

META Humanities 2010

MEditerranean Summer School of Theoretical and Applied Humanities

»The Mediterranean between Modernity and Post-modernity: Spaces, Cultures, Aesthetics and Ethics«

University of Primorska, Faculty of Humanities Koper, Slovenia

5th - 16th July 2010

The Mediterranean has always functioned as a space of cultural, economic and political differences and differentiations, and, at the same time, also as a relatively unified space of varied communication. In the modern era, particularly during the colonial period, it underwent a certain measure of unification, while in the post-colonial era some of such connections have weakened again. Perhaps the existence and the widening of the European Union represents a possibility for a renewed strengthening of such connections and links and for the identification of similarities and mutual interests that arise from similar needs, values and also from a similar import that is ascribed to culture and its discursive reflections in the majority of Mediterranean countries.

Today, modernity is interpreted as that epoch of the European history which begins approximately in 1492. Post-modernity stands for the global era from the middle of the previous century on, hence the epoch of the information and postindustrial society or the epoch of multinational capital or global society. A derived notion is modernization, a process which in some countries (China, Turkey, etc.) still continues. Modernism is the culture from the middle of the 19th to the middle of the 20th century when postmodernism steps in as a cultural dominant. (The latter has been, in the opinion of some, already replaced by »contemporaneity«).

In the space of the Mediterranean we thus obviously deal both with modernity and modernization and with post-modernity. The aim of the summer school META Humanities 2010 is to; (a) analytically and synthetically present similarities and differences within the contemporary Mediterranean space; (b) draw attention to the specific features of different Mediterranean spaces, places, cultures, languages, memories, identities, aesthetics and ethics; (c) show the unity and the universality thereof.

The Summer School addresses both advanced undergraduate (no first-year-students) and post-graduate students. It consists of a plenary session and three different courses (3 credits (ECTS) for each course):

Course A: Modernity and Postmodernity: Aesthetics and Ethics

A universal feature of the Mediterranean is the current problematic state of capitalism and the obvious limits of its growth. How is the related postmodern aesthetic and ethical relativism reflected in the cultures of the Mediterranean and in the global setting? To what an extent signifies the current revival of philosophical interest in the issues of ethics a return to the normative universalism accompanied by a simultaneous accentuation of human and other forms of singularity? How are these issues, dilemmas and standpoints reflected in contemporary artistic practices that are occurring in different cultural spaces of the Mediterranean? To what an extent do some of the countries of the Mediterranean continue to be subjects or objects not only to economic but also to cultural »modernization?«

Expected Speakers: Professor Aleš Erjavec (Koper, Slovenia), Ass. Prof. Ernest Ženko (Koper, Slovenia), dr. Polona Tratnik (Koper, Slovenia), prof. dr. Francisca Perez Carreno (Murcia, Spain), prof. dr. Matilde Carrasco Barranco (Murcia, Spain), Jose Alcaraz Leon (Murcia, Spain)

Course B: Space, Memory, Identity

The course which builds on an interdisciplinary collaboration among history, geography, and anthropology will investigate the dynamic and often problematic relations between culture and space through the lenses of social and epistemological characteristics of "the late modernity". The course will be divided into two general thematic parts that will investigate those relations by giving major attention to either social or spatial (landscape) aspects of the examined phenomena.

The first part will scrutinize the constructions of social identities and "their territories" as particularly enduring relics of modernity present throughout the Mediterranean in areas of linguistic, ethnic, national, and cultural interlacing. At the same time, these representations will be presented in comparison to social, economic, political relations and flows across the present and historical ("relic") social and spatial boundaries.

The second part will investigate the changing Mediterranean cultural landscapes, landscape uses, memories, and identities. As we know, Mediterranean landscapes are particularly vulnerable to the conflicts regarding the questions of maintaining and/or changing the use and the meaning of space. We will thus investigate relations and differences between diverse "cultures (i.e. attitudes toward) of space", as for example: the "cultures" of capital, tourism, environmentalism, local communities, that is the "cultures" of diverse users and managers of space.

Within both of the described thematic frameworks the central question will be; has the Mediterranean entered into "the condition of postmodernity" or are we actually dealing with the perpetuation of modernistic processes in contemporary contexts, i.e. with "the condition of late modernity"?

Course C: Authors and Discourses between Modernity and Postmodernity

The course will focus on the topics related to language as well as literature and other artistic practices that arise at the interfaces of modernity and postmodernity, particularly in relation to the cultural constructions of the Mediterranean.

Some topics to be covered include;

- from the cult of the author (whose subjectivity is externalized in the form of artistic practices) to the death of the author (lost within the labyrinths of intertextual references) and beyond;
- "the Other speaks back" (artistic practices as channels for the voices of the marginal, the liminal)
- the concepts of the East and the West holding mirrors to each other;
- writing in exile and emigration;
- reality, hyperreality, utopia.

Expected Speakers: Professor Karolina Prykowska-Michalak (Lodz, Poland), dr. Jacek Krištof Kozak (Koper, Slovenia)

Organizational Details

Students are to arrive in Koper on Sunday, 4 July 2010 in the afternoon. They will stay in rooms with three beds. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included. They are to depart on Saturday, 17 July 2010 after breakfast. If the students plan to arrive or leave before or after the mentioned dates, we must be informed of this before 1 June 2010 so that we can arrange the stay for the extra days. Students will be asked to cover a part of the extra stay.

The Faculty of Humanities Koper will cover 75% of travel cost based on original receipts or travel tickets directly to each registered participant. Thus every student will be asked to mail us upon his/her return home the original train, plain or bus tickets . Only upon the receipt of the original receipts will we be able to reimburse you for the 75% of travel costs. If students travel in a group and have one collective ticket then each of them will be refunded for his/her portion of the ticket. Thus the students are to buy the tickets themselves and are to be reimbursed for 75% of the travel receipts to their bank accounts when receiving the original tickets. No payment in cash is possible. You are to send us all the relevant bank account data (IBAN, SWIFT CODE) prior to your arrival in Koper.

META Humanities summer school has received funding from the Lifelong Learning Program - Erasmus Intensive Program. No fee will be charged to students from the Erasmus IP partner institutions: University of Murcia, Spain; University of Lodz, Poland; University of Klagenfurt, Austria; University of Venice, Italy; University of Bologna, Italy; University of Chieti - Pescara, Italy; University of Teramo, Italy, University of Regensburg, Germany.

Applications should be sent via E-Mail to:

Dr. Sabine Rutar, Südost-Institut, Landshuter Str. 4, 93047 Regensburg,
Tel. 0941.943-5473, rutar@suedost-institut.de

DEADLINE: May 15th, 2010.