

Fellows



Johannes Fabian
IFK_Research Fellow

Duration of fellowship
01. March 2010 bis 30. June 2010

Johannes Fabian

PROJECT TITLE

Objects of Pleasure and Pain: Another Look at African Paintings

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Popular painting, studied in Katanga (R. D. Congo) in the 1970s, emerged when urban Africans felt the need to decorate their living rooms. Because socio-economic conditions seemed comparable to those that favored the emergence of "genre painting" in Europe, the label was adopted to describe the phenomenon. Johannes Fabian's current project represents another take on Katanga genre painting, one in which the objects are given a voice: Based on a corpus of conversations with popular painters, recently transcribed and translated from recordings made more than thirty years ago, it will be shown that links between images and stories are essential to genre painting as a cultural praxis mediated by shared memories of colonial and post-colonial experiences.

CV

Johannes Fabian received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago and is professor emeritus of cultural anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. Previously, he taught at Northwestern and Wesleyan Universities and at the National University of Zaire in Lubumbashi. He held numerous visiting professorships in the USA and Europe and was a fellow at, among others, the Wissenschaftskolleg, Berlin, at the Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, Santa Monica, and the Stanford Humanities Center, Stanford.

He did research on religious movements, language, work, and popular culture in the Shaba mining region of Zaire (1966-1967, 1972-1974, 1985, 1986). In his theoretical and critical work, he addressed questions of epistemology and of the history of anthropology. Most recently he has been interested in questions regarding virtual ethnographic archives (see <http://www.lpca.socsci.uva.nl/>).

Publications

Ethnography as Commentary: Writing from the Virtual Archive, Durham 2008; Memory against Culture: Arguments and Reminders, Durham 2007; Out of Our Minds: Reason and Madness in the Exploration of Central Africa, Berkeley, Los Angeles 2002; Time and the Other: How Anthropology makes its Object, Columbia University Pr., Second Edition 2002; Anthropology with an Attitude. Critical Essays, Stanford 2001; Moments of Freedom. Anthropology and Popular Culture, University of Virginia Pr. 1998.