

Postwar and Contemporary Art in Western Europe (6/9 ECTS)



Name: Prof. Dr. André Rottmann
Office: HG 04
E-Mail: rottmann@europa-uni.de
Tel.: +49 335 5534 2928
Office Hours: on appointment

The seminar offers an introduction to the history of art in Europe from the immediate Post-War II -period to the turn of the millennium. In the wake of the horrors of destruction and atrocities of war, artists across the Western part of the divided continent as from the 1950s begun to face the emerging new conditions of reconstruction, repression, consumerism and media culture and—oftentimes in a transatlantic dialogue with artistic production and criticism in the US and the influence of social movements—conceived of neo- and post-avantgarde practices that radically hybridized the notions of the work of art and expanded its contexts and sites of reception.

Organized as a survey course, each class meeting covers distinct currents or movements and concomitant , such as Art Brut and *Informel*, Nouveau Réalisme, Pop Art, Arte povera, Fluxus, Vienna Actionism, the so-called Becher school of photography and Relational Aesthetics, as they emerged across Germany, France, Italy, Austria and Great Britain, among other countries, and introduces salient artworks, major protagonists and key terms of Western European art history in the second part of the 20th century. The concluding class meeting will be held at the Neue Nationalgalerie Berlin, the city's main museum for postwar and contemporary art.

The class meets for four hours per week (two times 90 minutes plus breaks).

Disclaimer: Section 5 (on Viennese Actionism) contains graphic content such as images of self-harm, violence against animals and pornography

GRADING:

6 ECTS:

Home essay (10 -15 pp.):	40 %
1 presentation (10 minutes):	30 %
Participation/Engagement:	30 %

9 ECTS:

Home essay (20 -25 pp.):	40 %
1 presentation (10 minutes):	30 %
Participation/Engagement:	30 %

TERMS

Presence

Students are requested to attend to classes in order to get graded. **More than one absence will automatically lower your final grade after your point total is calculated,** unless you can **document** that **all** the absences are related to an illness and/or official university event. For each additional absence your final grade will be lowered by 1/3 (a B becomes a B-, etc.). Late arrival and early departure will not be tolerated.

Policy on Academic Integrity. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

Your writing must be your own work. If you plagiarize egregiously on an assignment, you will fail the course. Simple rule of thumb: "If you use words or ideas that are not your own you must cite your sources. Otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism."

	Topic	Readings	Recommended
1	Painting in the Aftermath of Disaster: Art Brut and <i>Informel</i> (Wols, Jean Fautrier, Jean Dubuffet)	Rachel E. Perry: "Jean Fautrier's Jolies Juives," in: <i>October</i> , Vol. 108, Spring 2004, pp. 51-72 Hubert Damisch: "Robinsonades II: The Real Robinson," in: <i>October</i> , Vol. 85, Summer 1998, pp. 28-40.	Jean-Paul Sartre: "Fingers and Non-Fingers," in: <i>Portraits: Situations IV</i> , trans. by Chris Turner, London / New York, NY: Seagull Books, 2009, pp. 603-641.
2	From "Decollage" to "Nouveau Réalisme": Art in Postwar France (Yves Klein, Arman, Raymond Hains, Daniel Spoerri, Jacques de la Villeglé)	Kaira M. Cabañas: "Yves Klein's Performative Realism", <i>Grey Room</i> , Vol. 31, Spring 2008, pp. 6-31. Julia Robinson: "Before Attitudes Became Form," in: <i>New Realisms: 1957-62: Object Strategies from Readymade to Spectacle</i> , ed. by Julia Robinson, Madrid/Cambridge, Mass.: MNCARS/The MIT Press: 2010, pp. 23-40.	Benjamin H. D. Buchloh: "From Detail to Fragment: Décollage Affichiste", <i>October</i> , Vol. 56, Spring 1991, pp. 99-110.
3	The Artwork in Consumer Culture: Pop Art in Europe (Richard Hamilton, Eduardo Paolozzi, Gerhard Richter, Sigmar Polke, Oyvind Fahlström)	Hal Foster: "Citizen Hamilton: The Art of Richard Hamilton", in: <i>Richard Hamilton. October File</i> , ed. by Hal Foster, Cambridge, MA/London: The MIT Press, 2010, pp. 145-59. Christine Mehring: "Richter's Collaborations, Richter's Turn," in: <i>Gerhard Richter: Early Work, 1951-1972</i> , ed. by Christine Mehring, Jeanne Nugent and Jon Seydl, Los Angeles, CA: Getty Publications, 2010, pp. 90-124.	Thomas Crow: <i>The Long March of Pop: Art, Music, and Design, 1930-1995</i> , New Haven, CT / London: Yale University Press, 2015 (excerpts).

4	<p>The Politics of Value: Arte povera and Fluxus</p> <p>(Giuseppe Penone, Giovanni Anselmo, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Pino Pascali, Mario Merz; George Maciunas, Robert Filliou, Ben Vautier, Nam June Paik)</p>	<p>Nicholas Cullinan: „From Vietnam to Fiat-nam: The Politics of Arte Povera”, in: <i>October</i>, Vol. 124, Spring 2008, pp. 8-30.</p> <p>Natilee Harren: “Fluxus and the Transitional Commodity”, <i>Art Journal</i>, Vol. 75, No. 1, 2016, pp. 44-69.</p>	<p>Fredric Jameson: “Periodizing the 60s”, <i>Social Text</i>, No. 9/10, Spring-Summer 1984, pp. 178-209.</p>
5	<p>Breaking the Frame of Art: ‘Aktionskunst’ and Vienna Actionism</p> <p>(Joseph Beuys, Wolf Vostell, Gustav Metzger; Marina Abramovic, Gina Pane; Otto Mühl, Günter Brus, Hermann Nitsch, Richard Schwarzkogler)</p>	<p>Philip Ursprung: "'Catholic Tastes': Hurting and Healing the Body in Viennese Actionism", in: <i>Performing the Body/Performing the Text</i>, ed. by Amelia Jones and Andrew Stephenson, London / New York, NY: Routledge, 1999, pp. 138-152.</p> <p>Thierry de Duve: “Joseph Beuys, or The Last of the Proletarians”, <i>October</i>, Vol. 45, Summer 1988, pp. 47-62.</p>	<p>Beth Hinderliter: „Citizen Brus Examines His Body: Actionism and Activism in Vienna, 1968”, in: <i>October</i>, Vol. 147, Winter 2014, pp. 78-94.</p> <p>Mark Rosenthal: “Joseph Beuys: Staging Sculpture”, in: <i>Joseph Beuys. Actions, Vitrines, Environments</i>, London/Houston, TX: Tate Modern/The Menil Collection, 2004, pp. 10-135 (excerpts).</p>
6	<p>Figures, Signs and Monuments: Postmodernism in Europe</p> <p>(Thomas Schütte, Katharina Fritsch, Fischli & Weiss, Gerhard Richter, Martin Kippenberger, Isa Genzken, Franz West)</p>	<p>“The 80s Are in Our Midst. Roundtable Discussion with John M Armleder, Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, Werner Büttner, Isabelle Graw, Philipp Kaiser, Kasper König, Jutta Koether, and Thomas Ruff”, in: <i>Flashback: Revisiting the Art of the 80s</i>, ed. by Philip Kaiser, Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2005, pp. 21-96.</p> <p>Penelope Curtis: “Reclining Sculpture”, in: <i>Thomas Schütte. Hindsight</i>, ed. by Lynne Cooke, Madrid: MNCARS, 2010, pp. 52-64.</p>	<p>Benjamin H. D. Buchloh: “Figures of Authority, Ciphers of Regression: Notes on the Return of Representation in European Painting”, in: Benjamin H. D. Buchloh: <i>Formalism and Historicity. Models and Methods in Twentieth-Century Art</i>, Cambridge, MA/London: The MIT Press, 2015, pp. 115-172.</p>
7	<p>Photography as Tableau: German art after the Bechers</p> <p>(Thomas Struth, Candida Höfer, Andreas Gursky, Thomas Ruff)</p>	<p>Pamela M. Lee: “Gursky’s Ether”, in: <i>Forgetting the Art World</i>, Cambridge, MA / London: The MIT Press, 2012, pp. 69-103.</p> <p>Sarah E. James: “Bernd and Hilla Becher’s Industrial Archive: Re-enchanting the Everyday and Resisting Reification? “ in: <i>Common Ground. German Photographic Cultures across the Iron Curtain</i>, New Haven: Yale University press, 2013, pp. 149-185.</p>	<p>Michael Fried: <i>Why Photography Matters as Art as Never Before</i>, New Haven, CT/ London: Yale University Press, 2008.</p>

8	Another Social Turn: Exploring Sites of Communality and Communication (Pierre Huyghe, Philippe Parreno, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Liam Gillick, Christian Philipp Müller, Thomas Hirschhorn)	Miwon Kwon: "One Place after Another: Notes on Site Specificity", <i>October</i> , Vol. 80, Spring 1997, pp. 85-110. Claire Bishop: "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics", <i>October</i> , Vol. 110, Fall 2004, pp. 51-79.	Nicolas Bourriaud: <i>Relational Aesthetics</i> , Paris: Les Presses du Réel, 1998, excerpt pp. 25-48 (chapters "Art of the 1990s" and "Space-time exchange factors").
9	Visit to the Neue Nationalgalerie , Berlin		

COURSE READINGS

Benjamin H. D. Buchloh: *Formalism and Historicity. Models and Methods in Twentieth-Century Art*, Cambridge, MA / London: The MIT Press, 2015.

Thomas Crow: *The Rise of the Sixties: American and European Art in the Era of Dissent*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005.

Hannah Feldman: *From a Nation Torn. Decolonizing Art and Representation in France, 1945-1962*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014

Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yve-Alain Bois, and Benjamin H. D. Buchloh. *Art since 1900. Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2004.

Anne Rorimer: *New Art in the 60s and 70s. Redefining Reality*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2001.

Typologien: *Photography in 20th-Century Germany*, ed. by Susanne Pfeffer, Milan: Fondazione Prada, 2025.



Media, Discourse, & Feminism (6/9ECTS)

Name: Kateryna Pilyarchuk

Office: Chair of Language Use and Migration, Logenstrasse 4, AM 123

E-Mail: pilyarchuk@europa-uni.de

Office Hours: by appointment

While feminist ideas may seem commonsensical across the world, we continue to face numerous contradictions in how gender is (re)presented, (re)shaped, and (re)negotiated in discourses and on media platforms. The rhetoric of 'girl power' clashes with ongoing reports of rape and abuse, efforts toward all-gender representation in positions of power contrast sharply with the sexualized body images pervasive in contemporary advertising, and postfeminist ideals conflict with the rising trend of re-traditionalization on social media.

Drawing on literature from gender studies, media studies, cultural studies, sociology, and linguistics, this course invites you to examine the role media play in (re)constructing gender, explore the impact of neoliberal consumer culture on shaping (gendered, racialized, and sexualized) identities, and analyze the interplay between social media, technological changes, and gender representation. Through a range of theoretical frameworks, analytical approaches, and methodologies, the course encourages you to critically evaluate how gender stereotypes and ideologies are reinforced, challenged, and disseminated in the era of postfeminism.

This interdisciplinary course welcomes students with diverse research interests. You will have the opportunity to develop a unique research project, present it to your peers during the final session, and receive constructive feedback from the instructor before beginning your seminar paper.

Workload: 20 hours in-class / 130 hours independent study (6 ECTS)

GRADING

Final paper (10 pages = 2,500 words):	50 %
Final presentation (10 minutes):	25 %
Active in-class participation:	25 %

TERMS

Presence is compulsory. More than one absence will automatically lower your final grade unless you can document that the absences are related to an illness and/or official university event. For each additional absence your final grade will be lowered by 1/3 (a B becomes a B-, etc.). Late arrival and early departure will not be tolerated.

Academic integrity is essential. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including failure in the course and/or dismissal from the

University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

Plagiarism = failing the course. When in doubt, follow this rule: *“If you use words or ideas that are not your own you must cite your sources. Otherwise, you will be guilty of plagiarism.”*

SYLLABUS

	Focus of the class	Compulsory readings	Recommended readings
Introduction to feminism & postfeminism			
#1 5.6.	<p>AGENDA: Course requirements, overview of topics, literature, and workload. The basics.</p> <p>Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA).</p> <p>ACTIVITIES: 1. Discussing mundane and pressing questions of gender and feminism.</p> <p>2. Analyzing personal care product packaging and discussing how postfeminist rhetoric is used there.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hooks, B. (2000). <i>Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics</i> (Ch. 1-5) • Lazar, M. (2007). “Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cameron, D. (1985). <i>Feminism and Linguistic Theory</i>. • McRobbie, A. (2009). <i>The Aftermath of Feminism</i> (Intro & Ch.1).
Theorizing postfeminism & surveillance			
#2 12.6.	<p>AGENDA: What is postfeminism, neoliberalism and choice feminism? Contradictions of postfeminist discourse.</p> <p>Surveillance culture and gynopticon. The "girlfriend gaze" and policing of femininity.</p> <p>ACTIVITIES: 1. Analyzing Instagram captions by beauty or fitness influencers to examine neoliberal postfeminist discourse.</p> <p>2. Analyzing self-help and makeover apps (e.g., YouCam Makeup, FaceTune) and discussing how femininity is under constant surveillance.</p> <p>3. Examining “That Girl” trend on TikTok, identifying surveillance and self-regulation patterns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gill, R. (2021). “Neoliberal Beauty”. • Elias, A.S. & Gill, R. (2017). “Beauty Surveillance”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gill, R. (2007). <i>Gender and the Media</i> (Ch. 5) • Riley, S. et al. (2016). “It’s Just Between Girls”
The “Empowered” Woman in Advertising & Glossies			
#3 19.6.	<p>AGENDA: Commodification of feminism. The language of choice, agency, and empowerment in advertising.</p> <p>Fashion editorials & gender.</p> <p>ACTIVITIES: 1. Analyzing 2 beauty commercials (e.g., a Fenty Beauty ad from 2017 and Skims from</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lazar, M. (2009). “Entitled to Consume”. • Gill, R. (2009). <i>Gender and the Media</i>. (Ch. 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gill, R. (2007). <i>Gender and the Media</i>. (Ch. 3.) • Windels, K. et al. (2019). “Selling Feminism”. • Boschma, M. & Daalmas, S. (2021). “What a Girl

	<p>2023); discussing how empowerment is framed</p> <p>2. Analyzing how fashion discourse sells postfeminist ideals. Engaging with an online editorial of one's choice and commenting on language use.</p>		<p>Wants, What a Girl Needs.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nash, M. (2018). “Empowering “Sporty Sisters”.
Digital Feminism & Self-Branding			
<p>#4</p> <p>26.6.</p>	<p>AGENDA:</p> <p>#MeToo, #TimesUp, and digital feminist activism. How affordances of online platforms are used to raise awareness.</p> <p>Tradwives and the branding of femininity as “empowered submission.” The language of choice, self-care, and femininity in social media.</p> <p>ACTIVITIES:</p> <p>1. Tracking one feminist hashtag (e.g., #MeToo, #BodyPositivity, #FreeTheNipple) and analyzing how users (celebrities vs. activists vs. brands) frame their messages.</p> <p>2. Analyzing Instagram profiles of tradwife influencers (e.g., @solieolie, @ballerinafarm, @esteecewilliams, @prolifebarbie) and discussing how traditional gender roles are framed as “choice.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caldeira, S. P. (2024). “(Re)sharing Feminisms”. Sykes, I. (2024). “From ‘Girlboss’ to #stayathomegirlfriend” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caldeira, S. P. (2024). “Walking on Eggshells” Clark-Parsons, R. (2019). “I See You, I Believe You, I Stand With You”. Barbala, A.M. (2024). “The Platformization of Feminism”. Sykes, S., & Hopner, V. (2024). “Tradwives”.
Hands-on Group Work Class			
<p>#5</p> <p>3.7.</p>	<p>AGENDA:</p> <p>Students get in groups to analyze data of discourses covered so far, apply concepts from postfeminist framework (e.g., sensibility, surveillance, empowerment, choice) and are guided by FCDA.</p> <p>ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Choosing a topic and working on it as a group. Concept Mapping. Creating visual concept maps and linking key postfeminist themes to the data.</p>	<p>Readings from the previous few classes (use this class to catch up with some key sources that you have not had time to read yet)</p>	<p>Check the reading list for this course and see which sources may be useful for the topic you are interested in</p>
Project work – getting ready for your presentation & papers			
<p>#6</p> <p>10.7.</p>	<p>AGENDA:</p> <p>We will use this class to discuss your upcoming final projects, develop research questions and find suitable approaches to tackle them. Bring your project idea with a rough RQ and questions you need help with.</p> <p>ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Fine-tuning your ideas and exchanging feedback with peers.</p>	<p>Sunderland, J. (2010). “Research Questions in linguistics”</p>	<p>Let me know in advance if you need more help with literature for your presentations/projects. Feel free to use some of the sources we covered in class or ones I recommended as further reads</p>

Final workshop			
#7	AGENDA: Presentations, discussions, & feedback		
17.7.	ACTIVITY: This whole-day class is your chance to present an interesting project that you will subsequently develop into a research paper. Each student will have a dedicated time slot to present their ideas to peers and get feedback from the instructor and colleagues.		

COURSE READINGS (compulsory & recommended)

- Barbala, Astri Moksens. 2024. "The Platformization of Feminism: The Tensions of Domesticating Instagram for Activist Projects". *New Media & Society* 26(10): 5802-5818.
- Boschma, Marieke, & Serena Daalmas 2021. What a Girl Wants, What a Girl Needs: Analyzing Postfeminist Themes in Girls' Magazines. *Media & Communication* 9(2): 27-38.
- Caldeira, Sofia P. 2024. "(Re)sharing Feminisms: Re-sharing Instagram Stories as Everyday Feminist Practice". *New Media & Society*, 1-20.
- Caldeira, Sofia P. 2018. "Shop it. Wear it. 'Gram it.': A Qualitative Textual Analysis of Women's Glossy Fashion Magazines and Their Intertextual Relationship with Instagram". *Feminist Media Studies*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2018.1548498>
- Caldeira, Sofia P. (2024). "'Walking on Eggshells': Exploring Tensions and Ambivalences in Platformised Feminist Practices on Instagram". *Platforms & Society* 1: 1-15.
- Clark-Parsons, Rosemary. 2019. "I see you, I believe you, I stand with you": #MeToo and the Performance of Networked Feminist Visibility". *Feminist Media Studies* 21(3): 362-380.
- Duffy, Brooke E., & Emily Hund. 2015. "Having it All" on Social Media: Entrepreneurial Femininity and Self-Branding Among Fashion Bloggers". *Social Media + Society*, 1-11.
- Elias, Ana Sofia, & Rosalind Gill. 2017. "Beauty Surveillance: The Digital Self-Monitoring Cultures of Neoliberalism". *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 21(1): 59-77.
- Fowler, Jie G., & Les Carlson. 2015. "The Visual Presentation of Beauty in Transnational Fashion Magazine Advertisements". *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising* 36(2): 136-156
- Gamble, Sarah. 2001. *Routledge Companion to Feminism and Postfeminism*. Routledge.
- Gill, Rosalind. 2007. *Gender and the Media*. Polity Press
- Gill, Rosalind. 2021. "Neoliberal Beauty". In M. Leeds Craig (Ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Beauty Politics* (pp. 9-18). Routledge.
- Hooks, Bell. 2000. *Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*. South End Press.
- Kanalemang-Palm, Lame M. 2023. "'It Takes a Long Time to Become Young': A Critical Feminist intersectional Study of *Vogue's* Non-Issue". *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 1-22.

- Lazar, Michelle L. 2006. "Discover The Power of Femininity!" *Feminist Media Studies* 6(4): 505-517.
- Lazar, Michelle M. 2009. "Entitled to Consume: Postfeminist Femininity and a Culture of Post-Critique". *Discourse & Communication* 3(4): 371-400.
- Lazar, Michelle M. 2007. Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis: Articulating a Feminist Discourse Praxis". *Critical Discourse Studies*, 4(2): 141-164.
- Lebovic, Anna. 2019. "Refashioning Feminism: American *Vogue*, the Second Wave, and the Transition to Postfeminism". *Journal of Women's History* 31(1): 109-132.
- McRobbie, Angela. 2009. *The Aftermath of Feminism*. Sage Publications Ltd.
- Nash, Meredith. 2018. "Empowering "Sporty Sisters" Through "Active Living": A Feminist Multi-modal Critical Discourse Analysis of the Lorna Jane Fitness Fashion Website". In K. Toffoletti et al. (eds.), *New Sporting Femininities, New Femininities in Digital, Physical and Sporting Cultures* (pp. 277-297). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Proctor, Devin. 2022. "The #Tradwife Persona and the Rise of Radicalized White Domesticity". *Persona Studies* 8(2): 7-26.
- Riley, Sarah, Evans, Adrienne, & Alison Mackiewicz. 2016. "It's Just Between Girls: Negotiating the Postfeminist Gaze in Women's 'Looking Talk'". *Feminism & Psychology* 26(1): 94-113.
- Sykes, Isabel. 2024. "From 'Girlboss' to #stayathomegirlfriend: The Romanticisation of Domestic Labour on TikTok". *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 1-19
- Sykes, Sophia, & Veronica Hopner. 2024. "Tradwives: Right-wing Social Media Influencers". *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 53(4): 453-487.
- Winch, Alison. 2015. "Brand Intimacy, Female Friendship and Digital Surveillance Networks". *New Formations* (84/85): 228-245.
- Windels, Kasey, Champlin, Sara, Shelton, Summer, Sterbenk, Yvette, & Maddison Poteet. 2019. "Selling Feminism: How Female Empowerment Campaigns Employ Postfeminist Discourses". *Journal of Advertising* 49(1): 18-33.

TEXTS FOR FURTHER REFERENCES (not required | use for your papers /further readings):

- Banet-Weiser, Sarah. 2018. *Empowered: Popular Feminism and Popular Misogyny*. Duke University Press.
- Cameron, Deborah. 1985. *Feminism and Linguistic Theory*. Macmillan Press.
- Coates, Jennifer, and Pichler, Pia (eds.) 2011. *Language and Gender: A Reader (2nd edition)*. Blackwell.
- Elias, Ana Sofia, Gill, Rosalind, & Christina Scharff (ed.) 2017. *Aesthetic Labor: Rethinking Beauty Politics in Neoliberalism*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kozinets, Robert. 2019. *Netnography: The Essential Guide to Qualitative Social Media Research*. Sage Publications.
- Lazar, Michelle M. (ed.). *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis*. Palgrave MacMillan
- Sunderland, Jane. 2006. *Language and Gender: An Advanced Resource Book*. Routledge.
- Winch, Alison. 2013. *Girlfriends and Postfeminist Sisterhood*. Palgrave Macmillan.



Inventing Europe: Foundational Texts in Culture, Politics, and Law from Early Modern Times to the Present (6/9ECTS)

Lecturer: Dr. Pablo Valdivia Orozco

Office: Faculty of Cultural Studies, Große Scharrnstr. 59, HG 016

E-Mail: valdivia@europa-uni.de

Office Hours: on appointment

- This seminar explores the making of "Europe" as a contested cultural, political, and legal construct. We will read and discuss selected excerpts from foundational texts that have shaped the European tradition—from early modern political philosophy to key documents of the post-war integration project and contemporary critiques. The aim is to trace how Europe emerged not as a given geographical or civilizational entity, but as a historically constructed idea that has been mobilized in various contexts to legitimize institutions, policies, and hierarchies.

Focusing on the *longue durée* from the Enlightenment to the present, the course invites students to engage critically with the discourses that have granted Europe a special status in the history of modernity. We will interrogate how concepts such as human rights, citizenship, sovereignty, and cultural identity have been used to define Europe's normative core—and how these ideals often stand in tension with political and material realities, including exclusionary practices, colonial legacies, and migration regimes.

At the heart of the seminar lies the question: What makes "Europe" a powerful concept? How has it been constructed, institutionalized, and contested over time? Through historical reflection and critical reading, students will develop a sharpened awareness of the constructedness of large-scale political and cultural formations and the ways in which they function discursively to authorize specific policies, identities, and exclusions.

- **The seminar will include group work:** while all participants will read short excerpts from each text, small groups will engage more deeply with individual readings and present their insights to the class to facilitate collective discussion. Further readings will be provided at the beginning of the class.

Workload: 20 hours in-class / 130 hours independent study (6 ECTS)

GRADING

Home essay (8 pp.):	40 %
1 presentation (10 minutes):	20 %
Participation/Engagement:	40 %

TERMS

Presence

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Seminar Plan (8 Sessions à 4 hours)

	Topic	Readings
1.6.	FOCUS: Culture & Politics ACTIVITY: Introduction and summary of the methodology of the seminar: P. Valdivia Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Paul Valéry – <i>The Crisis of the Mind</i>- Étienne Balibar – <i>We, the People of Europe?</i> (Introduction)- Roland Barthes – <i>Mythologies</i> (selections)
8.6.	FOCUS: Politics & Law: Legal theory and political thought ACTIVITY: Introduction: P. Valdivia Discussion of our readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Niccolò Machiavelli – <i>The Prince</i> (Ch. 15–19)- Bartolomé de Las Casas – <i>A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies</i> (selections)- Hugo Grotius – <i>On the Law of War and Peace</i> (selections)
15.6.	FOCUS: Law & Culture: The bourgeois society of Enlightenment ACTIVITY: Introduction: P. Valdivia Discussion of readings Presentation of Group 1 (Rousseau)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Jean-Jacques Rousseau – <i>The Social Contract</i> (Book I–II)- Immanuel Kant – <i>Toward Perpetual Peace</i>- Michel de Montaigne – <i>Of Cannibals</i>

22.6.	FOCUS: Politics & History: Does history follow a pattern? ACTIVITY: Introduction: P. Valdivia Discussion of readings Presentation of Group 2 (Hegel)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - G. W. F. Hegel – <i>Philosophy of History</i> (selections) - Oswald Spengler – <i>The Decline of the West</i> (selections)
29.6	FOCUS: Law & Politics: Philosophical interventions and Foundations ACTIVITY: Introduction: P. Valdivia Discussion of readings Presentation of Group 3 (Arendt)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hannah Arendt – <i>The Origins of Totalitarianism</i> (chapter: “Decline of the Nation-State”) - Carl Schmitt – <i>The Nomos of the Earth</i> (Introduction + Europe-related sections) - Altiero Spinelli – <i>The Ventotene Manifesto</i>
6.7.	FOCUS: Critical perspectives on Europe ACTIVITY: Introduction: P. Valdivia Discussion of readings Presentation of Group 4 (Spivak)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jacques Derrida – The Other Heading - Hans Blumenberg – The Legitimacy of the Modern Age (selections) - Gayatri C. Spivak – An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization (selected chapter) - Achille Mbembe – <i>Necropolitics</i> (Introduction + Chapter 1)
13.7.	FOCUS: Law & Culture: Political theory ACTIVITY: Introduction: P. Valdivia Discussion of readings Presentation of Group 5 (Balibar)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neil MacCormick – <i>Questioning Sovereignty</i> (selections) - Étienne Balibar – <i>Europe, an “Other” Europe</i> - Chantal Mouffe – <i>On the Political</i> (selections)
20.7.	TERM PAPER WRITING	

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