

Contemporary European Cinema and Television Drama



Teacher: Professor Andrew Higson (University of York, UK)

Date: 27. – 29. 3. 2017

Times: 27.3. 12.30 – 15.45 / 28.3. 15.50 – 19.05 / 29.3. 12.30 – 15.45

Room: 429

Coordinator: Mgr. Jindřiška Bláhová, Ph.D.

(contact email for registration and inquiries jindriska.blahova@ff.cuni.cz)

This module will explore current trends in cinema and television drama in Europe, focusing on the last ten years. It will build on the work of the MeCETES research project led by Andrew Higson (www.mecetes.co.uk). We will examine what sorts of films and television drama programmes get made in different countries across Europe, and their production circumstances; we will consider which films and television drama programmes actually travel beyond their national boundaries, and why; and will study how different European audiences engage with and make sense of the European films and television drama programmes available to them.

The module will consist of three sessions, across three days:

1. Cinema and television drama in contemporary Europe:
 - a. Introduction to the module
 - b. Approaches to film and television studies and research methodologies
 - c. Ideas of national cinema, transnationalism and globalisation
 - d. The idea of Europe
 - e. The film and television industries in Europe, and national and European audio-visual policies

- f. What sorts of films and television drama get made in contemporary Europe, and what actually travels beyond national borders
2. Case studies of specific types of European film and TV drama and the extent to which they travel:
 - a. Big budget English-language film and TV drama (e.g. James Bond, Harry Potter, *Downton Abbey*)
 - b. Nordic/Scandi quality television drama (e.g. *Forbrydelsen/The Killing*)
 - c. Art-house film (e.g. *Ida*)
 - d. Small national film productions that don't travel far outside domestic market
 - e. Film and television production and distribution in the Czech Republic (group presentations by students)
 3. Film and television audiences in Europe:
 - a. How can we find out about and understand film and television audiences?
 - b. Who watches what and why?
 - c. What do audiences think of non-national European films and television drama programmes?
 - d. The globalisation of taste versus local variations in reception, engagement and interpretation.
 - e. Film and television audiences in the Czech Republic (group presentations by students)

Student requirements

1. All students need to watch the following films and television drama in advance of the module:
 - *Spectre* (Director: Sam Mendes, UK/US, 2015) – James Bond film
 - *Ida* (Director: Paweł Pawlikowski, Poland, 2013) – art-house film
 - *Forbrydelsen/The Killing* (Creator: Søren Sveistrup, for DR, Denmark, 2007-2012) – Nordic noir television drama – watch at least the first episode
2. All students to read the following in advance of the module:
 - Andrew Higson, 'The limiting imagination of national cinema', in Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden, eds., *Transnational Cinema: The Film Reader*, Routledge, 2006, pp. 15-26 (first published in Mette Hjort and Scott MacKenzie, eds., *Cinema and Nation*, Routledge, 2000). (Or Andrew Higson, 'The concept of national cinema'...)
 - Something produced by MeCETES, to be decided
3. All students to undertake research in small groups of 3-4 people between sessions, and present their findings in a brief presentation in the next session.

4. All students to work in small groups of 3-4 people to produce a 1500-word essay on the subject of their presentation (or a related topic).

Possible group work topics:

1. Analysis of non-national European films and TV drama that has shown successfully in the Czech Republic in recent years.
2. Case study of a recent CZ film that has done well in CZ and perhaps travelled to one or two neighbouring countries.
3. The involvement of the Czech film industry in European co-productions.
4. Audience research – undertake a focus group or an online survey, with friends/family – what non-national films and television drama do they watch and why; how do they watch it (at the cinema, on television, online, on DVD).
5. Analysis of CZ film and TV policy.