

# Cultural Studies in Europe: critical elements (II)

Research Methodologies in European Cultures and Society,  
Session 14

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# Course outline

- I. Approaches to culture. Limits and definitions
- II. “Self” and “Other”
- III. Culture and memory
- IV. Popular culture
- V. (...)

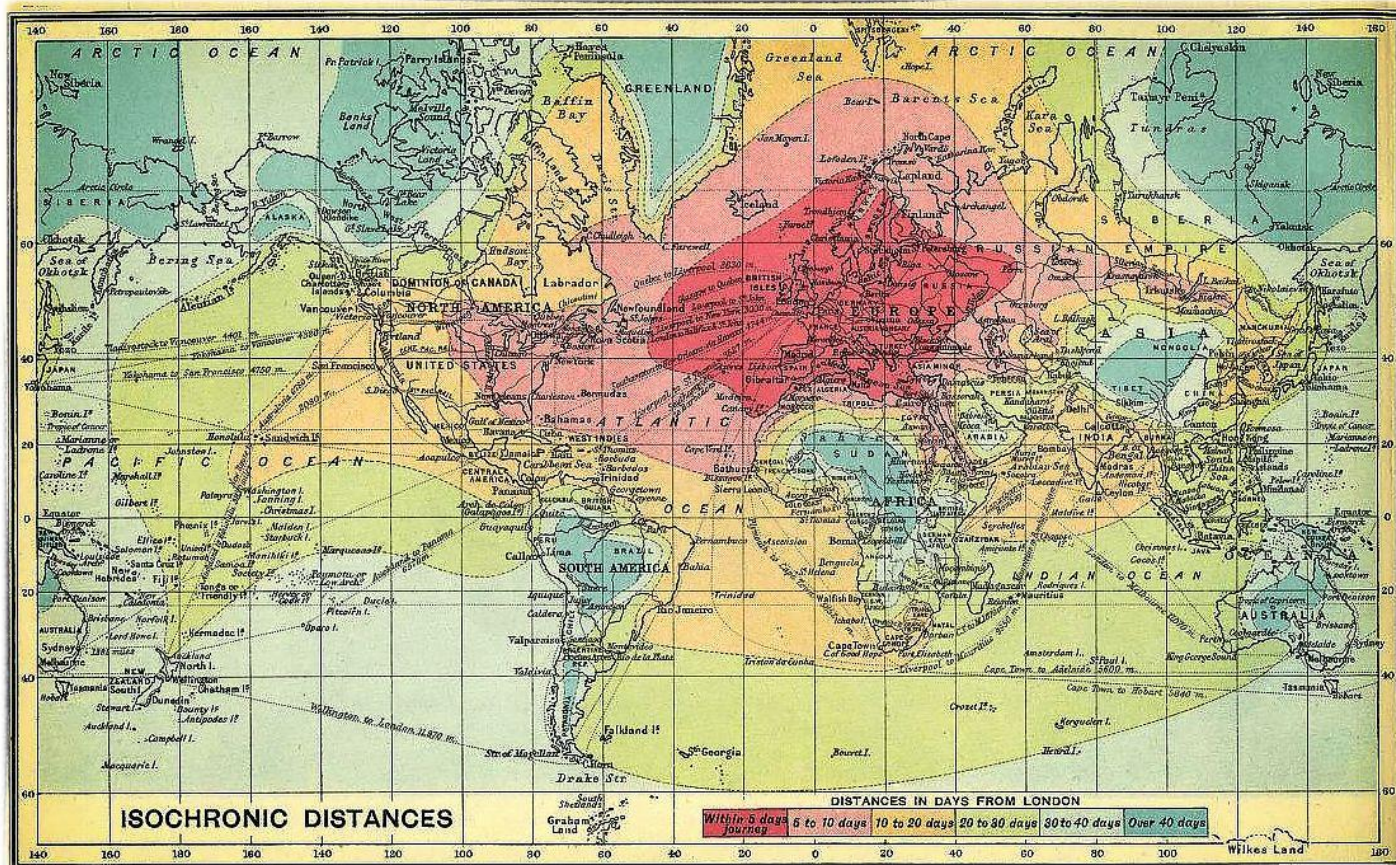
## II. “Self” and “Other”

- Introduction: self and other, one of the most fundamental distinctions in culture
- On the historicity of travel
- “Aliens”
- Disgust and anxiety
- Cultural appropriation or cultural theft?

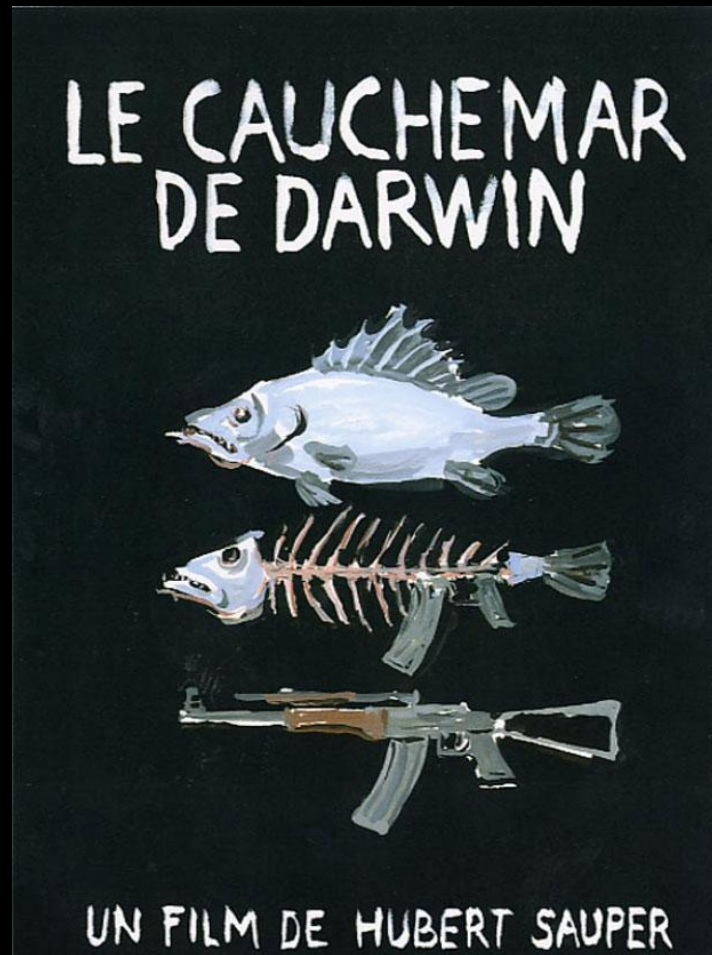
Chris Buck, *Pedicure*, photo from exhibition on racism at the historical museum Frankfurt/Main (2020-2021)



# The historicity of travel: Isochronic distance map 1904



Hubert Sauper, *Darwin's nightmare*, 2004  
(documentary about the Nile perch)



# Movie still



# « Travel » and (and colonialism) as a vector of transcultural phenomena

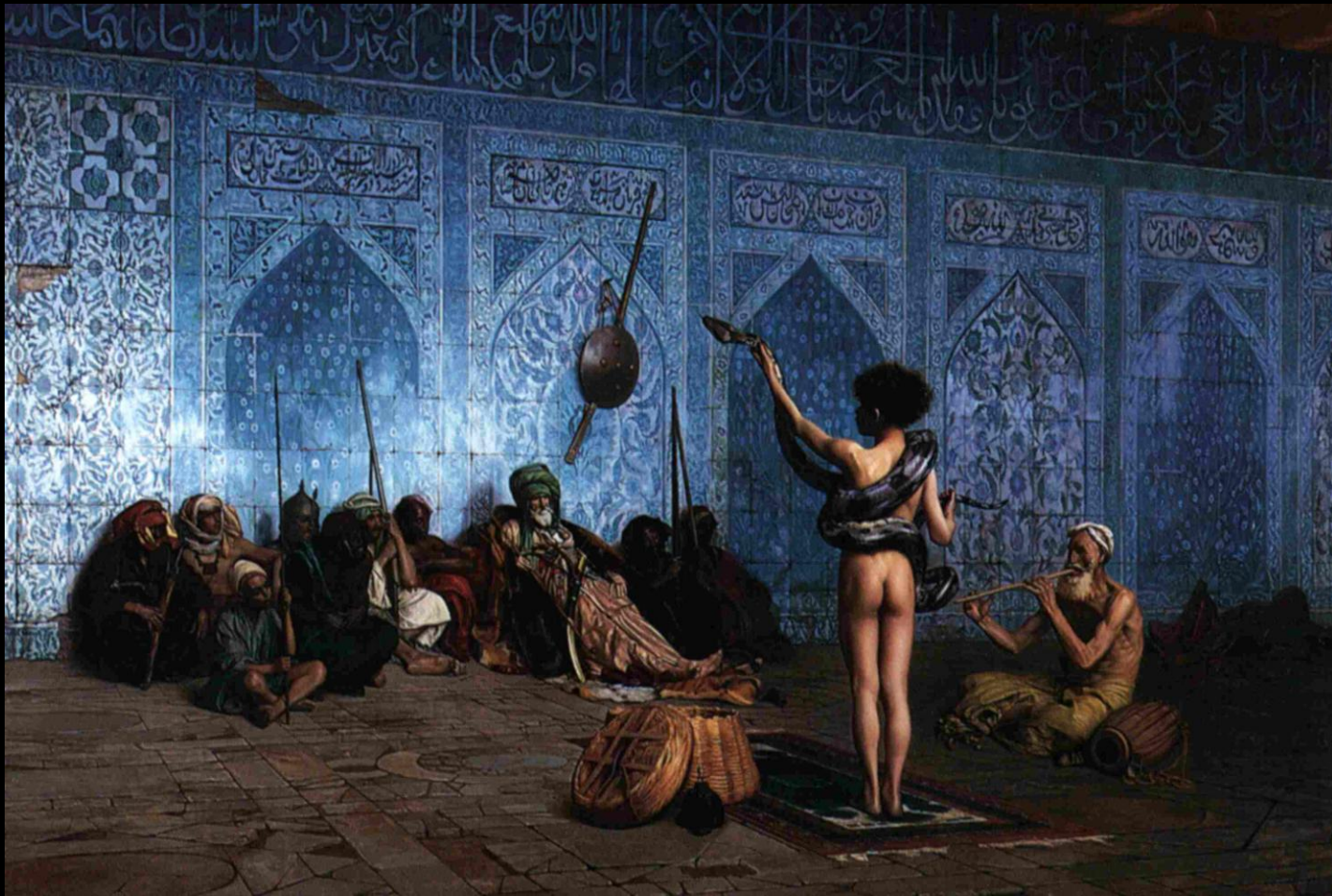
- The experience of migration: Ghandi
- Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks (Peau noire-masques blancs)*, 1952
- Aimé Césaire
- Léopold Sédar Senghor (« négritude » movement)



# The question of cultural representations (beyond stereotypes)

> Colonialism as a transcultural phenomenon

From the cover of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978): Jean-Léon Gérôme's *Snake charmer* (1880)



The psychological and cultural 'mechanics' of self and other - scene from *Alien*, Ridley Scott, 1979

# Movie still, 1



# Movie still, II



# Self and Other: the role of disgust

Julia Kristeva, *The Powers of Horror* (1982,  
French original 1980)

Notion of the « abject » to indicate the zone of the radically excluded which refers us to the archaism of pre-objectal relationship

# Culture as « purifying the abject » (Kristeva, *Powers*, p. 17)

- Role of “catharsis” in tragedy; rites of purification as basic cultural and cultic practices
- Important: the attribution of “alien” characteristics is a question of point of view and hegemony/domination
- Bibliographical item: Robert Parker, *Miasma. Pollution and Purification in Early Greek Religion* (1983)

# Problematizing cultural difference

## The question of cultural appropriation

