



University of Cyprus
Department of English Studies
Course Syllabus
ENG 517 – CONCEPTS OF EUROPE IN CONTEMPORARY FICTION
AND FILM
(7.5 ECTS)

Instructor: Tziouanis Georgakis (PhD)
Email: georgakis.tziouanis@ucy.ac.cy
Course Day: Mondays and Thursdays
Course Time: 9:00 – 10:30
Course Venue: KENTP / A109
Office Hours: Mondays and Thursdays: 11:00 – 13:00
Office Hours Venue: KENTP / M105A

Course Description

This course focuses on contemporary representations of Europe in fiction and film. However, the term “Europe” is not simply employed as the living space of European people (and others) or the idea of a European humanity and its complex unfolding in time. Rather, the course treats Europe as space of discourse through which the order of representation in general is accomplished. In particular, it investigates Europe as the peculiar and unique space in which objective representation in its entirety is suspended, revealing, thus, all the unquestioned presuppositions that underlie objectivity in general. In a similar fashion, students in the course investigate Europe as an ultimately in-between and evasive space in which contradictions such as inside/outside, line/convolution, integrity/division, identity/difference, certainty/ambiguity, original/simulation are constructed and then immediately dismantled by the same ambivalent ground that firstly effected their fragile constitution. Discussion are centred around selected works of art by China Miéville, Italo Calvino, Julian Barnes, Jean-Luc Godard, and Lars von Trier, and that will be brought in dialogue with some seminal thinkers such as Edmund Husserl, Gaston Bachelard, Jean Baudrillard, and Herbert Marcuse. The overall goal here is to treat “Europe” as the incalculable order of the spectre that evades the trapping lasso of both philosophers and artists.

Core Objectives

By the end of the semester, students will:

- understand and challenge various prejudices that are attached to the concept of Europe.
- envision another type of European space becomes the order and discourse of representation itself.
- grasp the vast difficulties of questioning the order of representation as such.
- participate in different debates that take place within various philosophical fields.
- interpret and analyze works of cinema and literature.
- be in a position to distinguish, evaluate, and construct arguments.
- produce critical essays of the kind that is assigned in upper level courses within the English major.
- develop an attentive eye to the marginal and the unconsidered.



- foster the necessary critical and analytical skills that each university student needs to utilize in every academic setting.

Bibliography

(All readings below are included in the *Course Pack*)

- Bachelard, Gaston. "The Dialectics of Outside and Inside." Trans. Jolas, Maria. *The Poetics of Space*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1994. 211-31. Print.
- Baudrillard, Jean. "The Precession of Simulacra." *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords*. Eds. Durham, Meenakshi Gigi and Douglas M. Kellner. Revised ed: Blackwell Publishing, 2006. 453-81. Print.
- Husserl, Edmund. "Philosophy and the Crisis of European Humanity." Trans. Carr, David. *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970. 269-300. Print.
- Marcuse, Herbert. "One-Dimensional Society." *One-Dimensional Man*. Oxford: Routledge, 2007. 3-86. Print.

(All readings below are to be purchased separately)

- Barnes, Julian. *England, England*. London: Vintage Books, 2008. Print.
- Calvino, Italo. *Invisible Cities*. Trans. Weaver, William. London: Vintage Books, 1997. Print.
- Miéville, China. *The Last Days of New Paris*. New York: Del Ray, 2016. Print.

(The films below are to be shown in class)

- Godard, Jean-Luc. *Alphaville*. 1965. Film.
- von Trier, Lars. *Europa*. 1991. Film.

Class Preparation and Participation

The class will be run seminar-style, by which the class instructor will do some lecturing. At the same time, students are expected to participate actively in class discussions. This format will not work unless all students are well-prepared for the class. It is very important that students engage discussions and readings so that the whole classroom participates in a dialectic exchange of thoughts and ideas. If students are having difficulty understanding parts of the class material, they should inform the instructor. In general, the instructor will not summarize the readings for the students' sake. The readings are for the students to discuss during the discussion portion of the class. The instructor will merely supplement the assigned readings. Part of class preparation also includes taking detailed notes, noting down pressing questions, understanding and evaluating arguments, responding to complex arguments, forming new arguments, and thinking critically about one's own positions. This class will thrive only if all students take responsibility to participate. In addition, the instructor expects that all seminar members will treat each other with the respect necessary for a philosophical discussion. Students should be courteous to the other students in the classroom and avoid disrupting their right to a positive learning environment. To this end, students should not arrive late to class or leave early, engage in side conversations, or pack their belongings before class has concluded. Students should not leave their mobile phones on, use text messaging on their phones, or surf the Internet during class. If students are using a laptop in class, they must sit near the front so as not to distract other students. If students anticipate arriving late to class or need to leave early from class, or are expecting a call (if they need to be reachable for an emergency), they should let the instructor know before class begins.



Attendance Policy

Attending class is extremely important. Missing any class, coming in late, or leaving early will detract from the final grade. If students miss a class, they are still responsible for finding out what was delivered in class that day and if there were any assignments given by the course instructor. Class success is determined by the students' active presence and by how much work they are willing to put in. Students are urged to make a commitment to the coursework for themselves and for their colleagues.

Course Assignments and Assessment

In-class Presentation: 10%

Student will be assigned to groups of 2-3 persons and present on assigned readings. Each presentation will be approximately 20-minutes long. At the beginning of every presentation, the group responsible for the presentation must submit an essay of 500-1,000 words that captures and details the presented argument.

Midterm examination: 35%

Each student will respond to specific questions given by the instructor relevant to the assigned readings and in-class discussions. The length of this assignment is 1,000-1,500 words.

Final examination: 50%

Each student will write one research essay relevant to the assigned readings and in-class discussions. The length of this assignment is 2,000-2,500 words.

Class attendance and participation: 5%

The Writing Clinic at the Department of English Studies

Students are advised to visit the Writing Clinic before they submit their academic essays and other writing assignments. Please email the clinicians before your visit and book an appointment ahead of time.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to the following: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, bribes, examination by proxy, grade tampering, and submission of non-original works. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in an automatic grade of 0. Information about plagiarism and citation rules will be provided during the semester. If students have any questions or are unsure of what constitutes academic dishonesty, they should ask the course instructor.

Office Hours and Availability

If students have any questions or wish to discuss course progression, course material, general philosophy or literature questions, or just to talk, the course instructor is available to them on Mondays and Thursdays from 11:00–13:00. If deemed necessary, they can schedule an appointment. The instructor strongly encourages all students to stop by and introduce themselves. Before students send an email with a query, they can come to office hours first. If they are unable to attend the designated office hours, they can email the instructor at



georgakis.tziovanis@ucy.ac.cy. The instructor will do everything possible to respond to any questions, comments, or issues within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on the weekends.

Course Schedule

A. IDEA AS SPACE AND THE SPACE CALLED EUROPE

Week 1 – Week 2: The Space of Suspension of the European Humanity

Weekly reading:

Husserl, Edmund. "Philosophy and the Crisis of European Humanity." Trans. Carr, David. *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970. 269-300. Print.

Week 3: The Dialectics of Inside and Outside

Weekly reading:

Bachelard, Gaston. "The Dialectics of Outside and Inside." Trans. Jolas, Maria. *The Poetics of Space*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1994. 211-31. Print.

Week 4: The Convolutions of the Parisian Space

Weekly reading:

Miéville, China. *The Last Days of New Paris*. New York: Del Ray, 2016. Print.

B. SIMULATING EUROPE AND THE EUROPE OF SIMULATIONS

Week 5 – Week 6: The Advance of Simulations

Weekly reading:

Baudrillard, Jean. "The Precession of Simulacra." *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords*. Eds. Durham, Meenakshi Gigi and Douglas M. Kellner. Revised ed: Blackwell Publishing, 2006. 453-81. Print.

Week 7: Simulating Venice and Other Phantasmic Cities

Weekly reading:

Calvino, Italo. *Invisible Cities*. Trans. Weaver, William. London: Vintage Books, 1997. Print.

Week 8: Simulating Britain

Weekly reading:

Barnes, Julian. *England, England*. London: Vintage Books, 2008. Print.

MIDTERM EXAMINATION ASSIGNMENT DUE: 35%

C. THE SOCIAL APPARITIONS OF EUROPE

Week 9 – Week 10: One-Dimensional Europe

Weekly reading:

Marcuse, Herbert. "One-Dimensional Society." *One-Dimensional Man*. Oxford: Routledge, 2007. 3-86. Print.

Week 11: Dystopia and the Impossibility of Dimensionality

Film Viewing: *Alphaville* (1965) by Jean-Luc Godard.

Week 12: Travelling the Labyrinth called Europe

Film Viewing: *Europa* (1991) by Lars von Trier.

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Week 13: Review and Preparation for Final Examination
FINAL EXAMINATION ASSIGNMENT DUE: 50%