

FLM 230 • Travel & Cultural Encounters in Film • Spring 2018

Tues/ Thurs 12:30-1:45 pm Ettinger 201

Dr. Amy Corbin
Film Screenings Wed 7-9 pm Trumbower 130

Email: acorbin@muhlenberg.edu (best method of contact)

Office Phone: (484) 664-3740

Office Hours: Wed 9:30-10:30 & Fri 12:30-1:30 (or by appointment) in **Walson 200**

This course looks at narrative and experimental films that thematize the act of travel as a trigger for cultural encounters, which often result in conflicts, power differentials, feelings of displacement, and cultural or individual transformations. Films center on three types of travel: colonization, immigration, and tourism, and move between Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe. As a theoretical lens, students will consider the unique ways that the cinematic medium can represent travel experiences. *Meets General Academic Requirement D/ DE.*

By the end of the course, students will have learned to:

- analyze the formal elements of film
- discuss the issues of colonialism, post-colonialism, tourism, and migration as they are illustrated in travel narratives
- explain the effect of formal choices on the film's expression of culture
- perform independent analysis of a film and its use of travel
- use informal writing as a means of generating ideas
- consider issues of travel, migration, religion, and culture through different disciplinary lenses through the "Narratives of Travel" cluster (see specific Learning Goals below)

Course Requirements:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Attendance & Participation | 10% |
| Film Analysis essay | 15% |
| 3 Quizzes | 25% |
| Integrative Discussions & Reflection Paper | 15% |
| Tracking Current Migrations | 15% |
| Final Paper | 20% |

Attendance As a class that goes beyond "just the facts"—one that encourages you to think critically, interpret films as artistic works, and make connections between films and their historical contexts—a crucial part of the class is discussion. I will also sometimes lecture on points that are not in the readings, and we will together consider which aspects of the readings are more important than others. All of these activities mean that your attendance is critical to your success in class. You are allowed 3 class absences without penalty (no explanations needed) and 2 screening absences; if you exceed either of those limits, your attendance and participation grade will fall by a letter grade for each absence (to a B, then a C, etc.). Two tardies= one unexcused absence. Excused absences must be documented by a college office like the Health Center, Counseling Center or Dean's Office, as per college policy. *Falsifying attendance records in any way (either by signing someone else into a class or screening, or by attending only to sign in and then leaving) shall be considered a violation of the Academic Integrity Code and reported to the Dean immediately.*

Participation is a significant part of this course and, in general, means having done the readings and watched the films, having the readings with you in class, contributing to class discussions, and listening with attention when others are speaking. It will be demonstrated by the following activities:

- completing the Canvas journal entries—short reactions to the film and/or reading (these will be due selected weeks)
- completing reading-based homework assignments
- completing short in-class writings
- participating in group work
- speaking in class

If you are shy about speaking in class, but do everything else well, you may still obtain a high participation grade.

Your participation grade will be penalized if you engage in any of the following behaviors frequently:

- using cell phones, tablets, or laptops in class (see me if you have a learning-related need to take notes on a laptop instead of by hand)
- getting up in the middle of class
- engaging in side conversations during class
- sitting in class with a blank sheet of paper in front of you, never taking notes, or not bringing the readings to class

3 *Quizzes* will test your comprehension of concepts from the readings and the films.

Tracking current migrations (shared with REL 185)

Working in groups, students will track a specific migration issue throughout the semester. Full details about this assignment will be presented early in the semester.

Integrative discussions & reflection paper (shared with REL 185)

Approximately 6 times during the semester, we will have joint class sessions attended by both Dr. Corbin and Professor Albert in which we discuss a specific film from the perspectives of both classes. Students will be provided with prompts to prepare for these discussions. Dates are listed on the semester schedule below. This integrative work will culminate in a brief reflection paper at the end of the semester.

Film Analysis Essay: A 4-5 page paper on the formal aspects of a film we have screened in class.

Final Paper: A 6-7 page paper in which you explore a new film in relation to questions of travel and cultural encounters, using several of the course readings.

→ Please note that you cannot pass the class without turning in all the papers, completing the quizzes and final exam, and passing the attendance grade.

Cluster:

This course is part of a cluster entitled “Narratives of Travel: Migrants, Colonists, and Tourists in Religion and Film.” Our other course is REL 185: “Religious Migrations, taught by Sharon Albert. This cluster joins two courses with shared themes of travelling, seen not just as individual journeys

but as journeys that are shaped by cultural, racial, and religious identities, and by the power dynamics of politics and nationhood. Our courses study texts that document these journeys, including personal narratives and films, and draw examples from a variety of geographic regions and historical periods. We will focus on migration, colonization and tourism as three forms of travel that are particularly impacted by cultural identities and political forces. Key questions in both courses include: who travels voluntarily and who is forced to travel? Who is able to return home and who is permanently displaced? How is a location changed by the arrival of travelers? Both courses also have an interest in the way that storytelling shapes travel experiences, so we ask: in what ways do written and visual narratives represent travel experiences and how might these narratives shape people's perceptions of their own journeys and of other groups who travel?

Cluster Goals:

- 1) Increase your understanding of travel as a cultural and political phenomenon that has implications beyond the individual traveler.
- 2) Recognize the ways that written and visual narratives represent and construct human experiences, and shape social identities.
- 3) Become familiar with various methods and theoretical approaches towards understanding travel, including religious studies, film studies, post-colonial theory, and cultural geography.
- 4) Consider how the historical events and fictional stories depicted in the course readings and films are applicable to current events including US political discourse about immigration, Islamophobia, and European responses to migration.

Course Unit Instruction:

This class is scheduled to meet for 3 hours per week. Additional instructional activities for the course include weekly film screenings and one off-campus event.

Required Texts:

Articles are available on the course Canvas site. Unless instructed otherwise, they should be printed out and brought to class marked up with your notes. Laptops, tablets, and smartphones are not to be used in class unless specifically permitted for an instructional activity.

Film Screenings: The films shown should also be considered like a textbook; your attendance is required at the weekly film screenings. This is because film is a medium created for a large screen to be watched with a group of people. Watching on your own is not a substitute, although repeat viewings will be necessary for essay writing and studying. Some guidelines for behavior at our screenings:

- 1) Do not talk during the film.
- 2) Do not use your phone, tablet or laptop during the film.
- 3) Do not get up during the film unless absolutely necessary.
- 4) You should take notes during or immediately after the film about content and style. These notes will help you review for discussions and tests.
- 5) You should arrive on time for the screenings so as not to disturb others, and stay until the end.

Course Policies:

Late Papers

Late papers will be marked down one-third letter grade per weekday late. Please note, as per college policy, that documentation for extensions must come from a college office like the Health Center, Counseling Center or Dean's Office.

Email Correspondence

I will make reasonable attempts to respond to your questions by email, but I'm not online constantly. Allow for a 24-hour response time; don't send me an email in the middle of the night and expect a response before class the next day.

The Academic Integrity Code

You are responsible for knowing the details of the Academic Integrity Code as described in your Student Handbook. Any violations will be reported to the Dean of the College for Academic Life and the appropriate course of action will be taken, ranging from failing the assignment to failing the course. Abiding by the Code in this class includes not giving or receiving help on the exams, nor plagiarizing written work. Plagiarism includes submitting someone else's work as your own, submitting your own work completed for another class without my permission, or copying exact phrases or specific ideas from another source without citing them. *Please ask me if you are unsure whether you need to cite a source.*

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting classroom or course accommodations must complete a multi-faceted application/approval process through the Office of Disability Services prior to the development and implementation of an Accommodation Plan. Each Plan is individually and collaboratively developed with the directors or other staff of the following Departments, as appropriate: Academic Resource Center, Counseling Services, Student Health Services, and the Office of Disability Services. If you have not already done so, please contact the appropriate Department to begin a dialogue regarding your academic needs and recommended accommodations, auxiliary aids, and services.

~ SEMESTER SCHEDULE ~

This schedule is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class, and students are responsible for keeping up with such changes.

→ Readings are to be completed by the day under which they are listed.

Week 1

Tu 1/16 class introduction

Wed 1/17 film screening *The New World* (Terrence Malick, USA, 2005, 135 m.)

Th 1/18 cluster introduction

Week 2

Tues 1/23 excerpts from Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism* (pp. 13-18, 61-70, 141-148)

no Wed film screening

Th 1/25 Edward Buscombe, "What's New in *The New World?*"

Week 3

Tues 1/30 excerpt from Giuliana Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film*

Wed 1/31 Film: *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* (Werner Herzog, West Germany, 1972, 93 m.)

Thurs 2/1 excerpts from *Unthinking Eurocentrism* (pp. 71-77)

Week 4

Sun 2/4 ***Tracking Migration Presentations due on Canvas***

Tues 2/6 Lutz P. Koepnick, "Colonial Forestry: Sylvan Politics in Werner Herzog's *Aguirre and Fitzcarraldo*"

Wed 2/7 film screening: *O No Coronado!* (Craig Baldwin, USA, 1992, 40 m.) and *Babakueria* (Don Featherstone, Australia, 1986, 29 m.)

Thurs 2/8 Rebecca Weaver-Hightower, "Revising the Vanquished: Indigenous Perspectives on Colonial Encounters"

Week 5

Tues 2/13 ***Quiz 1***

Wed 2/14 film screening: *A Passage to India* (David Lean, UK/ USA, 1984, 164 m.)

Thurs 2/15 no reading

Week 6

Tues 2/20 excerpts from Ellen Strain, *Public Places, Private Journeys: Ethnography, Entertainment and the Tourist Gaze*

Wed 2/21 film screening: *Calendar* (Atom Egoyan, 1993, Armenia/ Canada/ Germany, 74 m.)

Thurs 2/22 Atom Egoyan, "An Essay on *Calendar*" / integrative discussion with Prof. Albert

Week 7

Tues 2/27 Susan Sontag, "Plato's Cave"

no Wed film screening

Thurs 3/1 excerpt from John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*

Week 8 Spring Break

Week 9

Mon 3/12 ***Film Analysis paper due via Canvas upload at 5pm***

Tues 3/13 no reading; discussion of tourist photography

Wed 3/14 film screening: *Everything is Illuminated* (Liev Schreiber, 2005, USA, 106 min)

Thurs 3/15 no class

Week 10

Tues 3/20 excerpt from Emma Watson, *The Semiotics of Heritage Tourism*

Wed 3/21 film screening: *Le Grand Voyage* (Ismaël Ferroukhi, 2004, France/ Morocco/ Bulgaria/ Turkey, 108 min)

Thurs 3/22 ***Quiz 2***

Week 11

Mon 3/26

Field trip to the Bethlehem Steel Stacks, Frank Banko Alehouse Cinemas to watch documentary film: *The Chinese Exclusion Act* 7:15 PM

Tues 3/27 readings from filmmakers (TBD)/ integrative discussion with Prof. Albert

no Wed film screening

Thurs 3/29 Safoi Babana-Hampton, "Reading 'Beur' Film Production Otherwise: The Poetics of the Human and the Transcultural"

Week 12

Tues 4/3 Tim Cresswell and Gareth Hoskins, "Producing Immigrant Mobilities"

Wed 4/4 film screening: *Sin Nombre* (Cary Fukunaga, 2009, Mexico/USA, 96 min)

Thurs 4/5 Laura Senio Blair, “Bordering Adolescence: Latin American Youth in Road Films *La misma luna* and *Sin nombre*”

Week 13

Tues 4/10 Jeffrey Ruoff, introduction to *Virtual Voyages: Cinema and Travel*

Wed 4/11 film screening: *Brick Lane* (Sarah Gavron, 2007, UK/ India, 102 min)

Thurs 4/12 excerpts from Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness*

Week 14

Tues 4/17 Irene Pérez Fernández, “Representing Third Spaces, Fluid Identities and Contested Spaces in Contemporary British Literature”

Wed 4/18 film screening: *Dheepan* (Jacques Audiard, 2015, France, 115 min)

Thurs 4/19 Saskia Witteborn, “Constructing the Forced Migrant and the Politics of Space and Place-making”

Week 15

Tues 4/24 ***Quiz 3***

Wed 4/25 film screening: *Amreeka* (Cherien Dabis, 2009, USA/ Canada/ Kuwait, 96 min)

Thurs 4/26 excerpt from Evelyn Alsultany, *Arabs and Muslims in the Media: Race and Representation after 9/11*/ integrative discussion with Prof. Albert

Week 16

Tues 5/1 Typhaine Leservot, “Occidentalism: Rewriting the West in Marjane Satrapi's *Persépolis*”
*watch on your own before class: *Persepolis* (Marjane Satrapi & Vincent Paronnaud, 2007, France/ USA, 95 min)

no Wed film screening

Thurs 5/3 class wrap-up

Sun 5/6 ***Integrative Discussion Reflection Paper due via Canvas upload by 5 pm***

Thurs 5/10 ***Final Papers due via Canvas upload by 5 pm***