

Gabriele Schwab

**Imaginary Ethnographies**

Course Requirements:

Seminar: Paper; Class Presentation

Exploring the relationship between literature, film, ethnography and the cultural imaginary, this course views literature and film as different forms of *writing culture*. We will explore the specific role and devices of the literary in relation to the visual and to other discourses on culture such as ethnography and cultural theory. In this context, we will develop a method of reading that emphasizes the complex transcodings (as defined by Jameson in The Political Unconscious) between the literary/aesthetic, the cultural/ethnographic, and the psychological. We will explore topics such as the colonial imaginary and the colonization of psychic space, violent histories and trauma, and the social construction of childhood.

Literature:

Franz Kafka, The Trial; America

Beckett, Le Depeupleur / The Lost Ones

Juan Jose Saer, The Witness

Clarice Lispector, Family Ties (Short Story “The Smallest Woman in the World)

Werner Herzog, Fitzcarraldo (Film)

Richard Powers, Operation Wandering Soul

Ulrike Ottinger, Freak Orlando (Film)

Ruth Kluger, Still Alive

W.G. Sebald, The Emigrants

Simon Wiesenthal, The Sunflower

Marguerite Duras, The War (1<sup>st</sup> piece: “La Douleur,” translated as “The War”)

Sabine Reichel, What Did You Do In The War, Daddy?

Ralph Salisbury, The Indian Who Bombed Berlin (Short Story)

Margarethe von Trotha, Die Bleierne Zeit

Theory:

Clifford/Marcus, eds., Writing Culture. The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography (select.)

Behar/Gordon, “Women Writing Culture” (Selections)

Michel Foucault, The Order of Things, (Section on Ethnography and Psychoanalysis)

Jacques Derrida, Of Grammatology (“The Writing Lesson”)

Nicolas Abraham/Maria Torok, The Shell and the Kernel, Vol. I (Selections)

D. W. Winnicott, “The Location of Cultural Experience”

Michael Rothberg, Multidirectional Memory (Selections)

Vincent Crapanzano, Imaginative Horizons (Selections)

Veena Das, Words and Life (Selections)

Kelly Oliver, The Colonization of Psychic Space (Selections)

Michael Fischer, Emergent Forms of Life and the Anthropological Voice (Selections)

Dipesh Chakrabarty, Provincializing Europe (Selections)

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**Tu 4:30-7:10**  
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**Syllabus:**

1. 01/19: General Introduction
2. 01/26: Ruth Kluger, Still Alive
3. 02/02: Marguerite Duras, The War
4. 02/09: W.G. Sebald, The Emigrants
5. 02/16: Simon Wiesenthal, The Sunflower
6. 02/23: Craig Lecture: "Haunting Legacies"
7. 03/02: Margarethe von Trotha, Die Bleierne Zeit (screening and discussion)
8. 03/09: Die Bleierne Zeit (class presentation and discussion)

**Spring Break**

9. 03/23: Kafka, The Trial
10. 03/30: Beckett, The Lost Ones
11. 04/06: Saer, The Witness
12. 04/13: Herzog, Fitzcarraldo (screening)
13. 04/20: Fitzcarraldo (presentation and discussion)
14. 04/27: Richard Powers, Operation Wandering Soul