EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Relation of workshop to research project

The workshop brought together already identified members of a proposed collaborative research project on the topic of ‘Europe in Cinema, Cinema in Europe’ (from universities in Italy, UK, Sweden and Belarus) together with additional scholars from a wider range of countries (working in Italy, UK, Sweden, Belarus, France, Netherlands, Portugal, Lithuania, Turkey).

The ‘core’ project members met before the start of the workshop to firm up its objectives in relation to the proposed project: namely, to identify research partners, to draw up a list of research questions, to agree on appropriate research methodologies, and to define research outputs.

It was agreed that the final project meeting at the close of the workshop would be open to all participants. The Scientific Organiser and Convenor presented to this final meeting their proposals for research questions and methodologies, resulting from the discussion sessions over the past 3 days, and these were further refined and agreed by general discussion. Agreement was also reached on establishing a long-term communications network and on publication resulting from the workshop.

A proposal for funding was submitted to ESF by the Scientific Organiser, Prof Luisa Passerini, by the 4 November 2005 deadline, and has been registered with the reference number 05-PGM-069.

Attendance

Unfortunately, the ESF representative Professor Ian Bakos was not able to come. Since we were not given advance notice of this, the cost of his accommodation and catering has been invoiced to ESF, as originally requested.

Illness also prevented the following from attending: Professor Bo Strath (European University Institute, Florence); Professor Ian Christie (Birkbeck College, London), Professor Yosefa Loshitzkty (University of East London, due to attend only as a participant in general discussion). Prof Strath was replaced as Chair of Panel 4 by Prof Ousmanova. The summary of the Saturday’s discussion was given by Dr Wilson, replacing Prof Christie.

Brief summary of workshop objectives

The aim of the workshop was to investigate the connection between cinema and ongoing processes of European identification. It was based on three linked assumptions. First, that, in today’s multicultural and globalised world, there is a need to investigate a new sense of belonging to Europe. Second, that cinema is a privileged medium for studying the new ways of feeling European, since it operates through
techniques of identification. Third, that an approach grounded in the history of subjectivity can offer new insights. Within this framework the workshop set out to consider the ways in which cinema functions as an experimental laboratory for exploring and testing new models of transnational and multicultural European identity. Key topics proposed for discussion were questions of generation, gender and ethnicity, and their intersection to produce complex forms of subjectivity in which identification may be multiple, and in which allegiance to the nation-state may coexist with other local or wider loyalties.

The two strands of the workshop title were intended to encourage discussion of: (i) Europe as a fantasy space that has real emotional consequences for its viewers (Europe in Cinema); and (ii) the shaping of new images and symbols that are crucial to future political and social cohesion (Cinema in Europe).

Structure of workshop

The workshop comprised four panels, each followed by a 10-minute response from a designated respondent and one hour of discussion. Each day’s events were followed by a summary of key issues, leading to further discussion.

On the Friday afternoon, the panel ‘Memories of Europe’ explored the role of memory in creating a feeling of belonging to Europe, noting that, in many cases, the memory has been a painful recollection of war and ruins. Between them, the speakers discussed films from Denmark, France, Poland, Hungary, Portugal, Greece and Austria.

On the Saturday morning, the panel ‘Love and Hate’ examined the ways in which films can work out feelings of belonging or exclusion, thus constructing a ‘we’ that may be inclusive or exclusive. Speakers discussed films from Russia, Italy, UK, Spain, France and Turkey.

The Saturday afternoon panel ‘Spaces of Encounter’ looked at the relation between place and identification, through spaces of encounter. This involved exploration of feelings evoked by the representation of specific landscapes and urban locations, paying special attention to films that undertake a journey across Europe’s diverse geography. Films discussed were from Italy, Greece, Spain, UK. This panel also included one broad theoretical paper.

On Saturday evening, participants attended and discussed a screening of Visions of Europe: 25 Shorts by 25 Directors (2004, coordinated by the Danish director Lars von Trier).

The Sunday morning panel ‘Transcultural Identities’ explored the mobile and plural nature of transcultural identities and identifications, resulting both from the displacement or migration of individuals and groups, and from new practices of consumption which bind Europe into global networks. Speakers discussed films from Italy, Sweden, France, Lithuania, Poland, including films by immigrant directors from outside or elsewhere in Europe.
Panel 1: Memories of Europe

Liliana Ellena’s paper ‘From the ruins of history to the memories of Europe: contradictory trends in European cinema after 1989’ noted two intersecting trends. First, an exploration of the ruins of history, which at the same time adopts a European rather than national perspective. Second, the focus on a visual geography of Europe constructed via the memories of subjects or spaces often not considered as fully European. This was analysed in relation to a range of films which ‘europeanise’ the representation of the Holocaust, with particular reference to the notion that Europe is beset both by forgetting and by an excess of history.

Maria Rovisco’s paper aimed to set out two typologies of European ‘films of voyage’: one which presents Europe as a space of conflict and exclusion; another which constructs an image of Europe as a space of tolerance and inclusion. In both, the role of the foreigner tended to be crucial in defining what was seen as European, while at the same time the opposition between the European and the foreign was complicated or blurred. She argued that such films raise issues about whether the principles of solidarity, peace, democracy, social justice and humanism can be seen – as they often have been – as intrinsically European.

Dina Iordanova considered the representation of the Holocaust in films from Eastern Europe, focusing particularly on Polish and Hungarian films from the 1960s which have received limited distribution within Europe, but which need to be inserted within a pan-European framework. She focused particularly on films which deal with perpetrator memories. She was particularly interested in how the use of flashback structures articulated a particular attitude to history.

Christa Blümlinger explored the use of film in an experimental art installation which juxtaposes the first-person accounts of 25 migrants to or within Europe, filmed in extreme close-up. She argued that the interactive nature of the installation, as spectators move around to create their own narrative combinations, creates an atlas based on the notions of mobility and displacement, whereby identity is replaced by a mosaic of fragments.

The respondent, Dr Florin, picked up the interrelation of memory and war, and asked whether the Holocaust in some ways functioned as a screen memory screening out other memories. He asked about the memories of countries that did not fight in the two World Wars, and reminded us that we should always ask whose memories are being represented. He also asked in what ways the European road movie differs from the US road movie.

The discussion raised the issue of whether the focus on the Holocaust was in some ways screening out memories of European colonialism. The importance of analysing the forms of narration used was noted, looking for example, at repetitions and silences, and at the ways in micro-narratives intersect with macro-narratives. It was agreed that it was crucial to ask where a particular film was coming from geographically in Europe in order to be able to interpret the notion of Europeanness represented in it. It was suggested that it was important to look at how films represent the dead in Europe. It was also noted that it is important to distinguish between short-
term memory and long-term memory, the latter being more ideologically constructed. It was further noted that some things are so well remembered they don’t need to be represented. The discussion concluded by noting the importance of looking at the changes in the operation of European memory over the last 20 years.

Panel 2: Love and Hate

Almira Ousmanova noted that Russian literature has constructed an image of a ‘good’ Enlightenment Europe, whereas popular culture has constructed an image of a ‘bad’ Fascist Europe. She explored how this dichotomy has been inflected in post-1989 cinema, once Europe and Russia ceased to be political enemies. She focused on films of the 1990s which use their love plot to develop various strategies of communication with Europe, which she saw as falling into the two categories of disinterested love and profitable exchange.

Karen Diehl, in a talk covering films from a number of European countries, examined how the focus on emotion as a narrative motor allows the exploration of conflicted choices, producing a complex social commentary. She concentrated particularly on films that play with cinematic genre, filling the generic conventions with ‘perverse’ content, in order to express emotional ambivalence. What was at stake here was the interconnection between genre, narrative and desire, allowing European cinema to work out a ‘perverse’ relationship to Hollywood.

Lucy Mazdon again picked up the reworking of Hollywood in European film, focusing on the French film Western, where the American frontier is replaced by Brittany, as a ‘land’s end’ positioned on the edge of the nation and on the edge of Europe. She explored how this European road movie charts the travels of its Catalan and Russian protagonists in order to suggest that love functions as an anchor for identity, allowing the mapping of alternative family structures. She stressed that the film presents identity as always unfinished.

Nezih Erdogan explored two popular Turkish films, in the series based on the female protagonist Kesban, which show her as a female migrant first in Rome and then in Paris. He argued that that Kesban (a peasant’s name) is not only in these films negotiating her own relationship to Europe, but that she also functions for the viewer as a cipher of the Westernisation process, whereby Europe fulfils the role of object of desire. The paper also asked how the melodramatic plots based on chance might relate to a concept of Europe.

The response by Maria Rovisco picked up on the repeated motif of embodiment in the four papers, noting that as a visual medium the cinema is particular well placed to explore the ways in which emotions are embodied. The discussion raised the issue of how these films repeatedly construct Europe as an unattainable elsewhere, with Europe frequently being figured by a woman as the object of desire. We were reminded of the implications of this gendering of Europe, and of the importance of historicizing the trope of Europe as a woman (going back to the myth of Europa). It was also pointed out that we need to pay attention to male subjectivity. It was noted that Eastern European and Balkan cinema repeatedly insists on how we have to change our bodies to be acceptable to Europe. The importance of conducting close readings of cinematic texts was stressed, showing how form and
meaning are connected. It was also noted that the concepts of love and hate raised key issues about the relation between public and private. It was argued that we need to historicise love to avoid stereotypes; it was further noted that we need to historicise stereotypes. It was suggested that we should think of space not as something bounded but as an itinerary – space, like identity, being represented as something unfinished.

Panel 3: Spaces of Encounter

Thomas Elsaesser explored the notion of ‘double occupancy’ as an antidote to conceptions of ‘Fortress Europe’, but also as a way of avoiding notions of multiculturalism that fail to take into account the ethnicities of the European nation states. He argued that we should be sensitive to the ‘double occupancy’ involved in the historical trajectory of these national ethnicities, which cannot be opposed to some kind of ‘outside’ seen as the marker of difference. He argued that there is no such thing as a European who is not already diasporic and whose identity is not always already hyphenated or doubly occupied. This concept of ‘double occupancy’ needed to be conceived as a process of ‘mutual interference’. He suggested that we look to European cinema for an exploration of such mobile forms of subjectivity.

Giuseppe Lauricella proposed that the imaginary landscapes explored in the horror genre can be especially revealing of notions of belonging and exclusion. Tracing the relation of the European zombie movie to its Hollywood precedents, asking what European zombie films can tell us about a specifically European imaginary. He argued that, in pre-1989 European zombie movies, horror tends to invade the community from the outside or from the past (contrasting with the classic Hollywood zombie movie where horror lies within), whereas post-1989 European zombie movies show the coexistence of the living with the dead (but, unlike classic Hollywood zombie movies, they replace nihilism with love).

Jo Labanyi’s paper examined a number of films in which foreigners travel to Spain, or Spaniards travel to other parts of Europe. Focusing on one UK and one Spanish film in which foreigners travel to Spain in the Civil War, she noted how the UK film constructs Spain as a place where ‘history matters’, while, for the Spanish film, history and hope are located in the US. Thus history is depicted as an ‘elsewhere’. She then discussed two Spanish films where the characters travel to Finland and Paris respectively, the journey in each case allowing them to recover a blocked private past. She argued that this suggests that Spaniards are interested in Europe primarily as a resource for constructing their own identities.

In his response, Tim Bergfelder asked how the various films discussed might serve as distractions from thinking about other anxieties – this tied up with the earlier suggestion that films about the Holocaust might be serving to block discussion of colonialism.

The discussion suggested that it may not be only in the Spanish case that the idea of Europe is seen as a resource for the construction of local identities, rather than as a common heritage. There was further probing of the differences between the Hollywood and European horror movie. It was agreed that questions of genre would be important in the proposed research project. It would be important to establish what places were seen as an ‘elsewhere’ to Europe, and what values and desires were located in these ‘other’ spaces.
Panel 4: Transcultural Identities

Enrica Capussotti’s paper explored a number of Italian films about migrants which illustrate the encounter of different temporalities, which are shown to coexist within the same time frame. Time is thus shown not to be linear but to be mobile (just as the journeys in space are multiple and not one-way). The collapsing of time and space can, however, be problematic, as in the tendency to regard the periphery of Europe (in this case, the Mediterranean) as Europe’s past – viewed through the lens of nostalgia. The Mediterranean was proposed as a privileged site for exploring the coevalness of different temporalities.

Emma Wilson focused on films about children forced to relocate, stressing their representation of the materiality of migration, and the importance of sensory impact. In this respect, she noted the connection between the terms ‘motion’ and ‘emotion’. She analysed the use of mobile camerawork to envelop the viewer in the details of materiality, fusing motion and sensory impact.

Nerijus Milerius noted that some regions of Europe (e.g. Lithuania) resist mapping, pointing to the contradiction between geographical descriptions of Vilnius as being the central point of Europe and imaginary representations of it as a primitive zone on the edge of civilization. While Lithuanian cinema firmly positions Lithuania within civilization, a tension nevertheless remains through the tendency to focus on the rural landscape.

Astrid Söderberg Widding’s paper examined recent Swedish cinema by immigrant directors from outside Europe or from another European country. She noted that the emergence of such films coincides with the return of religion as a topic in recent Swedish cinema. She stressed that in some cases Swedish characters are represented as sharing the status of outsider or stranger.

The respondent Nezih Erdogan raised the issue in these films of the flow of commodities and the role of material objects in defining Europeanness. He noted the recurrence of water as a metaphor of fluidity, in films that went beyond the opposition between mobility and situatedness to illustrate multiple, changing positionalities.

The discussion stressed the need to go beyond the tradition/modernity dichotomy which tends to divide Europe into bits, rather than stressing their coevalness. It was again noted that it was important to think about the gendering of Europeanness, as a desire by whom for whom (or what). The question was asked, ‘What Europe are we seeing?’ It was suggested that we should look at the ways in which representations of Europe may be misrecognitions. It was noted that expatriate migration is often conceived as a way of recovering a lost past (by settling in an ‘undeveloped’ country). It was stressed that we should look at the body as smoothing that is gendered, and that has a particular age. It was suggested that it would be productive to look at European spaces as areas of exchange, replacing the binary ‘self/other’ with the notion of ‘subjects in transition’. Nonetheless, it was noted that we need to recognize the historical usage of binary dichotomies, while questioning them. It was important here to make use of cinematic gaze theory: are we shown the gaze of an insider or of an outsider? It was noted that it is not always easy to identify who is insider and who is outsider, and that such grey areas are important areas of investigation.
ASSESSMENT OF THE RESULTS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE FIELD

The one-hour discussion slots allowed after each panel proved extremely fruitful, allowing the papers to serve as a platform for the elaboration of broader ideas. Over the course of the three days, certain recurrent issues became identified as key areas to be explored in the future research project.

It was agreed by all participants that the discussion had been a genuine exchange, with everyone – regardless of age or status – participating on an equal basis. It was felt that this provided a very good basis on which to build a collaborative project. The agreement to set up a listserv so that all participants could remain in contact was unanimous (this has been set up at the University of Southampton under the address ec-ce@lists.soton.ac.uk).

It having been agreed to open the final project meeting to all, this was collapsed with the preceding round table, allowing a substantial space for final discussion. This space was used to identify and reach consensus on (first) the key areas for future academic investigation, and (second) the structure, scope, methodology and outputs of the future project.

The key areas for investigation were agreed as follows:

- Subjectivities/intersubjectivity as processes of exchange
- Subjects in transition
- Identification as process rather than identity as a thing/possession
- Europe as a desire (of whom for whom/what? how is this gendered?)
- Materiality and belonging/exclusion (bodies, sensory perception, material objects/goods as signifiers of Europeanness or non-Europeanness)
- What bodies/objects are acceptable/abject/strange? The politics of the body
- Gendering of the body (need to think beyond heterosexual paradigms)
- Age/generational specificities
- Importance of class (as something negotiated but also a labelling process)
- Geographical areas as systems of exchange rather than bounded entities; the politics of location
- Landscapes/citiscapes (relation between city/countryside)
- Multiple positionalities (Europe means different things depending on where in Europe one is situated, and on how one is situated within that space)
- Multiple temporalities (may be shifting and overlapping but always coeval)
- Question binary oppositions but also show how they have been used historically
- Historicize the ways in which stereotypes have been used
- Historicize how the operations of memory have changed over the period studied
- Whose gaze? (narrative point of view, insider/outsider gaze; shifting point of view)
- Genre (and of its complication/disruption by perverse content)
- Importance of popular cinema (different kinds of ambivalence in popular and art cinema)
- Intersection of private/public discourses/memories; micro/macro histories
- Role of the dead/inheritance in the present/future
• Short-term/long-term memory
• Europe as unattainable (utopian) project – an elsewhere
• What is home?
• Love as anchoring process or as quest
• Multilingualism; its relation to ‘double occupancy and mutual interference’
• Which Europe(s) are we seeing? Importance of misrecognition/ (mis)appropriation
• Europe as resource or as shared heritage/community?

The structure and scope of the project were agreed as follows:
• Three research groups each with a team leader, focusing respectively on memories, love/hate, and space. The groups would work under one overall project leader (Luisa Passerini)
• Focus on post-1989 European cinema but take into account the links with earlier periods.

The following was agreed with regard to methodology and outputs:
• Bring in further disciplines, beyond those represented at the workshop (e.g. anthropology, psychology).
• Combine textual analysis with other forms of cultural analysis
• Include some oral history work with audiences for European film
• Draw up and circulate a shared filmography
• Consider multimedia in addition to print outputs
• Develop teaching materials emerging from the project
• Possibly hold a summer school related to the project
• Use the listserv to share information re. individual projects; to build up a common filmography; to share information re. relevant films that might be added to the corpus; to firm up publication plans.

It was agreed that Luisa Passerini would liaise with core members to the team to draft a project proposal to ESF, which would be circulated to all those present to finalize structure and membership.

To summarize the above: thanks to the substantial space allocated for discussion, we feel that the workshop not only created a network of people who want to go on working together, but that is also moved forward debates on the changing nature of European identity – particularly by allowing an understanding of identity as being in transition and of spaces as areas of exchange. In other words, we feel that we were able to move beyond discussions of bounded categories in order to elaborate an understanding of intersecting processes. Particularly helpful was the bringing together of scholars in film studies with scholars from other disciplines, all of whom learnt from each other.

Postscript
As a result of the workshop, Luisa Passerini was able to submit an application for ESF funding for the 4 November deadline (given the reference number 05-PGR-069). The project will involve most of the participants in the workshop, plus additional scholars from further disciplines and further EU countries. An edited volume based on the workshop (including further commissioned papers) is proposed as the first publication output for the project.
European Science Foundation Exploratory Workshop
EUROPE IN CINEMA, CINEMA IN EUROPE
University of Southampton, 16-18 September 2005

Highfield Campus, Building 2 (Management), Lecture Room F

Scientific Organiser: Luisa Passerini (University of Turin)
Convenor: Jo Labanyi (University of Southampton)

Programme

Friday 16 September

11.15 COFFEE

12:00 Welcome
   Jo Labanyi (University of Southampton)

12:10 Presentation by ESF Representative

12:25 Introduction
   Luisa Passerini (University of Turin)

12:45 LUNCH

Panel 1: Memories of Europe
Chair: Jo Labanyi

14:00 From the Ruins of History to Memories of Europe: Contradictory Trends in European Cinema after 1989
   Liliana Ellena (University of Turin)

14:20 Memory and Identity in European ‘Films of Voyage’
   Maria Rovisco (University of Lisbon)

14:40 The Memory of Perpetrators: Selective Remembrance in Passenger (A. Munk, Poland, 1963) and Cold Days (A. Kovacs, Hungary, 1966)
   Dina Iordanova (University of St Andrews)

15:00 Cartographies of European Memory: Notes on an Installation (Ruth Beckermann, europamemoria, 2003)
   Christa Blümlinger (Université de Paris III)

15:20 TEA

15:50 Respondent
   Bo Florin (University of Stockholm)

16:00 DISCUSSION
17:00 Summary of day  
*Laura Mulvey (Birkbeck, University of London)*

19:00 CONFERENCE DINNER

**Saturday 17 September**

09:00 COFFEE

Panel 2: Love and Hate  
Chair: *Luisa Passerini*

09:30 Disinterested Love or Profitable Exchange? Encounters with Europe in Soviet and Post-Soviet Cinema  
*Almira Ousmanova (European Humanities University International, Minsk)*

09:50 Conflicted Passions  
*Karen Diehl (European University Institute, Florence)*

10:10 Love and Belonging in *Western* (Manuel Poirier, France, 1998)  
*Lucy Mazdon (University of Southampton)*

10:30 Kesban: Rome First and Then Off to Paris  
*Nezih Erdogan (Bilgi University, Istanbul)*

10:50 COFFEE

11:20 Respondent  
*Maria Rovisco*

11:30 DISCUSSION

12:30 LUNCH

Panel 3: Spaces of Encounter  
Chair: *Astrid Söderbergh Widding*

14:00 Double Occupancy and Mutual Interference in Contemporary European Cinema  
*Thomas Elsaesser (University of Amsterdam)*

14:20 Landscapes of the Mind: European Horror Films and (the) Beyond  
*Giuseppe Lauricella (European University Institute, Florence)*

14:40 Where is History? Travels to and from Spain  
*Jo Labanyi (University of Southampton)*

15:00 Europe as Space and Time on Film: The Case of the Balkans  
*Bo Stråth (European University Institute, Florence)*

15:20 TEA

15:50 Respondent  
*Tim Bergfelder (University of Southampton)*
16:00   DISCUSSION

17:00   Summary of day
       *Ian Christie (Birkbeck, University of London)*

19:00   DINNER

20:00   Screening: *Visions of Europe: 25 Shorts by 25 Directors*, 2004 (140 mins)

**Sunday 18 September**

9:00   COFFEE

Panel 4: Transcultural Identities  
Chair: *Bo Strath*

09:30   Mobility and Interculturality across a Globalised Southern Europe  
       Enrica Capussotti (University of Siena)

09:50   Transition and (E)motion: Child Subjects in Contemporary European Cinema  
       Emma Wilson (University of Cambridge)

10:10   Paradoxes of the City in Lithuanian Cinema: European Centre / European Border  
       Nerijus Milerius (Vilnius State University)

10:30   Transgressing Boundaries: Contemporary Swedish Cinema and the Cultural ‘Other’  
       Astrid Söderbergh Widding

10:50   COFFEE

11:20   Respondent  
       Nezih Erdogan

11:30   DISCUSSION

12:30   LUNCH

14:00   Round Table  
       Chair: Jo Labanyi

15:00   TEA

15:30   Concluding Remarks and Discussion of Ways Forward  
       Chair: Luisa Passerini

17:30   WORKSHOP ENDS (APPROXIMATE)
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Israeli (1)
Canadian/Bulgarian (1)

Working in the following countries:
Italy (7)
UK (8)
Sweden (3)
France (1)
Netherlands (1)
Portugal (1)
Lithuania (1)
Belarus (1)
Turkey (1)

Age groups:
Early career researchers (7)
Mid career researchers (9)
Senior researchers (8)

Academic disciplines:
Film studies (12)
History (4)
Cultural studies (3)
Modern languages (2)
Sociology (1)
Philosophy (1)
Museology (1)