
Margarita Carretero (carreter@ugr.es), Gerardo Rodríguez (gerardor@ugr.es)

Course description

This course will look at the consolidation of modern political theory and the origin and evolution of the English novel as two types of discourse which experience a parallel progress and which eventually influence each other. After studying the different theories regarding the origin of the novel, special attention will be paid to looking at the influence exerted by earlier fictional works (Thomas More’s *Utopia* or Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis*) in the conception and development of utopian and dystopian narratives. When looking at this kind of narratives, it will be revealed that the fantastic impulse very often appears better suited to explore issues raised in contemporary political theory than the mimetic one. The novel chosen to illustrate this point will be Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*.

The second section of the course will provide a theoretical introduction to communitarian theories through the use of hermeneutic models which explore the notions of community and immunity as theorized by post-phenomenological philosophers (Derrida, Nancy, Blanchot, Agamben or Esposito) in their interpretation of narrative discourse. The distinction between organic communities (nationalist, religious, etc.) and inorganic or inoperative communities (Nancy, Blanchot) will be essential to understand social, political and religious conflicts as well as to offer a utopian/dystopian approach to the study of the contemporary novel in English. Janet Frame’s *The Carpathians* (1988) will be used as an example to illustrate this point.

Compulsory reading

- Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*
- Janet Frame’s *The Carpathians*

Evaluation method

Attendance and class participation (including oral presentations): 25%
Final examination: 75%