

**WAR and ITS CONSEQUENCES IN 20<sup>TH</sup>c. EUROPE**  
COL241 / Fall 2008 syllabus / Leservot and Tölölyan  
Classroom: Butterfield C 314 / Time: M-W: 1:10-2:30pm

**Course description:**

The Sophomore Colloquium is the first of a series of five that constitutes the core of the COL program. It is designed to explore the literature, history, and philosophy of 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe around a chosen theme. This semester, we will focus on war and its consequences in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. From the revolutions in Russia, WWI, WWII, decolonization and the cold war, European letters have expressed the issues of war and its aftermaths in particular and fascinating ways. We will read and discuss how and what 20<sup>th</sup> c. European literature and philosophy have had to say following the major upheavals of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

PAPERS: Aside from reading and taking part in class discussions, you will be required to write three papers on the topic of your choice to explore further an issue raised by our readings and class discussions. You should turn in two (2) copies of each paper to be independently reviewed and evaluated by each instructor. **Late papers will not be accepted.** There is no final examination for this class. Thorough written evaluations are offered as a substitute for letter grades and missing papers are recorded in these evaluations.

**READINGS:**

- Most books are available for purchase at the campus bookstore.
- Excerpts are available online through blackboard.

**PRE WWI**

SEPT. 3: Pre 20<sup>th</sup> History, Philosophy and Literature. Poetry medley (Parnassian and Symbolist poetry: José Maria de Heredia, Stéphane Mallarmé).

**WWI (1914-1918) and the Communist Revolutions (1905, 1917)**

8 Rosa Luxembourge (1870-1919), Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924), Leon Trotsky (1879-1940) (excerpts)  
10 Isaac Babel (1894-1940), *Short stories* (“My first Goose”, “Gedali”, “The Rabbi’s Son”, “The Death of Dolgushov”)

15 Franz Kafka (1883-1924) (short story TBA)

17 T.S. Eliot (1888-1965), “The Wasteland” (1922), “The Dry Salvages” (1941)

22 Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925)

24 **Surrealism:** André Breton, *Surrealist Manifesto* (1924), Salvador Dali (1904-1989) and Luis Buñuel (1900-1983), *Un chien andalou* (1928) + Dali, “Premonition of a civil war” (1935)

**Leading up to WWII: Germany, Spain, Italy and Fascism:**

29 Leni Riefenstahl (1902-2003), *Triumph of the Will* (1935) [PAPER 1]

OCT 1: Spanish war documents + Picasso’s “Guernica” (1936)

6 Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) & Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) (excerpts TBA)

## **WWII (1939-1945) and ITS AFTERMATHS**

8 Bertold Brecht (1898-1956), *Mother Courage and Her Children* (1939)

13 Aimé Césaire (1913-2008), “Notebook of a Return to the Native Land” (1939)

15 Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980), *Existentialism is a Humanism* (1946)

20 Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986), *The Second Sex* (1949) (excerpts from intro).

22 Albert Camus (1913-1960), *The Plague* (1947)

- *FALL BREAK / HOMECOMING*

29 Camus, *The Plague*

NOV 3: Samuel Beckett (1906-1989), *Waiting for Godot* (1949) [PAPER 2]

5: Milan Kundera (1929-), *The Joke* (1968)

10 Primo Levi (1919-1987), *The Periodic Table* (chapters: 1, 4, 11, 20, 21) (1975)

12 Michel Foucault (1926-1984), *Discipline and Punish* (excerpts)

## **Spain and Germany: past and reunification**

17 Victor Erice, *The Spirit of the Beehive* (aka *The Hive*) (1973)

19 Gunter Grass (1927-), *Two States one nation* (1988)

## **1980s-: THE NEW EUROPE: regional, ethnic, and religious revivals**

24 Pope Benedict XVI's speeches in Germany (September 2006) [TBC]

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20060912\\_university-regensburg\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060912_university-regensburg_en.html)

- *THANKSGIVING*

DEC 1 One Contemporary [postcolonial] British writer TBA

3 Assia Djebar (1936-), *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade* (1985) (part 1, 2, + part 3 excerpts)

8 Juan Goytisolo (1931-), *State of Siege* (1996).

[PAPER 3 TBD]