

# MELANCHOLY AND THE METROPOLIS

## Modernity and its Aftermath



### FRAME

The industrial revolution of the 19th unleashed a number of forces which disrupted and disaggregated the organic unity of the city. New technological, economic and social constructions threatened the traditional life world in the city. The many urban theories, projects and practices immediately following this period were preoccupied with covering up the loss, trying to restore the organic unity of the city. They, however, rarely dealt with how this traumatic transformation has been experienced by the man of/in the crowd, the flaneur, the ragpicker, the dandy, the beggar, the detective, who were critical of modernity and felt threatened by the accelerated urban development.

Melancholy, as Freud described it, is the inability to come to terms with loss. The goal here is to address the loss, which has been experienced during this traumatic period on the way to modernity and the transformation of the city into the metropolis. It is the intent of the seminar to investigate the effects of these transitions on the city's inhabitants, not as a pathological condition but use melancholy as a refined, reflective emotion with its own qualities. The seminar intends to look how melancholy with its reflective trait found its way into cultural representations in literature, social studies, art, film, urbanism, where melancholy emotions serve as an explanatory model providing additional insight.

### COURSE OBJECTIVE

Through the lens of the concept of melancholy as the inability to come to terms with loss, the seminar wants to engage the student in a critical assessment of the consequences of the birth of modernity and the metropolis. Key urban phenomena accompanying the birth of the metropolis and their impact on the city and their inhabitants will be investigated.

### FORMAT

The seminar consist of eleven sessions. Each session has assigned as well as suggested readings to be discussed during the session. The assigned readings will be on Blackboard for the student to download. Assigned films can be screened during the week before the session they will be discussed.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

To ensure a lively and informed discussion each student is expected to have read the assigned material. Attendance and participation in discussion and debates is mandatory and will be considered in final grading. In specific:

- \* For each session the student has to provide a one page synopsis of the assigned readings.
- \* For one seminar session, prepare questions and direct the discussion.
- \* A final paper of min 2000 words about any topic of the student's choosing in consultation with the instructor or a 'project' using drawing, model, photography, video, film or any other media dealing with one of the seminar topics, to be possibly presented on the last seminar session or in a session after the course

## **GRADING**

25% - Preparation of reading synopses plus contribution to seminar discussion

25% - Directing a seminar session

50% - Research Paper

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity.

<http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html>

Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work, except in the cases of projects that are specifically structured as group endeavors. You are encouraged to study together and to discuss information and concepts covered in lecture and the sections with other students. You can give "consulting" help to or receive "consulting" help from such students.

However, this permissible cooperation should never involve one student having possession of a copy of all or part of work done by someone else, in the form of an e mail, an e mail attachment file, a diskette, or a hard copy. Should copying occur, both the student who copied work from another student and the student who gave material to be copied will both automatically receive a zero for the assignment. Penalty for violation of this Code can also be extended to include failure of the course and University disciplinary action.

During examinations, you must do your own work. Talking or discussion is not permitted during the examinations, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any collaborative behavior during the examinations will result in failure of the exam, and may lead to failure of the course and University disciplinary action.

## **ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY**

In compliance with the Cornell University policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for student with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Students are encouraged to register with Student Disability Services to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.

## **OFFICE HOURS**

Fridays 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM in 133 E.Sibley Hall

# MELANCHOLY AND THE METROPOLIS

## SYLLABUS

**January 29** INTRODUCTION

### WHAT IS MELANCHOLY

**February 5** THE PATHOLOGICAL ASPECT OF MELANCHOLY

Assigned Reading: S. Freud "Mourning and Melancholia" The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud. Translated by J.Strachey, Volume XIV London 1914-1916  
Suggested Reading: S.Freud "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through" Vol.12 of Standard Edition (1950) First published in 1914  
Robert Burton, "The Anatomy of Melancholy, ed. Holbrook Jackson (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1978)  
Jennifer Radden Ed., "The Nature of Melancholy: From Aristotle to Kristeva", Oxford University Press, 2000

**February 12** THE REFLECTIVE, AESTHETIC ASPECT OF MELANCHOLY

Assigned Reading: Emily Brady, Arto Haaplala "Melancholy as an Aesthetic Emotion"  
<http://www.contempaesthetics.org/newvolume/pages/article.php?articleID=214>  
Suggested Reading:

**February 19** MELANCHOLY AS A RESPONSE TO ART WORK

Assigned Reading: Emily Braun, "Mario Sironi and Italian Modernism, Cambridge 2000  
Chapter III "The Urban Landscapes (pp.44-67) and Chapter IV "Melancholy and the Modern Allegory" (pp.68-89)  
Kathleen Toohey "Giorgio de Chirico, Time, Odysseus, Melancholy and Intestinal Disorder" in: Peter G. Toohey, "Melancholy, Love, and Time" U.o.Michigan Press 2004, Appendix pp. 283-294  
Suggested Reading:

**March 5** MELANCHOLY AS A RESPONSE TO PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM

Assigned Reading: Eugene Atget, "Eugene Atget: Photographs from the J.P.Getty Museum Los Angeles 2000, pp.....  
Screening: Wim Wenders "Wings of Desire" 1987  
Walther Ruttmann "Berlin: Symphony of a Metropolis" 1927  
Suggested Reading: <http://www.artandantiquesmag.com/2012/08/eugene-atget-photography-paris/>  
<http://www.nga.gov/feature/atget/>

### MELANCHOLY, METROPOLIS AND MODERNITY

**March 12** MODERNITY IN THE STREETS

Assigned Reading: Marshall Berman, "Introduction Modernity-Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" pp15-36 and "Baudelaire: Modernism in the Streets" pp.131-171, in: "All That Is Solid Melts Into Air, The Experience of Modernity" New York 1982

Suggested Reading:

**March 19**

**THE CROWD**

Assigned Reading:

Edgar Allan Poe, "The Man of the Crowd" in: J.A.Harrison, Ed. *The Complete Works of E.A.Poe* <http://web.archive.org/web/20110209160927/http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbib/toccer-new2?id=PoeCrow.sgm&images=images/modeng&data=/texts/english/modeng/parsed&tag=public&part=1&division=div1>

Suggested Reading:

**March 26**

**BAUDELAIRE, HAUSMANN AND THE STREETS OF PARIS**

Assigned Reading:

Charles Baudelaire "The Painter of Modern Life" and Other Essays London 1995 pp.....  
Jen-yi Hsu "Ghosts in the City" in; *Comparative Literature Studies* 41, 4 (2004) pp. 546-554  
Wolf Lepenies. " Baudelarian Correspondances and the Critique of the New" pp. 52-59 in:  
W.Lepenies "Melancholy and Society", Cambridge 1992

Suggested Reading:

Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, "The Flaneur: The City and its Discontent" in: P.P.Ferguson, "Paris as Revolution: Writing the Nineteenth Century City" pp. 80-114, Berkeley 1994. <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft296nb17v/>

Spring Break (March 28 to April 5)

**April 9**

**ARCADES, DEPARTMENT STORES AND THE FLANEUR**

Assigned Reading:

Charles Baudelaire "The Painter of Modern Life and other Essays"  
Ed. Jonathan Mayne, London 1995

Suggested Reading:

Walter Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century" in:  
W. Benjamin, "Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings"  
P.Demetz Ed., New York 1978 pp 146-162  
Foster, Kurt "Fourier, or the Arcades, Walter Benjamin 1892-1940 in: *Architectural Design Profile* 1981  
Geist.....

**April 16**

**SPAZIEREN IN BERLIN**

Assigned Reading:

Franz Hessel, "In Berlin, Day and Night in 1929" Readux Books: Series 1, No 2 ([www.readux.net](http://www.readux.net))

**April 23**

**MELANCHOLY AS A COLLECTIVE RESPONSE: ISTANBUL**

Assigned Reading:

Orhan Pamuk, "Hüzün" Chapter 10 pp.90-107) in: O.Pamuk "Istanbul, Memories and the City" New York 2006  
Esra Akcan, "The Melancholies of Istanbul" in: *World Literature Today* Vol. 80, No. 6 (Nov. - Dec., 2006), pp. 39-43  
<http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/40159243?sid=21105554090783&uid=2129&uid=2&uid=70&uid=4>

Suggested Reading:

Rufus of Ephesus, "On Melancholy" Ed.P.E.Porman, Tübingen 2008  
Ipek Türeli, "Ara Güler's Photography of 'Old Istanbul' and Cosmopolitan Nostalgia"  
Esra Akcan,

**April 30**

**MELANCHOLY OF THE SITUATIONISTS**

Assigned Reading:

Alistair Bonnett, "The Nostalgias of Situationist Subversion"  
*Theory, Culture and Society* 2006, 23(5), 23-48 by Sage Publication  
at the page <http://tcs.sagepub.com/content/vol23/issue5/> on Sage Journals online  
<http://online.sagepub.com/>  
<http://site.ebrary.com.proxy.library.cornell.edu/lib/cornell/detail.action?docID=10422399>