

Contents list available at Cib.Unibo

AlmaTourism

homepage: almatourism.cib.unibo.it

Exploring the Mediterranean Sea Between Modernity and Post-Modernity. An Intensive Summer School in Slovenia

Bagnaresi, D. *
University of Bologna (Italy)

The Summer School was carried out in Koper/Capodistria, Slovenia by Univerza na Primorskem, Fakulteta za Humanistične, Študije Koper (Primorska University – Faculty of Humanities of Koper) from 5th to 16th July 2010. It was mainly committed to explore – as specified by the title of the event – «the Mediterranean Sea Between Modernity and Post-Modernity», focusing especially on places, cultures and aesthetics.

The project, supported by both the European Commission (General Directory of Education and Culture) and Slovenian Administration, is part of an educational proposal that has been developed in the last years by the most important European academic institutions. Its main goal is to create a network among european faculties and non-academic research institutes of the same geographical and cultural area. The aim of the summer school META Humanities 2010 was “to present similarities and differences within the contemporary Mediterranean space, drawing attention to the specific features of different Mediterranean spaces, places, cultures, languages, memories, identities, aesthetics and ethics, and showing the unity and the universality thereof were the starting points used by several researchers coming from different Mediterranean countries (Spain, Slovenia and Italy)”.

Three courses were organized to develop three different educational paths: “Modernity and Postmodernity: Aesthetic and Ethic”, “Space, Memory, Identity”, and “Authors and discourses between modernity and postmodernity”.

The 1st Course approached the post-modern aesthetics and the ethical relativism in Mediterranean cultures from the general perspective of global processes through a series of reports, lectures and discussions: Ethics and Aesthetics of the Artwork: Understanding others through art; Sentimentality, Immoralism and Almodóvar; Models for the Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature; Transculturality, Transart: the Contemporary Structure of Culture and Art; Theory and/of Art in the age of Media and Globalization; Modern Utopia and Postmodern Utopistics.

The 2nd Course was committed to investigate the dynamic and often problematic relations between culture and space through an interdisciplinary collaboration among history, geography, and anthropology. The social and epistemological aspects of “the late modernity” provides a common ground of analysis in which a series of reports, lectures and discussions

* E-mail address: davide.bagnaresi2@unibo.it

were articulated: Local, National and Imperial: the Cosmopolitan legacies of the Mediterranean Cities; Have we (Mediterraneans) ever been «modern»?; Deconstructing the Myth: Partisan Cultures in Slovenia, Istria, and Trieste; Images and perceptions of the Eastern shore of the Adriatic and of the Balkan region; The Sense of Place: a Semiotic Perspective for the Study of Space, Identity and Memory; An historical, comparative analysis of the relationship between Guidebooks and both the national heritage in Germany and Italy, 1800-2000, and the local identity in Republic of San Marino. The course, divided into two general thematic parts, was particularly concerned to either social or spatial (landscape) aspects of the case-study. The former scrutinized the constructions of social identities and “their territories” as relics of modernity which insist in the Mediterranean areas of linguistic, ethnic, national, and cultural interlacing. The latter investigated the change of Mediterranean cultural landscapes, landscape uses, memories, and identities. It is well known that Mediterranean territories are particularly vulnerable to the conflicts triggered by both geographical borders and the signification of the territory. We thus explored the relations and the differences between different “cultures (i.e. attitudes toward) of space”, as for example: the “cultures” of capital, tourism, environmentalism, local communities, that is the “cultures” of diverse users and managers of space.

The 3rd Course “Authors and discourses between modernity and post-modernity” focused on topics related to language as well as literature and other artistic practices that mark the shift from modernity to post-modernity and the new cultural constructions of the Mediterranean. Some topics were: Beyond and Behind a «Love Song»; Reading Metaphors of the Sea in Nietzsche’s «Thus Spoke Zarathustra»; Mental Map of the Eastern Europe and its Cultural Stigmata; Advertising and Postmodernism; The prose of Italo Calvino: the postmodern characteristics; Authorship in electronic media.

The courses were complemented by in-depth round tables discussions, museums visits, movies and workshops. Students had also the opportunity of guided visits to the arts and crafts of Istria, a region that is full of history and culture.

This successful experience shows that the creation of international networks is an imperative for many universities, especially for a country like Slovenia, whose historical, cultural and artistic wealth has yet to be discovered and acknowledged by the rest of the European Community.