

Boğaziçi University
Spring 2015

FA 49S – Violence of the Image

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Course Description:

Identifying cinematic image as connate with any imaging of the world, it is an arduous task to distinguish between capturing of violence as image and the violence of the image itself. On the one hand, there's the challenge of defining violence and on the other, the problem of isolating the image from the imaginary. In this case, the image of violence, at once, captures violence as image and reveals it as violence; while the violence of the image resides in the subversion of this equation of capturing and revealing. Put in simpler words, the relevant endeavour is towards situating the phenomena of capturing and revealing against each other.

The politics of the question of *the violence of the image* comes to be revealed in a variety of experiences such as censorship, propaganda, film festivals, education etc. Moreover, the basic tenets of such violence or violences are drawn in relation to dichotomies of high vs popular culture, mass vs alternative media, authority vs resistance, studio productions vs independent films as well as axes of the first world vs the third world. Naturally, it is a part of our questioning to interrogate the validity of such divisions, although every noun or term proper speaks its own history.

In the course of this seminar, we will concentrate on putting into discussion a categorical theme concerning violence and image every week. Our discussions will develop into an answer to two preliminary questions, successful or not: How is the image itself violent? What is the violence of the image itself? It is important to note that the primary aim will always be to maintain a level of questioning that hears itself and gets to know itself rather than confining itself to the non-literary interrogative mood. In other words, our work is not to reveal something we're looking for; it is to expose the questions to the violences of images.

In the course of our discussions, a wide variety of resources will be covered. There'll be excerpts from literature and philosophical texts which will be supplementary for the initiative questions regarding the films. Thus, the theoretical determination of the lectures will be based on texts that interrogate our thematics within specific fields.

In terms of film criticism, our primary indulgence will be within the analysis of a genre unless the structure of the film demands complimentary readings such as auteur theory, psychoanalysis or historical-movement based explications as in surrealism or Japanese new-wave.

Prerequisites:

Students who are willing to attend this course should consider that without at least a minor background in film studies or social sciences, the lectures, discussions and responsibilities will prove to be inaccessible. This is an advanced course that urges every one of us to read and observe in depth. It should be noted that students seeking a certificate in film studies will be given a priority.

Grading:

50% Attendance and Participation (a maximum of 3 lectures are allowed to be missed with valid excuses)

25% Midterm Paper - An 8 to 12 page essay (double-spaced Times New Roman 12pts) on a topic that will be announced.

25% Final Paper – An 8 to 12 page essay (double-spaced Times New Roman 12pts) on a topic that will be announced.

SCHEDULE

Week 1: Image of Violence

1. Cabiria (1914) Giovanni Pastrone, Italy
2. Jeanne D'Arc (1928) Carl Theodor Dreyer, France

Readings:

"A Hunger Artist". From *Franz Kafka - The Complete Short Stories*. Franz Kafka, London: Vintage Classics, 2005, (235-247).

Week 2: Crisis

3. Grapes of Wrath (1940) John Ford, USA
4. Les Enfants du Paradis (1945) Marcel Carne, France

Readings:

"Politics of Friendship". From *American Imago*. Jacques Derrida, 50:3 (1993:Fall) p.353.

Week 3: Situatedness

5. Battle of Algiers (1966) Gillo Pontecorvo, Italy
6. Lost Honour of Katharina Blum (1975) Völker Schlöndorff and Margarethe von Trotta, Germany

Readings:

None.

Week 4: Mechanisms

7. Garden of the Finzi-Continis (1970) Vittorio De Sica
8. Cabaret (1972) Bob Fosse, USA

Readings:

"The Psychological Structure of Fascism". from *Visions of Excess – Selected Writings 1927-1939*. George Bataille, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985 (137-160).

Week 5: Identity

9. Three Women (1977) Robert Altman, USA
10. Kagemusha (1980) Akira Kurosawa, Japan

Readings:

"Unworking Romanticism". from *Very Little... Almost Nothing*. Simon Critchley, London: Routledge, 1997, (85-117).

Week 6: Account

11. Shame (1968) Ingmar Bergman, Sweden
12. Alexandria, Why? (1979) Youssef Chahine, Egypt

Readings:

"Death as Possibility". from *Space of Literature*. Maurice Blanchot. Translated by Ann Smock. London: University of Nebraska Press, 1982, (87-107).

Week 7: Representation

13. Punishment Park (1971) Peter Watkins, England
14. F for Fake (1973) Orson Welles, USA

Readings:

"The Image-The Distinct" and "Image and Violence". From *The Ground of the Image*. Jean-Luc Nancy. Translated by Jeff Fort. New York: Fordham University Press, 2005, (1-26).

Week 8: Anxiety

15. Black God, White Devil (1964) Glauber Rocha, Brasil
16. Adak (1976) Atif Yılmaz, Turkey

Readings:

Fear and Trembling. Soren Kierkegaard. Translated by Walter Lowrie. New York: Everyman's Library, 1994. (45-70)

Black Skin, White Masks. Frantz Fanon. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann. New York: Grove Press, 1967. (83-108)

Week 9: Sexuality

17. The Trout (1982) Joseph Losey, England
18. Taboo (1999) Nagisa Oshima, Japan

Readings:

"This Sex which is not One". from *This Sex which is not One*. Luce Irigaray. Translated by Catherine Porter with Carolyn Burke. New York: Cornell University Press, 1985 (23-33).

Week 10: Taming of the Shrew / Indoctrination

19. Welcome to the Dollhouse (1995) Todd Solondz, USA
20. Death Proof (2007) Quentin Tarantino, USA

Readings:

“A Cyborg Manifesto”. *retrieved from* <http://www.egs.edu/faculty/donna-haraway/articles/donna-haraway-a-cyborg-manifesto/>

Week 11: The Search and Meaning Making

21. Alice in the Cities (1974) Wim Wenders, Germany

22. Goodbye Dragon Inn (2003) Tsai Ming Liang, Taiwan

Readings:

“In Praise of Profanation”. from *Profanations*. Giorgio Agamben. Translated by Jeff Fort. New York: Zone Books, 2005, (73-92).

Week 12: History / Dissemination

23. Memories of Underdevelopment (1968) Tomas Gutierrez Alea, Cuba

24. Meaning of Life (1983) Monty Python, England

Readings:

Putların Batışı. Friedrich Nietzsche, İstanbul: İthaki Yayınları, 2005 (7-48).

Week 13: Human Definition Revisited

25. Ghost in the Shell (1995) Mamoru Oshii, Japan

26. Come and See (1985) Elem Klimov, USSR

Readings:

TBA.