

Master InterAmerican Studies, Seminar

Exploring America and the World: French (Pre-) Revolutionary Travel Literature

Term: Fall/ Winter Semester 2017/18

Time & Place: 1. class: **VHF (Biology Building), Room 01.210**, all other classes will be held in the Main Building (UHG) U2-200, Wednesdays 14-16h

Lecturers: Prof. Dr. Kirsten Kramer, Office Hours: Wed. 12-13h, kirsten.kramer@uni-bielefeld.de; Asst. Prof. Dr. Eleonora Rohland, Office Hours: Tue. 17-18h, eleonora.rohland@uni-bielefeld.de

In France, a vast travel literature emerges throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, which is part of the European “politics of world exploration” (Despoix) that comes to map out multiple inter- and intracultural “contact zones” (Pratt). It also contributes considerably to the production of a particular world knowledge which comprises both traditional figures of comparing the ‘Old’ and the ‘New World’ (such as the ‘Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes’) as well as new scientific taxonomies and classifications belonging to the fields of geography, biology or botany.

The Seminar will ask how French explorers, travelers and members of the emerging “Republic of Letters” of the 17th and 18th centuries perceived, measured and described the ‘New World’ and the many novel experiences linked with its increasing exploration. On the one hand, the focus of the course will be on comparisons and references that authors drew from contemporary European discursive topoi (such as the ‘noble savage’, the ‘barbarian’ etc.); on the other hand, it will focus on wider geographical comparisons that authors made in order to come to terms with their ‘exotic’ or ‘primitive’ surroundings. Readings will include ‘canonical’ travel narratives by Montaigne, Bougainville, Diderot, Volney, Chateaubriand as well as the Abbé Raynal and the slightly less well-known de Champlain, Charlevoix, Biet and others.

Since the course will be held in a co-teaching of a literary scholar and a historian, you will explore the seminar’s texts from both perspectives, that of literary studies as well as that of history. The course “The Beginning of the Age of Revolution. America, France, and Haiti, 1775-1804” (220115) can be studied as a historical contextualization (historische Kontextualisierung) which supplements the seminar (both classes together form a module).

Assignment: Presentations of a length of 20-30 minutes (shared by students belonging to history and literary studies).

Exam: At the end of the semester, you will write a 25-30 page term paper on one of the texts we discussed in class or on a French (pre-)revolutionary travel text of your choice.

Syllabus

Date	Theme	Reading Assignment
18.10.17	Introduction: Who's who Course Program And presentations Intro to Travel Literature & Historical Epochs	
25.10.17	Theoretical Foundations I: Practices of Comparison: A theoretical Survey	Saussy, Haun. "Axes of Comparison." In <i>Comparison. Theories, Approaches, Uses</i> , edited by Rita Felski and Susan Stanford Friedman. 64-78. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013. Radhakrishnan, R. "Why Compare?". <i>New Literary History</i> 40, no. 3 (2009): 453-71.
01.11.17	ALL SAINTS DAY	
08.11.17	Comparing "Civilized" and "Savages" I: Cartier discovers Nouvelle France (1534)	Cartier , Jacques, Henry Percival Biggar, and Ramsay Cook. <i>The voyages of Jacques Cartier</i> . Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993, 1st Voyage, (extracts) Healy, George R. "The French Jesuits and the Idea of the Noble Savage." <i>The William and Mary Quarterly</i> 15, no. 2 (1958): 144-67.
15.11.17	Comparing "Civilized" and "Savages" II: Montaigne (1580)	Montaigne , Michel Eyquem. <i>Des cannibales (anthologie)</i> . Folioplus Classiques. 1580-1595. Lestringant, Frank. <i>Cannibals. The Discovery and Representation of the Cannibal from Columbus to Jules Verne</i> . Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997 (extracts). [Motohashi, Ted. "The Discourse on Cannibalism in Early Modern Travel Writing." In <i>Travel Writing and Empire. Postcolonial Theory in Transit</i> , edited by Steve Clark. 83-99. London: Zed Books, 1999.]
22.11.17	CLASS CANCELLED	(moved to 31.01.18)
29.11.17	Comparing Catholic and Protestant Colonies: Father Biet on Barbados (1654)	Handler, Jerome S. "Father Antoine Biet 's Visit to Barbados in 1654." <i>Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society</i> 32 (1967): 56-76. Klein, Herbert S., and Ben Vinson. <i>African slavery in Latin America and the Caribbean</i> . 2nd ed. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 3-47.
06.12.17	On the Treatment of Slaves in the West-Indies: The Abbé Raynal (1771)	Raynal , Abbé de, and Peter Jimack. <i>A history of the two Indies: A translated selection of writings from Raynal's Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements des Européens dans les des deux Indes</i> . Aldershot ; Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2006, Book 11, p. 147-162. Aristotle. <i>Politics</i> . The Internet Classics Archive MIT ed. 350 B.C.E., http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/politics.1_one.html , accessed October 17, 2017, Part II and III.
13.12.17	Comparing peoples and Climates I: Montesquieu (1748)	Montesquieu , Charles Louis de Secondat, and David Wallace Carrithers. <i>The spirit of laws. A compendium of the first English edition</i> . Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. of California Press, 1977, books XIV-XVII. Safier, Neil. "The Tenacious Travels of the Torrid Zone and the Global Dimensions of Geographical Knowledge in the Eighteenth Century." <i>Journal of Early Modern History</i> 18 (2014): 141-72.

Date	Theme	Reading Assignment
20.12.17	Comparing peoples and Climates II	Mauelshagen, Franz. "Climate as a Scientific Paradigm – Early History of Climatology to 1800." In <i>The Palgrave Handbook of Climate History</i> , edited by Sam White, Christian Pfister and Franz Mauelshagen. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming 2018.
22.12.17-08.01.18	CHRISTMAS BREAK	
10.01.18	Historiographic and Literary Foundations: The “Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes” and the “Dispute of the New World”	Bullard, Paddy, and Alexis Tadié. <i>Ancients and Moderns in Europe: Comparative Perspectives</i> . Oxford University studies in the Enlightenment, Oxford, UK: Voltaire Foundation, 2016 (extracts). Gerbi, Antonello, and Jeremy Moyle. <i>The Dispute of the New World. The History of a Polemic, 1750-1900</i> . 1st pbk. ed. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010, p. 3-32.
17.01.18	CLASS CANCELLED	(moved to 24.01.18)
24.01.18 12-14		Guest Lecture: Bougainville
24.01.18 14-16	Comparing Ancients and Moderns: Natural Law in Diderot (1771)	Bougainville , Louis-Antoine de, <i>A Voyage Round the World. Performed by Order of His Most Christian Majesty, in the years 1766, 1767, 1768, and 1769. By Lewis de Bougainville, Colonel of Foot, and Commodore of the Expedition, in the Frigate La Boudeuse, and the Store-Ship L'Etoile. Translated from the French by John Reinhold Forster, F. A. S.</i> London: J. Nourse, 1772 (extracts). Diderot, Denis, <i>Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville</i> . Éd. Michel Delon, Paris: folio classique, 2002 [1773] (extracts).
31.01.18 12-14	Transformations of Nature and Civilization: Chateaubriand’s Travel Writings (1791)	Chateaubriand , François-René de, <i>Travels in America and Italy by viscount de Chateaubriand</i> , London: Henry Colburn, 1828. (extracts) Todorov, Tzvetan, <i>On Human Diversity : Nationalism, Racism, and Exoticism in French thought</i> , Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1994, chap. 4 (extracts).
31.01.18 14-16	Course Summary and Tutorial Session	Requirements for a paper (Hausarbeit) in Literary Studies and History