



from Frederic Church, *Cotopaxi*

German 8300 | autumn 12 | M 12.30-3.18 | 488 Hagerty Hall

Nature, Land-Scape, Culture: Imagining Space in German Intellectual History

Professor *Bernhard Malkmus*

This seminar explores the German fascination with space in modernity and aims to develop a critical genealogy of how we think of space today. It offers close readings of seminal theories of space, ranging from A. v. Humboldt to Simmel, from Heidegger to Adorno. Our guiding question is: **What is the land we shape, and what is the land that shapes us?** We will put these theoretical discussions into dialogue with key literary texts and visual materials, using English-language texts as regular interlocutors and comparative points of reference. **Language of instruction: English.** All texts will be made available in German and English.



from Caspar David Friedrich, *Mondaufgang am Meer*

Syllabus

8/27 **Introduction:** an anthropology of space

Ossip Mandelstam, *Journey to Armenia*

Immanuel Kant, 'Was heißt: sich im Raum orientieren?' ('What does it mean to orient oneself in space?') and other early writings on space

John Brinkerhoff Jackson, 'The Westward-Moving House'

Dwelling

9/3 Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eye of the Skin*

August Schmarsow, 'Das Wesen der architektonischen Schöpfung' ('The Essence of Architectural Design')

Alvar Aalto, 'The Humanizing of Architecture', 'The Trout and the Stream'

9/10 Friedrich Hölderlin, Odes

Martin Heidegger, 'Bauen Wohnen Denken' ('Building Dwelling Thinking')

J.B. Jackson, 'Landscape – The Word Itself'

Land-Scaping

9/17 F.G. Klopstock, William Wordsworth, Johannes Bobrowski, poems

Georg Simmel, 'Philosophie der Landschaft' ('Philosophy of Landscape')

Theodor W. Adorno, 'Sils Maria'

9/24 Adalbert Stifter, 'Der Bergkristall' ('Rock Crystal')

Barry Lopez, 'Landscape and Narrative'

Chenxi Tang, *The Geographic Imagination of Modernity* (sections on Rousseau, Herder, Ritter)

10/1 Alexander von Humboldt, travel journals, excerpts

César Aira, *An Episode in the Life of a Landscape Painter*

Peter Handke, *Lehre des Sainte Victoire* (*Lesson of Mont Sainte-Victoire*)

German Romantic paintings

10/8 **excursion:** Westcott House, Springfield, OH and Clifton Gorge

10/12 Humanities Institute discussion: Jakob von Uexküll, writings on *Umwelt*

Memorizing

10/15 Max Frisch, *Der Mensch erscheint im Holozän (Man in the Holocene)*
Ernst Cassirer, 'Mythischer, ästhetischer und theoretischer Raum' ('Mythical, Aesthetic, and Theoretical Space')

10/22 G.M. Hopkins, Friedrich Hölderlin, Gary Snyder, poetry
Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, excerpts
German Romantic paintings, Hudson River School

Colonizing

10/29 W.G. Sebald, *Die Ringe des Saturn (The Rings of Saturn)*
Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, excerpts

11/5 Julia Leigh, *The Hunter*
Michel Foucault, 'Space, Power, Knowledge'

11/12 Humanities Institute discussion: Peter Sloterdijk, *Blasen (Bubbles)*, excerpts

Travelling

11/19 Goethe, *Italienische Reise (Italian Journey)*, excerpts
Barry Lopez, *Arctic Dreams*

11/26 no class

12/3 Mandelstam, *Journey to Armenia*, cont.
Heidegger, 'Ursprung des Kunstwerks' ('The Origin of the Work of Art')

12/5 **final discussion** and project presentations