

LITC0025

Memory and Literature in a Globalised Culture

Instructor

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Room 107, 16-18 Gordon Square

Drop-in Office Hours: Mondays, 10:00-2:00

if possible, please notify me via email if you plan to drop by

Class time and location

Tuesdays, 11:00 to 1:00, W3.04

Module Description

What is the place of memory in contemporary culture? What is the relationship between memory and history, individual and collective memory, memory and literature/media/place, memory and forgetting? To what extent is globalisation – from migration to mediatisation – a central factor in today's memory cultures? This module examines theories and cultural practices associated with memory.

Learning Aims

- Provide insight to specific aspects of the comparative study of literature and other cultural expressions in relation to their exemplification and exploration of mediality and collective memories;
- Encourage students to question the relationship between critical traditions and literary history from the perspective of memory studies in relation to artistic productions and cultural expressions;
- Provide students with knowledge of the relationship between globalising phenomena, collective memories and cultural expressions;
- Foreground the significance of study of aspects of modern and contemporary literature as a means of engaging with wider questions within the BA Comparative Literature and SELCS curriculum;
- Cultivate skills and aptitudes of close con/textual and comparative analysis in oral presentation and in formative written work;
- Facilitate critical engagement with an internationalised, cross-cultural curriculum;
- Hone student skills in the practice of academic writing as a mode of assessment.

Module Format

This module comprises three main elements: weekly class sessions at which attendance is mandatory, weekly readings on which each week's class is based, and a final assessment. Full participation in all aspects is required to excel. Our class time is discussion-based and students are expected to arrive prepared to discuss the readings and topic in detail.

At the start of term, students will form groups of two and will each choose a week in which they will 1) prepare a 15 to 20-minute presentation on the topic and reading and 2) animate a 30-minute discussion and/or class activity.

Presentations are to be a synthesis of the week's readings and themes. Students may choose to present additional examples to illustrate the course materials.

Assessment

Assessment for this module will be a 3000-word essay to be submitted via the central portal on 22 April 2024. It is worth 100% of the course mark.

Essay questions will be posted during the term. You will receive a notification when the questions are posted on Moodle.

Module Calendar and Readings

The course Moodle contains links to all readings, whether pdfs, links to articles or links to books. We will read the following books in their entirety:

1. Julian Barnes, *England, England*
2. Brian Friel, *Translations*
3. Dan Hicks, *The Brutish Museums*
4. Sadiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother*
5. Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*

Week 1 (9 January): Welcome and Introduction

Required Reading

- Assmann, "What is Cultural Memory?"
- Barash, "The Sources of Memory"
- Tomlinson, Chapter 1. "Globalisation and Culture"

Recommended Reading

- See selection of links on Moodle

Week 2 (16 January): Constructing National Memory

Required Reading

- Barnes, Julian. *England, England*. Vintage, 2008.

Recommended Reading

- Anderson, Benedict Richard O'Gorman. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, 2006. (see selection on Moodle)
- Nünning, Vera. "The Invention of Cultural Traditions: The Construction and Destruction of Englishness and Authenticity in Julian Barnes' *England, England*." *Anglia*, vol. 119, 2001. pp. 58-76.
- Bentley, Nick. "Re-Writing Englishness: Imagining the Nation in Julian Barnes's *England, England* and Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*." *Textual Practice*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2007, pp. 483-504.

Week 3 (23 January): Sites of Memory

Required Reading

- Buckley-Zistel, Susanne. "Tracing the politics of aesthetics: From imposing, via counter to affirmative memorials to violence." *Memory Studies*, vol. 14, no. 4, 2021, pp. 781-796.

- Nora, Pierre. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire." *Representations*, no. 26, 1989, pp. 7-24.
- Bond, Lucy, et al. "Introduction: Memory on the Move." *Memory Unbound: Tracing the Dynamics of Memory Studies*, edited by Lucy Bond et al., 1st ed., Berghahn Books, 2017, pp. 1-26.
- Anderson, Benedict Richard O'Gorman. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, 2006. (see selection on Moodle)

Recommended Reading

- Hue-Tam Ho Tai. "Remembered Realms: Pierre Nora and French National Memory." History Cooperative.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. "Introduction: Inventing Traditions." *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge UP, 1998.
- Lowenthal, David. "Introduction." *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*. Cambridge UP, 1998.
- Martin, Michael S. Martin. "Settlement, Cultural Memory, and Sacred Sites: The Function of Place-Names within the Cherokee Wonder Stories" *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, vol. 31, no. 3-4, 2019, pp. 36-57.

Week 4 (30 January): Landscape and Memory

Required Reading

- Friel, Brian. *Translations*. Faber and Faber, 2000. (also online via UCL library)
- Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*, Ch 1-5 (available on Moodle).
- Yard, Jaime. "Taking Tea with Granddaddy Tough: Accessing the Affective Topography of Logging Poetry and Labour." *Emotion, Space and Society*, vol. 6, 2013, 54-62.

Recommended Reading

- Masalha, Nur. "Settler-Colonialism, Memoricide and Indigenous Toponymic Memory: The Appropriation of Palestinian Place Names by the Israeli State." *Journal of Holy Land and Palestine Studies*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2015, pp. 3-57
- Perreault, Tom. "Mining, meaning and memory in the Andes." *The Geographical Journal*, vol. 184, no. 3, 2018, pp. 229-241.
- Cater, Tara, and Arn Keeling. "'That's Where Our Future Came from': Mining, Landscape, and Memory in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut." *Études/Inuit/Studies*, vol. 37, no. 2, 2013, pp. 59-82.

Week 5 (6 February): Deconstructing Memory

Required Reading

- Hicks, Dan. *The Brutish Museums: The Benin Bronzes, Colonial Violence and Cultural Restitution*. Pluto Press, 2020.

Recommended Reading

- Strother, Z.S. "Iconoclasm in Africa: Implications for the debate on restitution of cultural heritage." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, vol. 10, no. 3, 2020, pp. 928-952.
- Pugh, Cresa L. "The migration trajectory of the Benin Bronzes." *Migration Studies*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2022, pp. 274-282.
- Abungu, George Okello. "Victims or victors: Universal museums and the debate on return and restitution, Africa's perspective." In Alice Stevenson (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Museum Archaeology*, Oxford Handbooks, 2022.

- Paquette, Jonathan. "France and the restitution of cultural goods: the Sarr-Savoy report and its reception," *Cultural Trends*, vol. 29, no. 4, 2020, pp. 302-316.

Week 6 (No Class): Reading Break

- No readings

Week 7 (20 February): War and the Holocaust

Required Reading

- Celan, Paul. *Selected Poetry and Prose* (selections to be posted on Moodle)
- Balaev, Michelle. "Trauma Theory." *A Companion to Literary Theory*, edited by David H. Richter. John Wiley and Sons, 2018
- Balaev, Michelle. "Trends in Literary Trauma Theory." *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal*, vol. 41, no. 2, 2008, pp. 149–66.

Recommended Reading

- Huysen, Andreas. "Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia." *Public Culture*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2000, pp. 21-38.
- Levy, Daniel and Natan Sznajder "Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory." *European Journal of Social Theory*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2002, pp.87-106.
- Engdahl, Horace. "Philomela's Tongue: Introductory Remarks on Witness Literature." *Witness Literature*, World Scientific, 2002.
- Huysen, Andreas. "Monuments and Holocaust Memory in a Media Age." *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*. Routledge.
- See media links available on Moodle

Week 8 (27 February): Slavery and Selective Memory

Required Reading

- Hartman, Saidiya. *Lose Your Mother: A Journey on the Atlantic Slave Route*.

Recommended Reading

- See multimedia links on Moodle

Week 9 (5 March): Anthropocene Trauma

Required Reading

- Ghosh, Amitav. "Part I: Stories." *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*, University of Chicago Press, 2016.
- Cunsolo, Ashlee. "Climate Change as the Work of Mourning." *Mourning Nature: Hope at the Heart of Ecological Loss and Grief*, edited by Ashlee Cunsolo and Karen Landman, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017, pp. 169–89.
- Craps, Stef. "Climate Change and the Art of Anticipatory Memory." *Parallax*, vol. 23, no. 4, 2017, pp. 479-492, DOI: 10.1080/13534645.2017.1374518

Recommended Reading

- Albrecht, Glenn. "Negating Solastalgia: An Emotional Revolution from the Anthropocene to Symbiocene." *American Imago*, vol.77, no.1, 2020, pp.9-30.
- Clark, Timothy. "Ecological Grief and Anthropocene Horror." *American Imago*, vol. 77, no. 1, 2020, pp. 61-80.

- Kaplan, E. Ann. "Introduction: Pretrauma Imaginaries: Theoretical Frames." *Climate Trauma: Foreseeing the Future in Dystopian Film and Fiction*, Rutgers University Press, 2016, pp. 1–22.
- Liedeke Plate. Climate Change and the Metamorphosis of Memory: A Response to Stef Craps, *Parallax*, vol. 23, no. 4, 2017, pp. 493-497.

Week 10 (12 March): Essay Workshop

Recommended Reading

- Taylor, Gordon. "Part I: Reflection and Research." *A Student's Writing Guide: How to Plan and Write Successful Essays*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009.
- Headrick, Paul. "Chapter 4: Argument Structure." *The Wiley Guide to Writing Essays about Literature*, John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2013.
- Turley, R.M. "Chapter 6: Improving Your Style." *Writing Essays: A Guide for Students in English and the Humanities*. Routledge, 2015.

Week 11 (19 March): Memory, Exile, Nostalgia

Required Reading

- Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*

Recommended Reading

- Said, Edward. "Chapter 17: Reflections on Exile." *Reflections on Exile and Other Literary and Cultural Essays*. Granta, 2002.
- Rushdie, Salman. "Chapter 1: Imaginary Homelands 'Errata' the Riddle of Midnight." *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism*. Granta, 1992.
- Esbenshade, Richard S. "Remembering to Forget: Memory, History, National Identity in Postwar East-Central Europe." *Representations*, no. 49, 1995, pp.72–96.

UCL Attendance Policy

The following is adapted from the [UCL Academic Manual](http://ucl.ac.uk), available at ucl.ac.uk: Programmes of study at UCL are designed to ensure your learning is optimised and you have successful outcomes. Attendance at all scheduled teaching events is the best way to ensure you achieve your potential and to support your engagement and wellbeing. We recognise, however, that there are times when you may have to miss one or more teaching events (for example, because of illness). In this module, teaching events are mandatory. You must attend at least 8 out of 10 teaching events. Any additional undocumented absences will be reflected in your overall grade.

It is important that you attend teaching events punctually so as not to disrupt the learning of others. For some subjects, it will be vital that you arrive on time so that you are present for information that may be given at the start of a session, for example, health and safety instructions.

If you are an Undergraduate student, you must meet the minimum attendance requirements during UCL Term Times. Outside of term-time, there is no requirement for students to be present on campus or to notify absence.

RegisterUCL is UCL's attendance recording system and is linked to your timetable. You will need to register your attendance at each teaching event you attend, even where you have back-to-back events in the same room. You will be marked 'absent' if you do not register your attendance sometime in the window of 20 minutes before to 20 minutes after the timetabled start of a scheduled teaching event. Please keep your student ID card safe and always carry your ID

card with you while on UCL premises. As well as providing proof of identity and controlling access to UCL buildings, this ensures that you can record your attendance at all timetabled sessions.

I will pass around an attendance sheet at the start of each class to serve as a back-up record.

Student Support

UCL has a comprehensive set of student supports available online at ucl.ac.uk → Students → Support and Wellbeing. Please take particular note of the following:

Disabilities – UCL is an inclusive learning environment and aims to enable all students to study as independently as possible during their time here. A variety of adjustments, reasonable accommodations, and supports to suit your needs are available. For those who would like to explore these options, we recommend registering with the Disability, Mental Health and Wellbeing team (DMHW) so that personalised support can be provided in a timely manner.

Wellness – Academic pressure and the particular challenges of living in or commuting to London can take a toll on our mental health and wellbeing. UCL offers a suite of support services specifically designed to help students excel at their studies even in challenging times and we urge you to explore these options.