

Course Title: In-between Apocalypse and Promised land: Culture and Politics of Emotions

Course Code: BMI-FLMD-322E:09

Instructor: Basak Ergun

Course meets: every 2-3 weeks – the exact dates will be communicated Friday 15.00-17.00 room -135

Course type: Seminar

Course description:

We can list variety of emotions: fear, rage, envy, disgust, love, joy, happiness and many others. And also we can make groupings with these emotions such as basic emotions, aesthetic emotions, nationalist emotions, religious, political emotions and many others. The point in this course in relation with 'affect theories' is to understand and study how various emotions shape both culture and politics. Even to understand how emotions themselves become a source of cultural and political knowledge.

Affect studies have grown out of different academic fields and recently been extended to many other disciplines such as culture studies, psychoanalysis, phenomenology, political science, media studies etc. Affect studies investigate how the emotional responses are formulated both on the individual and community levels. "Politics of feelings/emotions" is an attempt to explore how affect mediates between individual and collective levels of subjectivisation and identification, creates action.

Among many varieties of emotions this course specifically will focus on 'fear and anger', 'pain' as strongly influential emotions affecting current political, social movements and relations. Especially since we are living within an increased pace of war, terror and ordinary criminality currently, the primary emotions/feelings underling the current situation and political actions seem to be centered around 'fear and anger' and inescapably 'pain'. May be just like Frederic Jameson stated as "history is what hurts," the twentieth century (and the twentieth-first Century) has been a history of pain.

On the other side, even paradoxically, we also live in an era of 'promised happiness'. We are living in between a real land of fear and pain from where we are supposed to escape and an illusionary promised land where we are supposed to rush into. Or even if can't escape it, we have to stay blind, deaf and numb, sedated and tranquilized but at the same continuously turned into wounded and vulnerable subjects by therapy culture. While talking about affect and subjectivities, it is impossible not to examine the 'experience of modernity'. Does it make sense to understand modernity as an experience and different kind's emotions and feelings?