

AR 191 Introduction to Art and Power

Prof. Hanan Toukan

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1-2

Seminar times: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:45-12:15

Seminar venue: P24

Course Description:

Does power shape art? How does art respond to power? Can there be politics without art? How are we to think about art created only for the sake of art, or art that foregoes aesthetics and only aims at political intervention? This course uncovers the ways in which power; ideology, hegemony and legitimacy circulate through specifically modern and contemporary forms of art, the processes of their making and the experience of encountering them in diverse sites. It explores a wide range of examples and historical moments to reflect on how art has been shaped by structures of inequality and, conversely, how power relations are represented and reinforced by art. The course approaches the study of the relationship between art and power within a framework of cultural politics that emphasizes the value of a postcolonial approach relevant for the study of culture, art and its relationship to empire and colonialism in the twenty and twenty-first centuries. It encourages students to think about some of the key questions that underpin the conundrum that globalizing art and culture institutions find themselves in today vis-à-vis their publics, collections and exhibitions. By covering examples from Europe, the Americas and the Middle East the course will run thematically starting with understanding how power functions in art-making via artistic and cultural institutions and moving in the second part of the course to look at key examples of artistic responses to power. Topics covered will include colonialism and museums; nationalism, state-building and art; Cold War and post 9/11 cultural diplomacy; art and the global economy, decolonizing museum initiatives in Europe and the US; migration, art and borders; curatorial politics, "artworlds" and more.

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. Syllabi should note that, instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section III Academic Misconduct.

Attendance

Attendance at ALL classes is expected. More than two absences (that is absences from two sessions of 90 minutes) in a semester will significantly affect the participation grade for the course. Please consult the BCB Student Handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence.

Class Conduct

“Active” participation is a significant component of your grade; you should come to class prepared to discuss the readings. This means bringing a copy of your reading as well as any questions you may have. Your contribution to the discussion should be based on the material you have read (and thought about). Identify important passages while reading for closer examination in class. Do not take out your cell phones, other devices (besides a laptop which you may need to write notes) and do not allow them to interrupt class.

Assessment and Grade Breakdown

Class Participation (20%): Participation will be evaluated at the end of each session. Students will be assessed based on the general enthusiasm, frequency and quality of the questions they raise. Regular attendance and completion of all reading assignments is also required. Recurrent absences will substantially decrease the final grade. (up to two unexcused absences are allowed).

Class Presentations (20%): Each student will be expected to make one 20-25 minute presentation about a particular week’s readings of their own choice. Presentations should address the author, central question and argument of the work, methodology used and key chosen works of art to discuss alongside three critically engaging questions and concluding thoughts posed to the class in a power point presentation to spark discussion. Class presentations will normally take place in the Thursday class (unless agreed otherwise) and students can sign up to present on the week of their choice in the first week of classes.

Museum writing assignments 2x: (30% [15% each])

Students are expected to write two 1000-word texts on the 2 shows attended as a class. Each text essay should combine a commentary on the form, content and context of the show or piece you to choose to focus on as well as make reference to some of the theories and concepts learned in the readings. Some of the questions addressed could be: When, where and why was the work made showed/conceived by the curator or artist?; what is the political and historical backdrop to the work?

What do the physical properties and form contribute to the analysis that you make? What is the title of the work/show and how does it relate to the point the show is trying to make, if it is making any?

Assignments should include a creative title followed by your name, date, and course number. Pages should be double-spaced with 12-pt. font and one-inch margins. **DUE: Thursday March 24 and Thursday April 21, 2022.**

Creative Final Project: (30%)

The final project for the course is an individual creative endeavor. It could be a website, a series of drawings, a painting, a blog, a collection of ideas, a visual essay, an e-zine, a virtual interactive gallery exhibit, a mini-documentary or film or even a performance that addresses chosen themes/concepts and key ideas discussed in the class. The work will be installed and exhibited in the cultural space A.L. Berlin. **DUE: Thursday May 12, 2022**

Policy on Late Submission of Papers/Assignments

Syllabi for core and elective classes should note or refer to the following policy from the Student Handbook on the submission of essays: essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

All readings will be posted on google classroom.

This course may take place in person or online, depending on the restrictions in place.

In case of in-person classes:

- All students must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill with covid 19 symptoms.
- All students must wear masks in an orderly manner (covering both mouth and nose) at all times during class.

If need be, for online attendance all students must have:

- Have an adequate internet connection. If your home has an adequate internet connection, you are welcome to attend class from home. If your home

internet connection is inadequate for video conferencing, it is your responsibility to find another suitable location. If needed, you can contact the Registrar to reserve a room on campus from which to participate in the seminar.

- Have a working camera and microphone. Keep your camera on all the time during seminar discussions. The camera should be directed so that your face is visible. Lighting should come from the front so that you are visible. If there is a privacy issue for the student then they are responsible for contacting and organizing with the registrar to use designated rooms on college grounds from which to call in the class.
- Always have a copy of the reading with in front of you for each seminar.

READINGS & SEMINARS*

1.WEEK 1.

Art and Power

Tuesday Feb 1

Introduction to the course

Thursday Feb 3

Judith, Kapferer ed. *The State and the Arts: Articulating Power and Subversion*. (Berghahn books, 2007). Read: Introduction: The Architectonics of State Power-Complicity and Resistance.

2. WEEK 2

Art, Class, Power

Tuesday February 8

Amariglio, Jack L. Resnick, Stephen A, and Wolff Richard D. 'Class, Power and Culture" in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1988)

Thursday February 10

Janet Wolff. *The Social production of Art* (London: Macmillan Education Ltd., 1981).
Chapter 2.

3. WEEK 3

Art as Ideology, Culture as Hegemony

Tuesday February 15

Adorno, Theodore, and Horkheimer, Max. "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception" in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Trans. John Cumming. (NY: Conitnuum, 1989)

Thursday February 17

Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (Columbia University Press, 1993). Chapter 1.

Bourdieu Pierre and Haacke, Hans. *Free Exchange*. (London: Polity Press, 2005).
Read "Sponsors who Know the Tune".

4. WEEK 4

Art and "Civilization": Islam in the Western Museum

Tuesday February 22

Brusius, Mirjam "Connecting the Ancient and the Modern Middle East in Museums and Public Space in *Islam and Heritage in Europe Past Present and Future Possibilities*" in Puzon, Katarzyna; Macdonald, Sharon and Shatanawi Sharon (ed). *Islam and Heritage in Europe, Pasts, Presents and Future Possibilities*. (London: Routledge 2021).

Thursday February 24

Museum Visit with Prof. Katarzyna to the Islamic Art Museum in Berlin.

5. Week 5

Art and the State: Modernity

Tuesday March 1

Levitt Peggy. *Artifacts and Allegiances: How Museums Put the Nation and the World on Display*. (University of California Press, 2015)

Thursday March 3

Karaca, Banu, *The National Frame: Art and State Violence in Turkey and Germany*. (Fordham University Press, 2021). Read chapter 1. "Modernity, Nationalism and Civilizing the Arts"

6. Week 6

Art and State Violence: Nationalism

Tuesday March 8

No class-FEDERAL HOLIDAY

Thursday March 10

Guest Lecture by Prof. of Anthropologist Banu Karaca

7. Week 7

Colonialism, Art, Plunder

Tuesday March 15

Ariella Azoullay. *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism*. London: Verso, 2019.
Read chapter 1.

Thursday March 17

Class Visit to the Humboldt Forum.

8. WEEK 8

Postcolonial Responses: Hybrid identity and Art

Tuesday March 22

Stam, Robert "Fanon, Algeria and the Cinema: The Politics of Identification" in Martin Jay and Sumathi Ramaswamy eds. *Empires of Vision: A Reader*" (Duke University Press, 2014) pp. 503-538

Thursday March 24

McCarthy, Cameron and Dimitriadis, Greg. Art and the Postcolonial Imagination: Rethinking the Institutionalization of Third World Aesthetics and Theory. *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature* (31:1 &2,(Jan.-Apr.20).pp. 59-74

9. WEEK 9

Art World Politics: Coloniality, Curators and the Moral Economy

Tuesday March 29

Winegar, Jessica. *Creative Reckonings: The Politics of Art and Culture in Contemporary Egypt*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Read Chapter 6.

Danto, Arthur . "The Art World". *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 61, No. 19, American Philosophical Association Eastern Division Sixty-First Annual Meeting. (Oct. 15, 1964), pp. 571-584.

Thursday March 31

Zolghadr, Tirdad. *Traction*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016. Read chapter 1.

Guest Lecutre: Author and Curator, Tirdad Zolghadr.

10. WEEK 10

Art and the Cold War

Tuesday April 5

Maasri, Zeina. *Cosmopolitan Radicalism. The Visual Politics of Beirut's Global Sixties.* (Cambridge University Press, 2020). Read Chapter 5

Thursday April 7

Stonor Saunders, Frances. *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters.* (The New Press, 1999). Chapter TBD

_____SPRING BREAK_____

11.WEEK 11

Art and Global Capital

Tuesday April 19

Museum visit to the Gropius Bau "Beirut and the Golden Sixties: A Manifesto of Fragility".

https://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/en/berliner-festspiele/programm/bfs-gesamtprogramm/programmdetail_366448.html

Thursday April 21

Stallabras, Julian. 2004. *Art Incorporated: The Story of Contemporary Art.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. Read chapters 2 and 3.

12. WEEK 12

Art after 9/11

Tuesday April 28

Toukan, Hanan, *The Politics of Art: Dissent and Cultural Diplomacy in Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan.* (Stanford University Press, 2021) Read chapter 1.

Thursday May 5

Winegar, Jessica. "The Humanity Game: Art, Islam, and the War on Terror". *Anthropological Quarterly* 81, no. 3 (Summer, 2008): 651–81. 4

13. WEEK 13

Museums and Decoloniality

Tuesday May 10

Procter, Alice. *The Whole Picture: The Colonial Story of the Art in Our Museums & Why We Need to Talk About It*. (Octopus Publishing Group Ltd, 2020)

Wintle, Claire. "Decolonizing the Smithsonian: Museums as Microcosms of Political Encounter" in *The American Historical Review*, Volume 121, Issue 5, pp.1492–1520

Thursday May 12

Final exhibition and opening of class projects at A.L. Berlin.

* *The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus on an as-needed basis throughout the term. Students will be notified by email or by announcement in class when revisions are made*