

EAST & WEST THROUGH TRAVEL WRITING: THE LIMITS AND DIVISIONS OF EUROPE

This course explores the ways travellers have constructed ideas of Europe, concentrating on the 17th century to the present. A body of source material has been selected from the rich variety of travel writings and related genres which deal with ideas of European identity and alterity. In particular, the course includes the writings of those from Europe's eastern margins, comparing and contrasting them to more familiar works by Western travellers. Because of the nature of the sources themselves, and because the issues of identity, difference, representation and power have been the subject of discussion in a number of disciplines, the course is conceived as interdisciplinary (bringing together historical, literary and anthropological perspectives). The course establishes a theoretical framework for examining ideas of Europe through travel writing, and tests theory against a variety of sources that span the whole period (17th – 21st centuries). The readings assigned for class discussion focus on Central Europe and the Balkans. These specific materials have been chosen to allow us to apply and critique theoretical and methodological issues, to improve contextualization and to enable comparison – but students are encouraged to pursue their own interests by researching other areas.

PRELIMINARY READING

Recommended literature on travel writing:

Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan (eds.), *Tourists with Typewriters: Critical Reflections on Contemporary Travel Writing* (2000)
 Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* (2002)
 Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (1997)
 Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (1993)

Anthologies:

Kenneth Parker (ed.), *Early Modern Views of Orient* (1999)
 Omer Hadžiselimović (ed.), *At the Gates of the East. British travel writers on Bosnia and Herzegovina from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries* (2001).

Selected travel texts:

Edith Durham, *High Albania* (1909)
 Sacherevell Sitwell, *Roumanian Journey* (1938)
 Lawrence Durrell, *Esprit de Corps* (rpt. 1990)
 Rebecca West, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* (1941)
 Patrick Leigh Fermor, *A Time of Gifts* (1977) and *Between the Woods and the Water* (1986)
 Claudio Magris, *Danube: A sentimental journey from the source to the Black Sea* (1989)
 Isabel Fonseca, *Bury Me Standing* (1995)
 David Tuller, *Cracks in the iron closet: travels in gay & lesbian Russia* (1997)
 Bohumil Hrabal, *Total Fears* (1998)
 Vitali Vitaliev, *Borders Up!* (1999)

Title: East and West through Travel Writing: The Limits and Divisions of Europe
Course Code: SEHI 3001/3A01
Course-unit value: 2.0
Level: Advanced

Availability: not available 2009-2011
Open to: All final-year undergraduates

Prerequisites: Students should normally have passed at least one full History course-unit at Advanced Level'

Course leader: Wendy Bracewell, Room 416, SSEES Taviton Street

Aims: To acquire a body of historical knowledge relating to the history of the Habsburg Monarchy 1700-1918. This knowledge will relate not only to the facts of history but also to broader concepts and explanatory tools.

Objectives: By the end of the course, you will have acquired:

1. an understanding of the ways in which Europe's divisions have been conceptualized and used in travel writing;
 2. experience in evaluating travel texts as historical, literary and anthropological sources, and an ability to analyse the personal, political and cultural assumptions underlying the viewpoints of authors writing on Europe's divisions;
 3. enhanced ability to frame an argument in a sustained manner both orally and in writing. Arguments should be structured, coherent, relevant, and concise, and should take into account all aspects of a given problem;
 4. enhanced generic skills: these may be defined as –
 - (i) self-direction and self-discipline
 - (ii) independence of mind, and initiative
 - (iii) the ability to work with others and to have respect for the reasoned views of others
 - (iv) the ability to identify, gather, deploy and organize evidence, data and information; and familiarity with appropriate means of achieving this
 - (v) analytical ability and the capacity to consider and solve problems, including complex problems
 - (vi) structure, clarity and fluency of expression, both written and oral
 - (vii) intellectual maturity and integrity
 - (viii) empathy and imaginative insight
 - (ix) ability to organize time, work and personal resources to optimal effect.
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Teaching & Learning Methods:

Number of Hours:

Seminars

40 hours

Consultations

20 hours

Private Study

approximately 540 hours (although this will vary

according to individual needs)

Assessment:

Coursework: Three pieces of coursework (essay, source analysis or 'gobbet questions' and text introduction) totalling approx. 5,000 words, to be submitted according to a fixed deadline. The aggregate mark for the coursework will count for 25% of the total mark for the first course unit.

Examination: A three-hour written examination of three questions: one composed of three gobbets and two essay questions. All questions carry equal weight and the aggregate mark counts for 75% of the total mark for the first course unit.

Extended essay: A long essay of 10,000 words on some aspect of the course worth 1 cu.

AFFILIATE STUDENTS:

See regulations posted elsewhere.

100% fulfilment of coursework is required for the successful completion of this course. If this requirement is not met by the final departmental deadline, it will normally lead to you being debarred from the exam and the course unit being marked as incomplete on your final degree transcript.