

Ewa Domanska  
Research Seminar (graduate, 5 units)  
Spring 2002  
Wed, 6.15-9.05, room 260--008

CASA 211B  
Comparative Literature 211B  
History 406

**APPROACHES TO THE PAST: PUTTING THEORIES IN PRACTICES  
(USEFUL CATEGORIES OF HISTORICAL ANALYSIS)**

*Course description*

This course is a research seminar designed to help students work on papers for classes, theses and individual projects. In scholarly texts dealing with the past, methodological and philosophical standards are often low and there is an obvious gap between theory and practice in this field. On the one hand, theoretical “speculations” and abstractions are viewed with suspicion by practising historians, archaeologists, and anthropologists, and on the other theorists complain about the low level of methodological sophistication among practising historians. The course will introduce texts that have inspired theoretically oriented scholars, and show how students might use techniques and categories borrowed from different disciplines in their own research.

The course is meant to convince students that an understanding of theory is fundamental to humanistic studies. The course would focus on cross-disciplinary themes and explore them in depth through workshops and seminars. It will encourage interdisciplinary approaches and encourage seminarists to take up interdisciplinary projects. It is meant to teach the importance of critical thinking, teach different strategies of interpretation, and devote special attention to the development of students’ original approaches.

*Course requirements*

This course is set for students who are interested in exploring new ways of thinking about the past. Students should read texts at home and come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings. There will be a final written assignment. Its topic will be chosen by the student himself/herself and it is supposed to draw upon the projects undertaken in other courses the student is taking. In order to pass the examination students have to participate in classes, be active in the discussions (creativity, modes of argumentation and originality in interpretations are given special considerations) and prepare a written assignment.

*Course schedule*

**1. Introduction: Challenging Traditional Ways of Thinking About the Past**

Michel Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”, in his: *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice. Selected Essays and Interviews*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, transl. by Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1995 (fragments)

Charles Lamert and Gerth Gillan, *Michel Foucault: Social Theory and Transgression*. Columbia University Press, 1982.

**2. Reading images - “punctum” (workshop)**

Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography*, transl. by Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, 1994.

John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1980 (fragments)

Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit, *Caravaggio's Secret*. Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 1998 (fragments).

Susan Sontag, *On Photography*. New York etc.: Anchor Books, 1989.

### **3. Memory and Trauma: Mourning and Melancholia**

Kerwin Lee Klein, "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse". *Representations*, no 69, Winter 2000.

Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia", in his: *On Metapsychology: the Theory of Psychoanalysis*, transl. by James Strachey. Penguin Books, 1984.

Frank Ankersmit, "Remembering the Holocaust: Mourning and Melancholia", in his, *Historical Representation*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001.

Sigmund Freud, "The Uncanny", in his: *Collected Papers*. London: Hogarth Press, 1958, vol. 4, 1953.

Sigmund Freud, "Moses and Monotheism", in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. London: Hogarth Press, 1958, vol. 23 (fragments)

Hélène Cixous, "Fiction and Its Phantoms: A Reading of Freud's *Das Unheimliche* (The "uncanny")". *New Literary History*, vol. VII, no 3, Spring 1976.

### **4. Space, place, chora**

Bachelard, Gaston, *The Poetics of Space*, transl. by Maria Jolas. Boston: Beacon Press, 1969 (fragments).

Edward S. Casey, "Smooth Spaces and Rough-Edged Places: The Hidden History of Place." *The Review of Metaphysics*, vol. 51, no 2, December 1997.

Elisabeth Gross, "Women, Chora, Dwelling", in her: *Space, Time, and Perversion. Essays on the Politics of Bodies*. New York-London, 1995.

Derrida, Jacques, "Khora", in *The Derrida Reader. Writing Performances*, ed. by Julian Wolfreys. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998.

Koselleck, Reinhart, "Space of Experience" and "Horizon of Expectation", in his: *Futures Past. On the Semantics of Historical Time*, transl. by Keith Tribe. Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 1985.

### **5. "Spectre"/ghost/phantasm/fetish/"factish"**

#### **Special guest: Hayden White**

Jacques Derrida, *Spectres of Marx. The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, transl. by Peggy Kamuff. New York and London: Routledge, 1994 (fragments)

Sigmund Freud, "Fetishism" (1927), in: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, edited and transl. by James Strachey, vol. 21, London: Hogarth Press, 1953-74.

Karl Marx, "The Fetishism of Commodities" in his, *Capital*, vol. I.

Latour, Bruno, "The Slight Surprise of Action. Facts, Fetishes, Factishes", in his, *Pandora's Hope. Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Henry Krips, *Fetish: An Erotic of Culture*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999.

*Fetishism as Cultural Discourse*, ed. By Emily Apter and William Pietz. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1993.

## **6. Encounter, nearness, face**

Lévinas, Emmanuel, *Totality and Infinity: an Essay on Exteriority*. The Hague: Nijhoff, 1979 (fragments)

Lévinas, Emmanuel, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. The Hague: Nijhoff, 1981 (fragments)

## **7. Monster/the Other**

Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)", in: *Monster Theory. Reading Culture*, ed. by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

Maggie Kilgour, "The Function of Cannibalism at the Present Time", in: *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*, ed. by Francis Barker, Peter Hulme and Margaret Iversen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Maggie Kilgour, "Introduction. Metaphors of Incorporation" and "Conclusion In Which Everything is Included and Nothing Concluded", in her, *From Communion to Cannibalism. An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1990.

Franco Moretti, "The Dialectic of Fear". *New Left Review*, no 136, November-December 1982.

Barbara Creed, "Alien and the Monstrous-Feminine", in: *The Gendered Cyborg. A Reader*, ed. By Gill Kikup, Linda Jones and others. London and New York: Routledge, 2000.

Goldman, Laurence, *The Anthropology of Cannibalism*. Westport: Bergin and Garvey, 1999.

## **8. Abjection, Disgust and Abomination**

**special guest: René Girard**

Julia Kristeva, "Approaching Abjection," in her: *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.

Jack Ben-Levi, Craig Houser, Leslie C. Jones, Simon Taylor, "Introduction," in: *Abject Art. Repulsion and Desire in American Art*, exhibit catalog. New York: Whitney Museum of Modern Art, 1993.

Barbara Creed, "Kristeva, Feminity, Abjection". Fragments published in: *The Horror Reader*, ed. By Ken Gelder. London and New York: Routledge, 2000.

Hal Foster, "Obscene, Abject, Traumatic." *October* 78, Fall 1996.

Elisabeth Grosz, "The Body of Signification", in: *Abjection, Melancholia, and Love. The Work of Julia Kristeva*, ed. by John Fletcher and Andrew Benjamin. London and New York: Routledge, 1990.

Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger. An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London and New York: Routledge, 1996.

## **9. Body (alive and dead)**

Hayden White, "Bodies and Their Plots", in: *Choreographing History*, ed. by Susan Leigh Foster. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1995.

Zoe Crossland, "Buried Lives. Forensic Archaeology and the disappeared in Argentina". *Archaeological Dialogues*, vol. 7, no 2, 2000.

Thomas W. Laqueur, "The Dead Body and Human Rights" (manuscript)

Elizabeth Grosz, "Sexed Bodies", in her, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.

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