

**AS070.303 The Romantic Legacy of Anthropology**  
**T 1.30-3:50**  
**Macaulay Hall 400 (Anthropology Seminar Room)**

**Instructors**

Naveeda Khan  
409 Macaulay Hall  
x6-7274  
[nkhan5@jhu.edu](mailto:nkhan5@jhu.edu)  
Office hours: Wednesday 2.15-3.30 and by appointment

Andrew Brandel  
127 Macaulay Hall  
[ABrandel@jhu.edu](mailto:ABrandel@jhu.edu)  
Office hours: Fridays 12-1 and by appointment

**Description, Pre-requisites and Outcomes**

The word "romantic" has long carried negative connotations within anthropology meaning the tendency to idealize, exoticize, or seek out the irrational. Instead, through a focus on the themes of magic, art, myth, nature and creativity, we suggest that romantic philosophy has offered and continues to offer much of interest for contemporary anthropology. Drawing on readings in philosophy and anthropology, we explore the suppressed romantic legacy of anthropology.

Students do not need to have any former knowledge of either philosophy or anthropology prior to the course. At the end of the course they should be familiar with important figures within German Romantic philosophy and classical and contemporary anthropology; have learnt to read philosophical and anthropological texts together; and to write short papers in critical engagement with the course readings.

**Organization, Assignments and Grading Rubric:**

This course will meet once per week for two hours twenty minutes. Students must show up in class on a timely fashion. They must have the weekly readings with them in hard copies or in tablets (but not in computers or phones), as we will be reading texts closely. Students are required to do the readings assigned for the class and to actively demonstrate that they have done so through their participation in class discussions. They are required to submit a quote from the reading with a comment or question on the weekly discussion board within Blackboard in advance of the weekly meeting (instructors must have student interventions before 9am on the day of the class or else students do not get any credit). Finally, they have to write three response papers of 5-6 double-spaced pages each on prompts provided by the instructors. Papers must be submitted over blackboard in .doc format. Course total will be out of 100 points with 25 points for class and discussion board participation and 25 points for each of the three papers for a total of 75 points. The instructors retain the right to use their judgment in making the final course evaluation.

## Resources

Students should take advantage of the Johns Hopkins Writing Center located at the Greenhouse Annex. You may make appointments at 410/516-4258 or email [writingcenter@jhu.edu](mailto:writingcenter@jhu.edu). For research purposes you should utilize the resources at Milton Eisenhower Library (MSEL) as much as possible. You may call 410/510-8335, email reference service, or pay the librarians a visit during library hours.

## Note on plagiarism

Any use of another person's ideas or words, taken directly or paraphrased, without citing the source is plagiarism. **This includes taking material from the Internet without citing the website.** Please speak to the instructor or refer to *The Chicago Manual on Style* if you have any questions on how to properly cite your sources.

## Required Books (also on reserve at the Sheridan Library):

1. Novalis. 2015. *Henry von Ofterdingen*. Dover
2. Friedrich Schiller. 2015. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*. Angelico
3. Claude Lévi-Strauss. 1996. *The Story of the Lynx*. University of Chicago Press
4. Marcel Griaule. 1975. *Conversations with Ogotemmeli: An Introduction to Dogo Religious Ideas*. Oxford University Press
5. J.W. Goethe. 2009. *The Metamorphosis of Plants*. Steiner
6. Anand Pandian. 2009. *Crooked Stalks: Cultivating Virtue in South Asia*. Duke University Press
7. Michael D. Jackson. 2000. *At Home in the World*. Duke University Press  
(hold off in purchasing this until we are sure of make up class)

## Required Reading (on e-reserve available through the library website and blackboard):

1. Andrea Wulf. 2015. *The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World*. Knopf, 1-9, 25-38, 235-248
2. Alexander von Humboldt. 1804/1864. *Cosmos: A Sketch of A Physical Description of the Universe*. Vol 1: 1-37  
<https://archive.org/stream/cosmos01humbgoog#page/n9/mode/2up>
3. Franz Boas. 1996. "The Study of Geography" in G. Stocking, ed. *Volkgeist as Method and Ethic*. University of Wisconsin Press, 9-17
4. Julia E. Liss. 1996 "German Culture and German Science in the *Bildung* of Franz Boas." in G. Stocking, ed. *Volkgeist as Method and Ethic*. University of Wisconsin Press, 155-185
5. Michael Taussig. *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing* University of Chicago Press, Chapters 7-10, 14-20
6. Alfred Gell. 1998. "The Problem Defined: The Need for an Anthropology of Art." In *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*. Oxford University Press, 1-10
7. Dalia Nassar. 2014. "Introduction." In *The Relevance of Romanticism*. Oxford University Press, 1-15

8. Manfred Frank. 2014. "What is Early German Romantic Philosophy?" in D. Nassar, ed. *The Relevance of Romanticism*. Oxford University Press, 15-30
9. Frederick Beiser. 2014. "Romanticism and Idealism." *The Relevance of Romanticism*. Oxford University Press, 30-47
10. Franz Boas. *Primitive Art*. Section IV "The Art of the Northwest coast of North America" and "Conclusion"
11. F.W.J. Schelling "Historical-Critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology" Lectures 1-5

**Required Film (on reserve at the library)**

Guillermo del Toro's *Pan's Labyrinth*

## Part One: What is Romanticism and how does it relate to anthropology?

### Week 1

Feb 1: Introductory Comments

Film: *Pan's Labyrinth*

### Week 2

Feb 8: A historical line of connection between Romanticism and anthropology

Andrea Wulf. 2015. *The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World*. Knopf, 1-9, 25-38, 235-248

Alexander von Humboldt. 1804/1864. *Cosmos: A Sketch of A Physical Description of the Universe*. Vol 1: 1-37

<https://archive.org/stream/cosmos01humbgoog#page/n9/mode/2up>

Franz Boas. "The Study of Geography"

Julia E. Liss. "German Culture and German Science in the *Bildung* of Franz Boas."

### Week 3

Feb 15: A conceptual introduction to German Romantic philosophy

Dalia Nassar, "Introduction."

Manfred Frank "What is Early German Romantic Philosophy?"

Frederick Beiser "Romanticism and Idealism."

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## Part Two: Magic and the Ordinary: Resonances between Philosophy and Anthropology

### Week 4

Feb 22

Paper Prompt Handed out in Class

Novalis. *Henry von Ofterdingen*

### Week 5

Feb 29

Michael Taussig. *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing*. Chapters 7-10, 14-20

**March 4 First Paper Due**

**Part Three: Aesthetics and Self-Cultivation: Resonances between....**

**Week 6**

Mar 8

Friedrich Schiller. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*

**Spring Break: March 14-20**

**Week 7**

Mar 22

Paper Prompt Handed out in Class

Alfred Gell, "The Problem Defined: The Need for an Anthropology of Art."  
Franz Boas. *Primitive Art*. Section IV "The Art of the Northwest coast of North America" and "Conclusion"

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**Part Four: Myth in Theology, Anthropology, Cosmology: Resonances...**

**Week 8**

Mar 29

F.W.J. Schelling "Historical-Critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology"  
Lectures 1-5

**April 1 Second Paper Due**

**Week 9**

April 5

Claude Lévi-Strauss. *The Story of the Lynx*

**Week 10**

April 12

Marcel Griaule. *Conversations with Ogotemmel*

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**Part Five: Metamorphosis and Nature**

**Week 11**

April 19

Paper Prompt handed out in class

J.W. Goethe. *The Metamorphosis of Plants*

**Week 12**

April 26

Anand Pandian. *Crooked Stalks*. Chapters 1, 2, 4, and 5

**April 29 Third and Final Paper Due**

**Week 13**

If make up class/party:

Michael Jackson. *A Home in the World*.