

INTL 190 *Everyone, Always a Foreigner: Travel Writing and Cultural Translation*
Winter 2019
Wednesday 9:00AM-11:50PM
1428 RBC

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Office Hours: Tuesday 9:00AM-11:00AM
Or by appointment

“It is not down in any map; true places never are.” (Melville *Moby Dick*)

This course is about travelling before the world was fully explained by and displayed on the internet or in travel guides. Nearly all of the major writers we will read ventured to places that existed only on maps or by hearsay. For the most part, there was little of a “beaten path”: no tourist hotels, tourist friendly restaurants...no tourists. Travelers of the sort that we will read did not go to ‘see’ or ‘relax’; they went, they tell us, to experience or “find grace” and, then, to return home to explain to their sedentary cotemporaries how life is lived at the far ends of the earth.

There is, though, something of a conceit in these travel projects. While the writing is often exceptional, giving evidence of enormous powers of description, most of the writers did not speak the local languages and began their journeys with uninformed notions of what they would find. They had not thought about what scientists call the observer effect: How would the simple fact of their being there affect the authenticity of the experience they sought? As a way of thinking and talking about this, we will also read two essays on the difference between a tourist and a traveler, and why people take so many photographs. Is the traveler, like a reader with no native ability, forced into an experience that is (inevitably?) one degree removed from the original? Can one travel without being a tourist?

Finally, we will also talk about the differences that may be created by choices of travel route, the intent of a trip, the literary form, the form of travel, and the gender of a writer.

Requirements: This is a research seminar for which each of you is required to choose a topic based on your particular interest. Your project must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. You may not write about your native country or the country in which you were raised and educated.
2. You must choose a writer or set of writers who published before the end of the 20th century. You may compare an older and new writer, if you like. If they wrote in a language other than English, their work must be translated.
3. To accompany your writer, you must also choose another form of media to explore, for example travel photography, music, or some other art form that speaks to your analysis.

4. Your research paper **must** be 20 to 25 pages in length, provide both an analysis of the travel text and its historical context, and be approved by me by week three of the quarter.
5. You will be asked to present, for credit, your research topic for discussion in the weeks following its approval.
6. Your final papers **must** be submitted in both hard copy to me and electronically to turnitin.com as noted on the calendar below. All cases of suspected plagiarism will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Seminars work only when participants show up having done the reading, thought about the issues suggested by the text, and are prepared to discuss both the details and underlying arguments. They live or die on the basis of participation. This means **two** things:

1. Each of you will be asked to commit to leading one week's discussion on the assigned reading. You will work, most likely, in teams of two. One will present the travel writing assigned for the week and the other will provide the cultural/geographic/political context with, for example, photographs, music, film clips, or excerpts from another, unassigned writer. Your job is not to tell us about the writing assigned for the week, but suggest the questions we should be asking about it. You may divide the labor as you like. You will be leading the class discussion and should be prepared to ask your classmates direct questions.
2. You will **not** be allowed to use computers in class. Everyone must come every week having done the reading and be ready for engagement...with questions and comments on the reading in hand.

Finally, you cannot pass the class unless you do all of the work. Late work will be penalized unless you are allowed an extension in advance of the due date. If you must miss class, please let me know in advance. Once you have signed up for a presentation week, only a documented emergency should keep you from showing up.

Grading:

- Participation—talking in class: 10pts
- Reading Presentation: 10pts
- Topic declaration, outline and bibliography, and draft paragraphs: 5pts each/ 15pts total
- Final essay: 65pts

Required Texts: All are available at the UCSD bookstore or from any used bookstore or on-line seller. All are in paperback. You will need each text in class for each meeting of the seminar as assigned.

Pico Iyer *Sun After Dark*
Ernest Hemingway *Green Hills of Africa*
Isak Dinesen (Karen Blixen) *Out of Africa*
Isabella Bird *Unbeaten tracks in Japan*
Alan Booth *The Roads to Sata*

Mark Salzman *Iron and Silk*
Edith Wharton *In Morocco*
Paul Bowles *Their Heads are Green and Their Hands are Blue*
Peter Matthiessen *The Snow Leopard*
Bruce Chatwin *In Patagonia*

Course Outline—Reading Assignments and Due Dates: Reading assignments are expected to be done in full. I have also made one reading “strongly recommended.” I will be talking about it and it will frame discussions as we go along, but it is up to you whether you wrestle with it or not.

Wednesday, January 9th: Introduction: Travelers, Tourists, Photographers, and the Prejudiced Eye—Setting It All UP.

READING: Required:

Pico Iyer *Sun After Dark ALL*- This is a collection of essays. Please come to class with significant sentences from each essay noted so that we can talk about the Iyer in detail.

ALSO Read:

David Foster Wallace, *Consider the Lobster*, *Gourmet Magazine*, August, 2004.

<http://www.columbia.edu/~col8/lobsterarticle.pdf>

Jessica Crispin, *How Not to Be Elizabeth Gilbert*, *The Boston Review*, July 20th, 2015;

http://bostonreview.net/books-ideas/jessa-crispin-female-travel-writing#.WGk_tf19YV4.email

Strongly Recommended:

Susan Sontag, *In Plato’s Cave* from *On Photography*

http://sites.uci.edu/01807w14/files/2014/02/SontagSusan_InPlatosCave.pdf

Wednesday, January 16th: Women and Colonialism in Africa

Reading: Isak Dinesen *Out of Africa* Read ALL

Wednesday, January 23rd : Hemingway and His “Passion” for Big Game in Africa

Reading: Ernest Hemingway *Green Hills of Africa* and please at least skim Pauline Pfeifer Hemingway’s Safari Journal

Research Statement Due: One page that tells me what country, what you think you will be reading, why this is both an interesting place to read about and that the reading fits that interest, and what you will be looking at for secondary literature.

Wednesday January 30th: An American Woman in Morocco

Reading: Edith Wharton *In Morocco* ALL

Wednesday, February 6th: An American Man in North Africa (“Scenes from the Non-Christian World”)

Reading: Paul Bowles *Their Heads are Green and their Hands are Blue* ALL

Wednesday, February 13th: South America as the American West

Reading: Bruce Chatwin *In Patagonia* ALL
Due: Research Outline and Bibliography

Wednesday, February 20th: Climbing in Nepal in Search of Ghosts and Enlightenment
Reading: Peter Matthiessen *The Snow Leopard* ALL

Wednesday, February 27th: An American in China
Reading: Mark Salzman *Iron and Silk* ALL

Due electronically to me by 4:00PM on Monday, February 25th: Introductory paragraph and three body paragraphs.

Wednesday, March 6th: A Victorian Woman in Japan
Reading: Isabella Bird *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan* ALL

Wednesday, March 13th: A Modern Brit in Japan
Reading: Alan Booth *The Roads to Sata* ALL

Final papers are due Wednesday, March 20th by 4:00PM—in hard copy to my office and electronically to Turnitin.com.