

**Global Humanities Campus of the Thematic Network**

**Principles of Cultural Dynamics**

**Summer School**

**Arts, Politics, Economics: Different or Comparable Rationales  
of Development?**

**(July 20 – August 2, 2015)**

**STEPHANIE BUNG (FUB)**

**NEW SPIRIT, THE AVANT-GARDE-PROJECT AND POETICS IN FRANCE (1918–1924)**

Bridging the gap between Life and Art: if there has ever been such a thing as an overarching ‘avant-garde-project’, this is what it was supposed to be. At the beginning of the twentieth century, poets from different European nations asked themselves one of the main questions we will be dealing with in this summer school: is there a link between politics, economics, and the arts; or are developments in these spheres essentially independent from each other? In a speech held in 1917 (against nineteenth century’s ‘*l’art-pour-l’art* policy’) and published in 1918, Guillaume Apollinaire claimed that an *esprit nouveau* had to be embraced by any modern poet. Apollinaire was the *spiritus rector* of the *vanguard movements* in France, and in 1924, André Breton published the first Surrealist Manifesto where he called (again) for an understanding of the human spirit that could change the world. At the same time, and still within the logic of creating bridges between the different spheres of life, the journal *La Révolution surréaliste* was born. This summer school course consists of two parts. In the first part, I will sketch the picture of French *vanguard movements*, somewhat modifying the question mentioned above: did French poets imagine a link between politics and the arts in the early twentieth century, and, if so, how did they envision it? After this introduction and in the second part of this course, we will return to the beginning of the French avant-garde project, that is, to Apollinaire’s fundamental speech “L’esprit nouveau et les poètes” (“The Poets and the New Spirit”). We will discuss the concept of the avant-garde outlined in

this text by isolating its various links between Life and Art. We shall ask ourselves if these links announce the surrealist ‘revolution’; whether or not it makes sense to speak of a coherent avant-garde-project at all; and in which way Apollinaire’s vision may still apply today.

**IGOR CANDIDO (JHU)**

**THE BIRTH OF THE RENAISSANCE: POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL  
DYNAMICS IN THE CITY OF FLORENCE FROM DANTE TO MACHIAVELLI**

The birth and rise of the Renaissance are strictly linked to the political developments, as well as to the economic and cultural growths in late Medieval and Early Modern Florence. The city’s pre-modern history therefore represents an apt case study for investigating the connections that link politics, economics, and the arts in the pre-modern world. If masterworks such as Dante’s *Divine Comedy* or Machiavelli’s *The Prince* were written when its authors were out of office and in exile, others such as Ficino’s *Platonic Theology* and Pico della Mirandola’s *Oration on the Dignity of Man* were, by contrast, among the most important intellectual achievements of the Medici patronage. The seminar aims to raise interest in, and provide background knowledge on, historical and literary questions and problems concerning the birth, development, and life of Florentine (pre-)humanistic culture in Italy and Europe from the late 13<sup>th</sup> to early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**EMANUELE COCCIA (EHSS)**

**THE OMNIPRESENT ARTWORK. FASHION AS CASE STUDY FOR THE ANALYSIS OF  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ART, ECONOMICS, AND POLITICS**

Ready-to-wear fashion is the paradigmatic example of an art where aesthetic practice is not, and could not, be separated from the economic and the political realm. Not only does fashion have to produce marketable and livable artworks, but it also has to produce the most political artworks there can be: clothes are artworks used in order to express and to shape personal and social identities; all the members of a society (and not just an elite of cultivated ones) have to buy and

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judge them, and they wear clothes all throughout their lives, every day, from morning to evening.

Starting from the analysis of a peculiar case (the collections of Benetton), we will try to analyze the link between politics, economics, and the arts, and the structure of mutual reinforcement between them.

### **STEFANO DE BOSIO (FUB)**

#### IMAGE ORIENTATION IN ART AND SCIENCE: SHIFTING PARADIGMS ON IMAGE REVERSAL IN EUROPE (16<sup>TH</sup>-20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY)

Each image has a left and a right side – but what happens if you reverse it? Focusing on Europe from the Early Modern to contemporary period, this seminar considers how laterality affects the production, as well the reception, of images. We will address image reversal through a series of specific case studies, ranging from the history of scientific illustration to the theory of pictorial space, from the antiquarian Nicolas de Peiresc to the art-historian Heinrich Wölfflin and to the artist Wassily Kandinsky. At the core of this seminar is the composite interaction of “form” and “content” within the image and the subsequent aesthetic, cultural, and epistemological issues of knowledge production.

### **ANETT DIPPNER (FUB)**

#### NEW WINE IN OLD BOTTLES? ART, POLITICS AND ECONOMICS IN MAOIST AND IN CONTEMPORARY CHINA

Global media reports praise the new era of Chinese art, now experiencing freedom, creativity, and development, while, in the same breath, blaming political restrictions and censorship. Yet is there really a constant struggle of freedom and restriction between politics and liberal artistic movement, or might it rather be seen as kind of mutual reinforcement? To understand the contemporary artistic landscape, the lecture will be split into two parts: the first part focuses on art production in the Maoist era, so as to highlight the historical dimension; the second part will analyze some new art trends in contemporary China since the 1980s. For each period, we will have a closer look at the developmental links between politics, economics and the arts and the concrete influences and

interrelations; this may lead us to the general question about the meaning of art in the specific cultural context and historical and political contingencies of development.

### **HOLGER DROESSLER (HARVARD UNIVERSITY)**

#### PACIFIC CROSSINGS

The Pacific Ocean covers a third of our earth’s surface. Home to over a thousand languages and thousands of years of rich histories, the Pacific has been, and continues to be, one of the most diverse regions of cultural, social, economic, and environmental interaction. The goal of our seminar is to discuss a set of cultural practices and artifacts from the Pacific, as well as from artists of Pacific Islander descent living elsewhere. As we shall see, Eurocentric debates about political participation, cultural production, and economic development look quite different when seen from the islands of the Pacific.

### **YUFAN HAO (CUHK)**

#### ARTS, POLITICS, ECONOMICS: RATIONALES OF DEVELOPMENT AND THE LESSONS WE MAY LEARN FROM CHINESE EXPERIENCE

While Chinese economy has been experiencing spectacular growth in the last three decades, the ethics of Chinese government have been corroded by rampant corruption. I intend to speak about the logic of Chinese development and its undesirable consequences. By addressing the social decay (corruption and demoralization in contemporary China), and the environmental deterioration during its rapid economic growth, I will address the importance of these three: the arts (and humanities), politics, economics.

### **DANIELA HAHN (FUB)**

#### ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ART

In his recent book *Art & Ecology Now* (2014), Andrew Brown states that “once an area of interest for a relatively small group of people, art that addresses environmental issues has in the last five years become part of the artistic

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mainstream". According to Brown, environmental art appears mainly as a growing and visible tendency in contemporary art – responding to political, scientific and economic debates on environmental issues in broader society. However, ecology, the engagement with the natural world, as well as the exploration of the mutual dependence between human beings and the more-than-human world, has sparked a greening fire across arts and disciplines since the 1960s. By drawing on examples from the visual arts, performance, and literature, we shall investigate and discuss concepts of ecology in relation to developments in artistic practice confronting ecological issues in the course of this seminar.

### **HÉCTOR HOYOS (FUB/STANFORD UNIVERSITY)**

#### **NEW MATERIALISM IN WORLD LITERATURE?**

At our meeting, we will do a hands-on reading of one of the few articles where the influential French thinker Bruno Latour openly engages with fiction, particularly the work of Richard Powers. We will, however, read it not as science studies scholars, but as literary critics, and examine its relevance for our discipline. This jumping board will allow us to discuss the potential contributions of new materialism to literary study, and vice versa. A central question is: how does the material turn intersect with the growing interest in studying fiction at a global scale, that is, as “world literature”? Other topics will include: how can local specificity and literary hermeneutics inform this approach? Does it reproduce cultural hegemony? In what ways can it factor in politics, beyond mere description? We shall focus on two short stories by the Argentine writer César Aira as case studies and heuristic devices.

### **SVEN THORSTEN KILIAN (FUB)**

#### **THE IMPACT OF THE PRINTING PRESS ON LITERATURE: INTERDEPENDENCIES BETWEEN ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND CULTURAL FACTORS**

Undoubtedly, the (Western) invention of the moveable-type printing press in the middle of the fifteenth century brought major change to the literary culture – in the broadest sense – of Western Europe. A change, however, whose oft-claimed

revolutionary character may be questioned from the perspective of intercultural or macrohistorical comparison. In China, Korea, and Japan, printing was in use hundreds of years earlier. Its impact on literary culture in this region seems to be less pervasive, though. Starting with these considerations, this seminar aims at discussing interdependencies between literary production, aesthetic and economic demands, as well as political constellations.

### **IRMELA MAREI KRÜGER-FÜRHOFF (FUB)**

#### **DEMENTIA: POLITICS, ETHICS, AESTHETICS**

Both personal and cultural identity rely on memory and on (at least some degree of) narrative cohesion. What happens in the case of dementia, when the ability to remember fails and language tends to disintegrate? Focusing on a short film, excerpts from a graphic novel, a scientific article and two literary texts, we will discuss medical and cultural concepts of forgetting, their bioethical and political impacts against the backdrop of (post-) World War II, and aesthetic strategies of telling stories about the breakdown of language.

### **ENRICO LUCCA (HUJI)**

#### **INTERPRETING GERMAN-JEWISH INTELLECTUALS IN DARK TIMES**

Around the middle of 20<sup>th</sup> century, quite an interesting number of German-Jewish figures (poets, historians, philosophers) were the protagonists of radical innovations in their own field of research. In my lecture I would like to address the question of possible explanations for this, by referring to some particular cases (Gershom Scholem, Walter Benjamin, Hugo Bergman, Leo Strauss, Hannah Arendt). Are there certain affinities that might be traced beyond the differences between all these figures? What was the function of the coeval cultural, political, and economical setting? Does the image of crisis play any role in this context?

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**IAN BRANDON MORLEY (FUB)**

ARTS, POLITICS, ECONOMICS: THE CITY PLAN AS DEVELOPMENT

The 1905 Manila Plan by Daniel Burnham was a grand imperial statement by the US as to how the Philippine capital city should appear. Whilst offering a guide to restructure the urban environment so as to make it be more clean and beautiful, the plan also involved the stimulation of the local economy and the uplifting of local culture. The paper for presentation accordingly appraises the 1905 city plan, and in doing so emphasizes the role of modern city planning as a governmental tool to renew cities in a number of ways: art; politics; economics; environment.

**LEONARD NEIDORF (HARVARD UNIVERSITY)**

SUBJECTIVITY, HISTORY, AND THE STUDY OF PREMODERN ART

In any discipline where the merits of competing hypotheses are gauged according to the criterion of relative probability, an element of subjectivity in one's judgment is unavoidable. In the social and natural sciences, rigorous methodological protocols function to constrain the subjectivity of researchers, and guide their precarious judgments toward accurate conclusions about reality. In the humanities, however, subjectivity is given variable treatment, since little explicit attention is paid to methodology: some researchers intuit the principles of empirical methodology, while others place few constraints on their subjectivity as they enunciate judgments about remote phenomena, such as works of literature composed more than one thousand years ago. Humanists who bring contemporary values to the interpretation of premodern art engage in a practice that positions art as a sphere independent from history, and implies little discontinuity between past and present. This seminar will question the premises of this practice and reconsider the role of subjectivity in research on premodern art. Although subjectivity tends to be celebrated in humanistic discourse, is it possible that we find limited merit in excessive subjectivity, and actually value research where subjectivity is constrained and enduring insights into common objects of study are generated?

**JACQUES NEEFS (JHU)**

THE ECONOMY OF CREATIVE PROCESS: THE MAKING OF THE LITERARY WORK

The way, in which the genesis of a literary work is set out, demonstrates the form through which the emerging work is managed and finds its path, its rules, its substance. This holds true for the entire genesis of the work: modes of composition, treatment of notes, construction of preliminary outlines, drafts, the number of times a text is written out, and the shape these writings take on. Through examples belonging to the narrative prose of the nineteenth and twentieth century – from Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert to Proust and Beckett – we will propose a reflection on the economy of the creative process in modernity, as linked to social, ideological, and political purposes.

**GISÈLE SAPIRO (EHESS)**

FIELD THEORY IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: DIFFERENTIATION,  
AUTONOMIZATION, AND CRISIS

The concept of field, as theorized by Pierre Bourdieu, is a heuristic tool to explore the relationships between literature and other domains such as politics, economy and science. Field theory assumes that these activities enjoy a relative autonomy in our modern society, meaning that they have specific rules, specific issues at stake, and require a specific kind of capital in order to achieve recognition. This relative autonomy results from a process of differentiation and specialization of these activities, which is not linear nor irreversible, and which varies across cultures. The market helped the writers to gain autonomy from the political power during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The scientific field differentiated from the literary field starting at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and achieved a high symbolic capital by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, while literature was losing part of its symbolic power. This explains for instance the attempt of realist and naturalist authors like Flaubert and Zola to found the legitimacy of their literary project on a scientific basis. They shared with science the truth value, and brandished it in defense when reproached for lack of morality by the prosecution during their trials. However, the rise of the human and social

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sciences challenged their expertise on these domains, while nourishing some avant-garde trends like surrealism, existentialism and the Collège de sociologie.

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