

O0ELSY03 - The Environmental Imagination: Representing nature in visual arts (fine art, film, documentaries) and literature

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Department: International affairs
Semester: 2

Course level: L3 undergraduate
Domain: Electives
Teaching language: English
Number of in-class hours: 36
Number of course sessions: 11 + Exam
ECTS: 6

Course description and objectives

The aim of the course is to introduce students to the various artistic, filmic and literary means used in the representation of nature and the environment in art, literature, fiction film and documentaries. The course will introduce students to different periods, media and genres, ranging from early cave painting to the cinema of eco-disaster or apocalyptic futurism, exploring various genres (Pastoralism, Romanticism and the Sublime, Eco-poetics...), themes or motifs (Animals in fiction, Landscapes, Skies, ...), artistic movements (Impressionism, Land Art...) or material and techniques. The different modes of relationship or interaction between humans and/in nature, and the aims and use of those representations of nature will often be at the center of discussions: how do those representations create meaning, values and emotional responses, especially in the understanding of the “human” and the “natural”.

Courses Objectives:

At a time of Earth’s sixth mass extinction, in a period of climate change, humans’ relationship to their environment and other living beings is at the center of many debates in all fields. The course aims at bringing students to some of the many artistic and literary traditions in the representation of the “natural” world, their shifts in discourses and techniques, and the wide range of value and meaning they create about the understanding of the relationship between the “human” and the “natural”, as well as the various level of importance, types of visibility and voice these visual artworks give to the “natural” world and environment.

Prerequisites

None, but an intermediate level of English is recommended.

Learning outcomes

The students will learn about many different artistic, filmic and literary genres and their evolution over time, as well as focus on specific artists and movements that are landmarks in the study of the representation of nature. Improving students' ability to describe and comment on artworks in an informed, critical way is promoted throughout the course, whether orally or in writing through class presentations and response essays.

Assignments and grading

- Group presentations, Response essays, Final exam
- Class participation will be taken into account

The numerical grade distribution will dictate the final grade. The passing grade for a course is 10/20.

Class participation: Active class participation – this is what makes classes lively and instructive. Come on time and prepared. Class participation is based on quality of comments, not quantity.

Exam policy: In the exam, students will not be allowed to bring any document (except if allowed by the lecturer). Unexcused absences from exams or failure to submit cases will result in zero grades in the calculation of numerical averages. Exams are collected at the end of examination periods.

Course structure (Provisional)

Session	Topic
1	Introduction to the class - Cave painting & its impact on artists from XIXth to XX1st centuries – Representations of the creation of Cosmos
2	Nature as garden: Pastoralism - Arcadia - Some symbols of Nature in Classical paintings
3	Mapping the world: Naturalist representations / Still Lifes / The invention of landscape
4	Nature as wilderness –The Romantic Gaze and the Sublime The quest for wilderness (ex: Grizzli Man (Herzog) / Into the Wild (Sean Penn))
5	Conquering the West - The Western genre and its evolution (film and literature)
6	Impressionism: leaving the studio – the study of light. Pointillism
7	Land Art
8	Nature as raw material in Art [ex: Fire (Yves Klein) - Chemical reactions (Hicham Berrada), etc.] - Recycling nature, using waste - Gleaning
9	Giving voice to nature: Writing for an endangered world / Eco-poetics / Eco-art
10	Artificial nature - Tech-dreams of nature and the environment: (ex: Avatar / Matrix...)
11	The cinema and literature of Eco disaster / Moving out from Earth
12	Final Exam

Bibliography

- Excerpts from various relevant texts will be provided.

MyCourse

This course is on MyCourse: **Yes**

Academic integrity

Be aware of the rules in Université Paris Dauphine about plagiarism and cheating during exams. All work turned in for this course must be your own work, or that of your own group. Working as part of a group implies that you are an active participant and fully contributed to the output produced by that group.

Academic calendar

Dates (Monday/Sunday)		International Affairs courses
06/01/20	12/01/20	Welcome Week + French seminar
13/01/20	19/01/20	1
20/01/20	26/01/20	2
27/01/20	02/02/20	3
03/02/20	09/02/20	4
10/02/20	16/02/20	5
17/02/20	23/02/20	Holidays
24/02/20	01/03/20	6
02/03/20	08/03/20	7
09/03/20	15/03/20	8
16/03/20	22/03/20	9
23/03/20	29/03/20	10
30/03/20	05/04/20	11
06/04/20	12/04/20	Holidays
13/04/20	19/04/20	Exams
20/04/20	26/04/20	
27/04/20	03/05/20	
4/05/20	10/05/20	