

**Code: BMI-FLMD-322E.13**

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**Course title: Cultural Politics of Violence and Magical Realism**

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**Course convener:** Basak Ergün

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**Class time and place:** Monday 16:00-17.30, Múzeum krt. 6-8, 2nd floor, room 251

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**Course type:** Seminar

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**Course content:** At first the course provides a biographical survey focusing on of the early career of the founding fathers of Hollywood, the first studio-moguls, who were all immigrants with East-European roots. Later we discuss the silent area, the first three decades of the American cinema and we also make an attempt to find connections between the personal taste, cultural background of the first Studio-owners: the founders of Paramount, MGM, Universal, Fox, Warner Bros., Columbia - and the style, topics, genres of the films used to be made in accordance with these people's strategical decisions.

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**Requirements:**

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**Learning outcomes and methods:** Magical Realism has different and even contradictory definitions since it has been initially developed in 1920s as an art form in Europe. Despite the conceptual problems, currently, it is widely used not only in fiction, but also in poetry, different forms of arts and in cinema. Since Alejo Carpentier in 1940s declared that the marvelous was to be found exclusively in Latin America, Magical Realism was defined as a means of expressing the authentic Latin American mentality and developing an autonomous literature.

Though currently not practiced solely in Latin America but also in other places of the world-especially in post-colonial countries- magical realism was also approached as a genre that comes into being at politically violent and chaotic places. Some scholar and critics emphasized the issues of violence, trauma, and its effects on literature and magical realism was described as an escape from a violent reality, or as re-describing the violence in a 'fantastical imaginary'. Magical realism is also argued by other scholars to have the potential to challenge the official histories by 'countermemories that work in different temporal structures.' During this course with an interdisciplinary approach, the students are expected to gain an understanding of:

The historical, geographical, cultural and political contexts within which the genre has developed.

Differences between 'magic/magical/marvelous' realism, natural/supernatural, and the relationship and distinctions of magical realism from other genres such as fantastic, surrealism and such.

The relationship of magical realism to issues of post colonialism, cultural politics, development, and modernism/postmodernism.

Alternative modernities different than the mainstream discourses of sociology of 'modernization' and the economics of 'development,' and the aesthetics of modernism, especially focusing on Latin America.

The themes of magic/supernatural, carnivalisque, carnival celebration of body, dance as resistance, cyclical time understanding, importance and tradition of storytelling in these cultures, magical realism as a form of belonging strategy, authorship and right to have a voice of its own as a resistance to colonial/Eurocentric labeling.

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**Indicative Reading:**

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