GER 392: Literature and Travel  
Spring 2010 - #38147  
M 2-5 p.m – BUR 232

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Description:  
This seminar has two main objectives: 1) to provide an overview of the history of travel and the enormous changes in modes and goals of travel between 1770 and 1870 and 2) to investigate the changes that this travel had on perceptions of the world during the same period, particularly as they left their mark on German cultural writing and literature.

It will begin with the European travel and travel writing boon of the eighteenth century which includes the tradition of the Grand Tour brought to Germany by Goethe among others, the “sentimental journey” popularized by Laurence Sterne, and fantastical writings of imaginary travels. Then we will examine naturalist voyages and the texts that they inspired such as the popular and influential Georg Forster who accompanied Cook on his trip around the world and with Alexander von Humboldt who wrote extensively about his 1799-1804 trip to the Americas over the course of many decades. We will also consider the impact of new technologies on literary expression in the first half of the nineteenth century (in writings like Stifter's “Kondor ‘or travelers’ essays on the experience of the railway). We will focus on the role of travel and tourism in the development of new genres in the early nineteenth century, such as romantic parodies of travel and Heine's Reisebilder, and new media, such as Baedeker's travel guides intended for the traveling middle class reader. The extensive emigration to the Americas is the focus of numerous authors in the mid-nineteenth century (Sealsfield and Gerstäcker), while the same period also saw the significant increase in the ability of women to travel (Pfeiffer). Finally, we will study the impact of national interests in the rest of the world and colonial aspirations in popular geographical magazines and in differing texts of adventurers such as Henry Stanley and Gerhard Rohlfs.

Lectures will devote significant attention to the structural and social changes that allowed for greater geographical mobility and inspired travel and travel writing in this period. Due to the wide variety of texts included in the seminar lectures and discussion will focus both on a range of socio-literary issues such as context, authorship, publication, and audience as well as on important formal issues of style, genre, narration, and perspective.

Readings: A course reader with numerous excerpts will be available from Jenn’s Copy Shop, 2200 Guadalupe. Other readings will be available on-line or on reserve. Readings listed on the syllabus must be completed before each class period so that productive discussion can follow the introductory lectures. In order to facilitate these discussions each student will pose at least one question about the readings for each meeting. Questions should be posted on the course web site by noon the day before the seminar.

Protokoll: Each student will present a short (one-page) ”Protokoll” that takes issue with the previous week’s seminar. It can present your reactions to lecture, discussion, or readings and can consist either of posing relevant and related issues or of taking a critical position with respect
to the material. Most importantly they should, however, present an independent, original thought on the topic(s) (during weeks 2-14).

**Reaction papers:** Two reaction papers (one to two pages) should introduce and critique a work of scholarship on a topic related to the seminar (and ideally relevant to your research project). In these reaction papers you should identify the subject matter, main thesis, argumentation, and methodology of the scholarly paper and then provide your evaluation of it (assessing its strengths and weaknesses). The purpose of these two reaction papers is to help you to find relevant background research for your own project and to identify the qualities inherent in first-rate scholarly work. One of these should be presented orally in class by March 29 (5 minutes).

**Research topic:** Each student will select the topic for his/her research project after discussing it with the instructor. The research topic can include works read in the seminar or focus exclusively on other material and topics related to travel and literature. The tentative title and a one-paragraph summary shall be posted on the course web site by March 22. An initial bibliography (including primary texts, background works, and scholarship) is due (posted on the course web site) on April 5. The research project will be both presented as a Referat and submitted in the form of a written term paper.

**Referat:** During the last week of the semester, each student will present the results of his/her research on one aspect of travel writing (20 minutes). The purpose of this presentation is threefold: to share the initial results of your research with other seminar participants, to receive detailed feedback from peers on the content, organization, and argument of your paper, and to practice the art of formal academic presentation.

**Peer reviews:** Each student should take detailed notes during the Referat of all other participants and then submit a commentary (of at least 150 words) to each presenter that summarizes the strengths of the research project and offers suggestions for the final written version (i.e., term paper). These suggestions might address the formulation of the thesis, the paper's overall organization, the works included (both primary and secondary), and suggestions for further reading. This peer review is just between you and the presenter; its purpose is to give the presenter as much concrete and positive help as possible. It should be e-mailed directly to the presenter (and copied to the instructor) the day after the presentation (not posted on the course web site).

**Term paper:** A 15- to 20-page paper on the student's research project is due on May 14. This assignment should be in the form of a research manuscript that could be submitted to a scholarly journal for publication.

**Grading:**
- Preparation, participation - 25%
- Questions - 10%
- Protokoll - 5%
- Reaction papers (5% x 2) - 10%
- Referat - 10%
- Peer Reviews - 10%
- Term paper - 30%
**Syllabus**

Week 1 (1/25)  Introduction to the history of Travel and Travel Literature

Week 2 (2/1)  Enlightenment and Sentimentality: Laurence Sterne: *Sentimental Journey*

Week 3 (2/8)  Sterne’s reception in Germany: Moritz August von Thümmel: *Reise in die mittägliche Provinzen von Frankreich* (excerpts); Johann Gottfried Herder: *Journal meiner Reise von 1769* (excerpts)

Week 4 (2/15)  Grand Tour: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: *Italienische Reise*

Week 5 (2/22)  Discovery and Science: Georg Forster: *Voyage around the World*; Alexander von Humboldt: *Ansichten der Natur; Journals* (excerpts)

Week 6 (3/1)  Fantasy and Utopia: Daniel Defoe: *Robinson Crusoe* (excerpts); Joachim Heinrich Campe: *Robinson der Jüngere*


Week 8 (3/22)  Technology and tourism: excerpts from: Baedeker *Reiseführer*; Schivelbusch: *Railway Journey*; Lafayette (steamships); Rousseau (carriage ride); Alexis de Toqueville (wilderness); Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallesleben: “Die Englänner am Rhein”

Week 9 (3/29)  Travel essay: Heinrich Heine: *Die Harzreise*; Hermann von Pückler-Muskau: *Briefe eines Verstorbenen*

Week 10 (4/5)  Emigration, Outsiders, and Women: Friedrich Gerstäcker: *Mississippi-Bilder* (excerpts); *Gerstäckers Travels* (excerpts); Francis Lieber: *Like a Sponge Thrown into Water*; Ida Pfeiffer: *Reise in das Heilige Land* (excerpts); *Lady’s Second Journey Round the World* (excerpts)

Week 11 (4/12)  Popularizing Travel: excerpts from *Globus; Petermanns Mitteilungen; Westermanns Monatshefte*

Week 12 (4/19)  Nostalgic Journey: Theodor Fontane, *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg*


Week 14 (5/3)  Referate and Conclusions