

CARLETON UNIVERSITY	
Institute of European, Russian and Eurasian Studies (EURUS)	
EURR 3001/ENGL3804	Fall 2012/13
Literatures & Cultures in Europe-DRAFT	
Time: TBA	Location: TBA
Instructor: Vildana Stanišić-Keller	Office: River Building 3314 vskeller@connect.carleton.ca

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Literatures and Cultures in Europe is an interdisciplinary seminar offering, through selected readings/movies and discussions, an exploration of issues which have been emerging in the European tradition.

Through the study of literature and cinema, we will explore diverse cultures of Europe, as both the intersection of many powerful global forces and a distinct cultural, anthropological, historical, linguistic and geopolitical entity. The course is oriented towards comparative analyses of the phenomena of European culture from mid-20th century to the challenges of the 21st century. Our encounter with novels, plays and movies, created by authors from the regions in question, aims to investigate literature and cinema as alternative cultural history of Europe.

Designed as an introduction to the ideas that shaped cultural tradition in Europe, the course addresses questions from different intellectual traditions and explores the diversity of positions on the ideas of Europe, its unity/disunity, and cultural identity/ies. Some of the topics of the course are: Notion of Europe (geographic/cultural/political); The East/West and North/South divide of Europe; European intellectual and spiritual identity versus its history; Europe – imagined and conceptualized / Europe as a metaphor and reality; Europe – as a civilization / a political community; Europe and its “other”: Europeanization and Globalization.

Readings and classroom discussions will focus on situating individual works in a socio-cultural context in order to gain insights into the significance of diverse European traditions. With an assumption that literature is a form of cultural knowledge, the course will explore the ways in which literature creates a transitional space where the boundaries of language and subjectivity are continually shaped and reshaped on both an individual and a cultural level.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

In the process of our study, we will explore diversity of European cultures reflected in the novels, plays, and movies. The course will proceed simultaneously along two lines of inquiry. The first concerns the works of literature (and cinema) directly: what, if anything, do these authors have to tell us about cultures, including that most puzzling of themes – cultural commonalities/diversities? We will treat these sources as alternative cultural documents that open a window on the society, trends, and events not only of the era in which they are created, but also of intellectual traditions of the globe at large. The second line will require us to reflect on articles written by prominent European individuals.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

Students should develop:

- a greater understanding of contemporary Europe, European identity and appreciation for the diversity of the world's cultures;
- the ability to critically analyze material, synthesize diverse disciplinary perspectives, present and debate arguments;
- the ability to work independently and collaboratively in drafting, writing and oral skills.

NOTE: The course assumes no prior knowledge of literatures, languages and cinema of Europe. All books are in English language and movies with English subtitle. You are welcome to read books in original languages.

READINGS

The readings are a combination of course reserves and on-line resources. While this course has no stated prerequisite, it is assumed that the students like literature and cinema, as well as sharing ideas and views with others.

REQUIRED READINGS

1. *The Elegance of the Hedgehog/L'élegance du hérisson* by Muriel Barbery
2. *1985* by Anthony Burgess
3. *Accidental Death of an Anarchist/Morte accidentale di un anarchico* by Dario Fo
4. *Book of Laughter and Forgetting/Kniha smíchu a zapomnění* by Milan Kundera
5. *All the Names/Todos os nomes* by José Saramago

NOTE: The detailed syllabus (with the Curse Calendar, Supplementary Readings, Course Format & Requirements & Evaluation, and Academic Regulations and Accommodations) will be provided during our first session.