussions we will examine research strategies used by historians, geographers and literary scholars with special emphasis on critical issues that have helped define their respective fields and facilitated exchanges between them.

Course Structure

The course consists of a series of curricular “units,” each defined by:

- *geographical region
- *time period
- *a primary text, and
- *methodological approach

Students will read a selection of monographs, articles and literary texts on a wide range of loosely related topics. Furthermore our inquiry will focus on a set of practical questions involving the uses of discourse: as a mode of representation (institutions, race, gender or the ‘other’); as a form of interpretation marking differences; and as a site of exchange of knowledge, values, ideologies. These concerns will provide a common ground for our discussions, bringing together various disciplinary strands and orienting us toward practices of research.

To highlight the practical aspects of research in history, literary studies and geography, invited faculty from the three participating departments will teach several of these units during the term, choosing a topic in their area of expertise or interest. The course instructors (profs. Farquhar and Ewing) have designed the remainder of the curricular units with an eye to enhancing the thematic and methodological coherence of the course.

Course Requirements

Everyone will complete the assigned readings and participate in discussion. Given the fairly large amount of reading required, your regular contribution to class meetings will be a significant factor in determining your final grade. Students will submit a short response “paper” (250-500 words) and suggest themes for discussion to the class via email by 9:00 am the day before class meets.

Evaluation

Completion of assigned readings, response papers, discussion themes, and class participation (20%)
Four papers (5 pages) due September 16, October 14, November 18, and December 12 (80%)

Course Materials

Reading selections marked with an asterisk have been ordered and are available for purchase at the bookstore. Items marked with two asterisks are available through the J-Stor data base (accessed from the Virginia Tech library) <http://www.jstor.org/>. Other readings are available online from the course website: http://www.majbill.vt.edu/history/ewing/Area_Studies/Syllabus2002.htm.

Class Schedule:

August 28: **What is Area Studies?**

Session co-ordinators: profs. T. Ewing and S. Farquhar

**Vicente L. Rafael, "Regionalism, Area Studies, and the Accidents of Agency," American Historical Review 104/4 (1999), pp. 1208-1220.

THEORETICAL CONTEXTS

September 4: **Cultural anthropology**

Session co-ordinators: profs. T. Ewing and S. Farquhar

Robert Darnton, "Workers Revolt: The Great Cat Massacre of the rue Saint-Séverin," The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History (Vintage, 1984), pp. 75-104

**Robert Darnton, "An Early Information Society: News and Media in Eighteenth-Century Paris," American Historical Review 105/1 (2000), pp. 1-35.

Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," The Interpretation of Cultures (Vintage, 1973), pp. 3-30

Mikhail Bakhtin, Rabelais and His World trans. Hélène Iswolsky (Indiana University Press, 1984), pp. 1-30.

September 11: **Cultural history**

Session co-ordinators: profs. T. Ewing and S. Farquhar

Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality Vol. 1 (Vintage, 1990) pp. 17-35, 51-74.

———, Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison (Vintage, 1995) pp. 3-31, 170-194.

Michel de Certeau, "Spatial Stories," The Practice of Everyday Life trans. Steven Rendall (University of California Press, 1984), pp. 115-130.

Joan W. Scott, "The Evidence of Experience," Critical Inquiry 17 (1991), pp. 773-797.

William H. Sewell, "The Concept(s) of Culture," in Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt, eds., Beyond the Cultural Turn (University of California Press, 1999) pp. 35-61.

September 16: Paper #1 due

September 18: **The Barbarians Speak**

Session co-ordinator: prof. A. Becker

*Tacitus, "Germania," The Agricola and Germania, trans. A. R. Birley (Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 101-142.

Peter S. Wells, The Barbarians Speak : How the Conquered Peoples Shaped Roman Europe (Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 3-27.

Clifford Geertz, "Cultures," After the Fact: Two Countries, Four Decades, One Anthropologist (Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 42-63.

Hayden White, "The Question of Narrative," The Content of the Form (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), pp. 26-57.

UNDERSTANDING ACROSS TIME AND SPACE

September 25: **Orientalism**

Session co-ordinators: profs. T. Ewing and S. Farquhar

*The Edward Said Reader edited by Mousafa Bayoumi and Andrew Rubin (Vintage, 2000).

Gustave Flaubert, Flaubert in Egypt (1972) pp. 37-96.

**Rosalind O'Hanlon and David Washbrook, "After Orientalism: Culture, Criticism, and Politics in the Third World," Comparative Studies in Society and History 34/1 (1992) pp. 141-167.

**Gyan Prakash, "Orientalism Now," History and Theory 34/3 (1995) pp. 199-212.

October 2: **Cultural Cannibalism**

Session co-ordinator: prof. S. Farquhar

Montaigne, "Of Cannibals," Essays trans. Donald M. Frame (Stanford University Press, 1957), pp. 150-159.

Frank Lestringant, Cannibals: The Discovery and Representation of the Cannibal from Columbus to Jules Verne (University of California Press, 1997), pp. 1-12.

David Quint, "The Culture That Cannot Pardon: 'Des cannibales'," Montaigne and the Quality of Mercy (Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 75-101.

George Hoffmann, "Anatomy of the Mass: Montaigne's 'Cannibals'," Publications of the Modern Language Association of America 117 (2002), pp. 207-221.

Carla Freccero, "Cannibalism, Homophobia, Women: Montaigne's 'Des cannibales' and 'De l'amitié,'" Women, 'Race' and Writing in the Early Modern Period ed. Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker (Routledge, 1994), pp. 73-83.

Stephen Greenblatt, "Foreward," in Frank Lestringant Mapping the Renaissance World. The Geographical Imagination in the Age of Discovery trans. David Fausett (Polity Press, 1994), pp. vii-xv.

October 9: **Imagining Russia through Geography and Literature**

Session co-ordinator: prof. T. Ewing

**Mark Bassin, "Russia between Europe and Asia: The Ideological Construction of Geographical Space," Slavic Review 50/1 (1991) pp. 1-17.

**Mark Bassin, "Inventing Siberia: Visions of the Russian East in the Early Nineteenth Century," American Historical Review 96/3 (1991) pp. 763-794.

**Susan Layton, "The Creation of an Imaginative Caucasian Geography" Slavic Review 45/3 (1986) pp. 470-485.

Fedor Tyutchev, "Russian Geography" (poem)

A. S. Pushkin, "To a Kalmyk Woman" (poem)

Leo Tolstoy, "A Prisoner in the Caucasus" (short story)

October 14: **Paper #2 due**

October 16: **Caribbean Environmental Discourses and Policies**

Session co-ordinator: prof. L. Grossman

Lawrence Grossman, "Soil Conservation, Political Ecology and Technological Change on Saint Vincent," Geographical Review 87 (1997), pp. 53-374.

- T. Bassett and K.B. Zueli, "Environmental Discourses and the Ivorian Savanna," Annals of the Association of American Geographers 90 (2000), pp. 67-95.
- R. Bryant, "Romancing Colonial Forestry: the Discourse of 'Forestry as Progress' in British Burma," The Geographical Journal 162 (1996), pp. 169-178.
- Roderick P. Neumann, "Dukes, Earls and Ersatz Edens: Aristocratic Nature Preservationists in Colonial Africa," Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 14 (1996), pp. 79-98.

GENDER, POLITICS, AND EVERYDAY LIFE IN LITERATURE AND HISTORY

October 23: Ideology in Literature

Session co-ordinator: prof. F. Teulon

- A. Brillat-Savarin, The Physiology of Taste (Heritage House, 1949), pp. 1-3, 18-23, 24-31, 32-48, 49-57, 150-162, 163-178, 186-200.
- Roland Barthes, "Reading Brillat-Savarin," On Signs, ed. M. Blonsky (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), pp. 61-75.
- Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, "A Cultural Field in the Making: Gastronomy in 19th Century France," French Food: On the Table, On the Page, and In French Culture, eds. L. Schehr & A. Weiss (Routledge, 2001), pp. 5-50.
- Jean-Baptiste Say, "Of Immaterial Products, or Values Consumed at the Moment of Production," in A Treatise on Political Economy (Grigg & Elliot, 1844), pp. 119-127.
- Fabrice Teulon, "Gastronomy, Gourmandise and Political Economy in Brillat-Savarin's Physiology of Taste" European Studies Journal 15 (Spring 1998), pp. 41-53.

October 30: Gender and Stalinism

Session co-ordinator: prof. T. Ewing

- *Lydia Chukovskaya, Sofia Petrovna (Northwestern University Press, 1994).
- **Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," American Historical Review 91/5 (1986), pp. 1053-1075.
- **Lynne Viola, "*Bab'i bunty* and Peasant Women's Protest During Collectivization," Russian Review 45/1 (1986), pp. 23-42.
- **Victoria Bonnell, "The Peasant Woman in Stalinist Political Art of the 1930s," American Historical Review 98/1 (1993), pp. 55-82.
- E. Thomas Ewing, "A Stalinist Celebrity Teacher," Journal of Women's History (forthcoming).
- , "Coping with the 'Triple Burden': The Professional, Public, and Family Responsibilities of Soviet Teachers in the 1930s" (unpublished paper, fall 2003).

November 6: Women in the French Resistance

Session co-ordinator: prof. S. Farquhar

- *Marguerite Duras, The War. A Memoir trans. Barbara Bray (New Press, 1986), pp. 115-141.
- Margaret Collins Weitz, Sisters of the Resistance (John Wiley & Sons, 1995), pp. 1-20, 276-285.
- Miranda Pollard, "Reign of Virtue," Mobilizing Gender in Vichy France (University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 1-8, 196-201.
- Henry Rousso, The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France Since 1944 (Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. vii-x, 15-27, 297-306.

November 13: **Everyday Life in Nazi Germany**

Session co-ordinator: prof. R. Stephens

*Art Spiegelman, Maus (3 volumes)

Dominick LaCapra, History and Memory after Auschwitz (Cornell University Press, 1998) pp. 1-42, 139-179.

November 18: Paper #3 due

November 20: **Mexican Theatre and the Postmodernization of History**

Session co-ordinator: prof. J. Bixler

*Linda Hutcheon, The Politics of Postmodernism (Routledge, 1989).

Sabina Berman, "Heresy," The Theatre of Sabina Berman. The Agony of Ecstasy and Other Plays. Ed. and trans. Adam Versenyi. (Southern Illinois University Press, 2003).

Jacqueline Bixler, "From Ecstasy to Heresy: The Theatre of Sabina Berman," The Theatre of Sabina Berman pp. xx-xxvii.

_____, "The Postmodernization of History in the Theatre of Sabina Berman," Latin American Theatre Review 30/2 (1997) pp. 45-60.

Hayden White, "The Historical Text as Literary Artifact," Tropics of Discourse. Essays in Cultural Criticism (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978) pp. 81-100.

December 4: **Gender theory and contemporary Spanish fiction**

Session co-ordinator: prof. J. Folkart

Paul Smith, Discerning the Subject (University of Minnesota Press, 1988) pp. xxxiii-xxxv

Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay on Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and Theatre ed. Sue Ellen Case (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990) pp. 270-282.

Cristina Fernández Cubas, "In the Southern Hemisphere." trans. Phyllis Zatlin, Kansas Quarterly 23/1-2 (1992) pp. 83-93.

Cristina Fernández Cubas, "The Attics of Brumal," trans. Phyllis Zatlin Short Story International 14/80 (1990) pp. 53-75

Jessica A. Folkart, "Performing and Reforming Gender in *Los Atillos de Brumal* (The Attics of Brumal)," Angles On Otherness: The Fiction of Cristina Fernández Cubas (Bucknell University Press, 2002).

December 12: Paper #4 due