Syllabus

Title of the Course: IED 6/743  Comparative Novel
Instructor: Prof. Dr. SERPIL OPPERMANN
Year and Term: Spring 2016
Classroom and Hours: Seminar Room, Monday 13.00-16.50
Office Hours: Monday 10.00-11.30

Aim and Content:

This course focuses on the emerging genre of climate change fiction (known as “Cli-Fi”) comparing the cultural and social contexts in which selected American, British, and Turkish novels deal with pressing environmental problems. In a way we will be comparing “the cultures of climate change” (Stephanie LeMenager) and the Anthropocene epoch in exploring how different cultures respond to the severity of the global ecological crises. In responding to the fragility of ecosystems and the biological environments increasingly devastated by human practices, such as the use of pesticides, fracking, global pollution, and overconsumption of natural resources, the novels themselves aim to raise ecological awareness. They dramatize the ecological effects of human-induced alterations of the planet’s life-support systems. One of the questions we will address in analyzing the novels is, whether fictional texts from different cultural backgrounds offer new ways for thinking about climate change and other environmental issues. In other words, when scientific facts are slow to reach the public awareness, can eco-fiction succeed in changing our relations with the environments? Ecocritics and the environmental humanities scholars repeatedly argue that what “we need now are stories and characters that connect us to these facts—perhaps even without us knowing it at first—in ways that inspire lasting change and have the power to change our worldview” (John Yunker). Yunker also states that “writing acts as a mirror, reflecting our culture, our time and place in history. Yet writing can also influence culture, nudge it forward, or redefine it entirely.” Dan Bloom, who coined and popularized the term “cli-fi,” also contends quoting Steve Masover (a cli-fi novelist) that “literature and film play a critical role in shaping human understanding of real world issues and solutions, and that changes in human understanding drive changes in social organization and behavior.” Such claims will be discussed in detail while we analyze the novels within broader scientific, theoretical, and political debates about climate change and specifically about the scientifically and culturally debated question of the Anthropocene epoch. In doing so we will compare the novels’ stylistic conventions in addressing the issue of how their different cultural forms as well as the conventions they are written in shape the ways people see, understand, and relate to the world.

Course Outline:

2. [http://www.sdjewishworld.com/2016/01/14/66609/](http://www.sdjewishworld.com/2016/01/14/66609/)
Week I-III: Introducing Cli-Fi genre


Online Sources:
https://sites.temple.edu/clifi/
Ian Sample: "Anthropocene: Is this the new Epoch of Humans?"
Robert Macfarlane: "The Burning Question."
http://www.theguardian.com/books/2005/sep/24/featuresreviews.guardianreview29
Rodge Glass: "Global Warning: The Rise of Cli-Fi"
http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/may/31/global-warning-rise-cli-fi
Climate Change Fiction: http://blogs.uoregon.edu/eng104/

Week IV-VI: Introducing the Anthropocene Narratives


**Week VII-XIV:** Discussions of novels:

Jeanette Winterson - *Stone Gods*
Liz Jensen - *The Rapture*
Marcel Theroux - *Far North*
John Burnside - *Glister*
Maggie Gee - *The Ice People*
Buket Uzuner - *Water*
Yaşar Kemal - *The Birds Have Also Gone*
Latife Tekin - *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills*
Nathaniel Rich - *Odds Against Tomorrow*
JL. Morin - *Nature’s Confession*
Saci Lloyd - *It’s the End of the World as We Know It*
Richard Powers - *Gain*
Peter Heller - *The Dog Stars*
Karen Tei Yamashita - *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest*
Ruth Ozeki - *My Year Of Meats*
Morgan Llywelyn – *The Elementals*
Yann Martel – *Beatrice and Virgil*
Raymond Federman – *Return to Manure*
Stephen Baxter – *Ark*
L.T. Gibbons – *Project Ark*

**Useful Links:**


THE "Cli-Fi" REPORT: 50+ academic & media links: [http://cli-fi.net](http://cli-fi.net)

A NEW "Cli-Fi" (10 + 8) *Must-Read* Reading List for College Students, Academics: [http://northwardho.blogspot.tw/2015/12/a-cli-fi-10-8-must-read-reading-list.html](http://northwardho.blogspot.tw/2015/12/a-cli-fi-10-8-must-read-reading-list.html)
Welcome to first day of 406 A.D., (anthropocenus deflexus) since Anthropocene began 1610. 
http://northwardho.blogspot.tw/2015/12/this-era-is-no-longer-jesus-dated-anno.html

Italian professor of eco-criticism explains about current status of "Cli-fi" in Italy now 

“Imagining Climate Change: Science & Fiction in Dialogue”-February 17–18, 2016- University of Florida 
https://imagining-climate.clas.ufl.edu/spring-2016-colloquium/

Blog archives Cli-Fi classes worldwide: http://pcillu101.blogspot.com

Method of Instruction : lectures and student presentations

Requirements: Attendance is compulsory. More than 12 hours of absence will result in F1 Each student is obliged to read every text listed in this course. The students are expected to study the critical writings and offer critical approaches informed by their ideas in their papers. The focus will be mainly on analyzing the novels in their light. The students are responsible for preparing critical papers on the novels drawing on the ideas presented in scientific and theoretical texts, reflecting on the problematic relationship human and more-than-human forces, and environments.

Method of Assessment: Students are to write ONE major argumentative essay of about 15 pages (Term Paper) with a comparative critical approach of 2 novels of their choice which aims to test their abilities to respond critically to the novels. Students are also to produce class presentations of the listed texts every week. They are expected to attend lectures and participate in class discussions. The aim here is to encourage close attention to the texts and open up lively discussions.

The final assessment will be made on the following basis:

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Written Term Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Position/Response Papers and Presentations</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Texts to be studied as supplementary material.