

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 consists of a plenary session and three different courses:

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)

The coordinator of the course A: dr. Polona Tratnik

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”?

The coordinator of the course B: dr. Matej Vranješ

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)

The coordinators of the course C: dr. Barbara Zorman, Eva Brajkovič