

Epic Theatre and its Afterlife

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The course will explore how the technological and political upheavals of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries altered the formal and generic features of drama and performance as well as the experiences and expectations of the audiences. A central theme in this course will be Brecht's theories of epic theatre that aimed to emancipate the audiences from their "attachment" to nineteenth century bourgeois, sentimental aesthetics.

The afterlife of epic theatre is especially prominent in plays that focus on war and refugees. We will also investigate how Brecht's theory of "alienation effect" informs the work of playwrights as well as filmmakers and the media.

Plays include Dumas' *Camille*, Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children*, Handke's *Offending the Audience* and *Kaspar*, Liwaa Yazji's *Goats*, Ismail Khalidi's *Tennis in Nablus* and Sama Sabawi's *Tales of a City by the Sea*. Films include Georg Cukor's *Camille* and Hany Abu Assad's *Paradise Now*.

The plays are available at Parga, the university bookstore. A packet with supplementary readings is available at Antoniou's bookstore tel. 22377560

Readings

Alexandre Dumas, *Camille*

<https://archive.org/details/camilleplayinfiv00duma>

Gustav Freytag, "Technique of the Drama"

<https://archive.org/details/freytagstechnique00freyoft>

Bertolt Brecht, *Mother Courage and Her Children* (Methuen) ISBN 9780413492708
(Parga bookstore)

Peter Handke, *Kaspar and Other Plays* (Parga bookstore)

Mahmoud Abu Hashhash, "On the Visual Representation of Martyrdom in Palestine."

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09528820600901008>

Ismail Khalidi, *Tennis in Nablus* (Parga bookstore)

Michael Hays, "Peter Szondi and the Modern Theatre"

<https://www.stor.org/stable/303001>

Liwaa Yazji, *Goats* (Parga bookstore)

Sama Sabawi, *Tales of a City by the Sea* (Parga bookstore)

Peter Szondi, "Tableau and Coup de Theatre. On the Social Psychology of Bourgeois Theatre"

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/469014>

Bertolt Brecht, "On Chinese Acting" <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1125011>

Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, https://archive.org/details/IAndThou_572

Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, <http://archive.org/details/blackskinwhitema00fano>

All assignments are obligatory

If you are facing medical or other problems that might oblige you to miss classes communicate with me as soon as possible.

KEEP COPIES OF YOUR ASSIGNMENTS

Policy:

--Regular attendance in class and participation in discussions. More than three absences will need to be justified through medical or other documentation. **HABITS YOU MUST TRY TO FORGET:** forgetting your books and/or course packet at home, bringing the wrong books, coming to class late. The schedule is subject to change so you need to check with your classmates if you miss a class.

HABITS YOU MUST ACQUIRE in order to succeed in this course:

Read the material in advance, keep notes, contact me or your adviser on any difficulties you may be facing in your studies and stay in tune with classmates who need support. Any updates on the course will be communicated to you through the email. Make sure you check your email at least twice a week.

DON'T COME TO CLASS WITHOUT TEXTS

Assignments

Creative Journal or Project (Details in class) (15%);
Mid Term Report 4-5 pp (30%);
Final Paper 10-12 pp (40%)
Presentation 15%

Schedule of events

Mo Sept 3 G. Cukor, *Camille*; Peter Szondi, "Tableau and Coup de Theatre"

Thu Sept 6 Dumas, *Camille* (cont)

Mo Sept 10 Dumas, *Camille* (cont);

Thu Sept 13 No Class (make up class will be arranged)

Mo Sept 17 Hany Abu Assad, *Paradise Now*; Mahmoud Abu Hashhash "On the Visual Representation of Martyrdom in Palestine."

Thu Sept 20. Brecht, "On Chinese Acting;" G. Freytag, "Technique of the Drama."

Mo Sept 24 Brecht, *Mother Courage and Her Children*

Thu Sept 27 Brecht, *Mother Courage and Her Children*

Mon Oct 1 No Class

Thu Oct 4 Handke, *Offending the Audience*

Mon Oct 8 Handke, *Kaspar*

Thu Oct 11 Handke, *Kaspar*

Mon Oct 15 Hays, “Peter Szondi and Modern Drama.”

Thu Oct 18 Sabawi, *Tales of a City by the Sea*

Mon Oct 22 Sabawi, *Tales of a City by the Sea*

Thu Oct 25 Yazji, *Goats*

Mon Oct 29 Yazji, *Goats*

Thu Nov 1 Yazji, *Goats*

Mon Nov 5 Buber, *I and Thou*

Thu Nov 8 Buber, *I and Thou*

Mon Nov 12 Khalidi, *Tennis in Nablus*

Thu Nov 15 Khalidi, *Tennis in Nablus*

Mon Nov 19 Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*

Thu Nov 22 Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*

Mon Nov 26 Presentations

Thu Nov 29 Creative Projects

December 21 Final Paper Due