ARLT 100g, 35212

VKC 203

M/W 10.00 am – 11.20 am

Prof. Antónia Szabari

Office: THH 155B

Office Hours: M/W 9.00 am – 10. 00 am, M 12.00 pm – 1.00 pm or by appointment

**East-Central European Literature and Film after 1989: What I Learnt from the Fall of the Wall?**

This course focuses on literary and cinematic works from some Eastern- and Central European nations (especially the Czech Republic and the former Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Romania) as well as on the representation of Eastern European diasporas in the world after the end of the Cold War. The goal of the course is to provide students with a rich material, historical context and critical concepts for understanding this region whose perception is often clouded by prevailing cold-war-era stereotypes. “What I have learnt” refers to both assessments made post 1989 and responses to the political and social transition out of the Soviet zone and to a globalized world--including artistic reflections on the past, diversity, diaspora, and the changes brought about by a global culture and economy. The course begins by acquainting students with the historical background of the current East-Central European cultures (through Hrabal, Tarr, Dragomán, and Kertész) and progresses to works that respond to the so-called “changes” in 1989 and their aftermath (Krasznahorkai, Bózai, Porumboiu, Nimród, Nemescu, Kundera, and Ponge). Students will also learn to understand both realism and satire as narrative devices at work in the novels and films studied in this course and acquaint themselves with ideas by East-Central European public intellectuals such as Vaclav Havel, Danilo Kis, and George Soros.

Readings and films will include: Bohumil Hrabal (*In-House Weddings*), Béla Tarr (dir.) (*Werckmeister Harmonies*), László Krasznahorkai (*The Melancholy of Resistance*), Imre Kertész (*Kaddish for An Unborn Child*), György Dragomán (*The White King*), Corneliu Porumboiu (dir.), (*12:08 East of Bucharest*), Ágota Bózai (*To Err is Divine*), Antal Nimród (dir.), *Kontroll*, Milan Kundera (*Innocence*); Cristian Nemescu (dir.), György Pálfi (*Taxidermia*), (*California Dreamin’*), Francine Ponge (*My New American Dream*).

Note on the materials: All readings available at the University Bookstore. All films are available at Leavey Reserves. There will be no in-class screening. I expect that you will have completed the reading of the text and viewing of the film assigned for the class by the day of discussion.

Course Requirements:

Assignments:

First (2-page) paper: 10%

Second (4-page) paper: 15%

Third (6-page) paper: 15%

In-Class Presentation: 15%

Mid-term Exam: 15%

Final Exam: 15%

Active participation in discussions, homework, and quizzes: 15%

About the papers and other writing assignments:

\* Each paper should have the specified length, typed in 12-pt. Times New Roman font, and have one-inch margins.

\* Include your name and the title of your paper at the top of the first page.

\* All papers must have titles.

\* You should number pages.

\* Spell check and proofread adequately.

\* Be sure that you cite all secondary material and present bibliographical information according to either the guidelines of either the Modern Language Association or Chicago Manual of Style.

\* You must list all material cited, even if you are only using the required text.

\* There will be a sheet of questions for the second and third papers. The first paper will be a close reading exercise, which we will discuss in class. The paper questions will be available on blackboard at least two weeks before the paper is due.

\* Be sure to turn in both an electronic copy on blackboard and hard copy of the paper to me personally: only electronic submissions will not be counted nor will papers left in mailboxes. In exceptional cases, papers turned in at THH155 (French & Italian) to the administrator (Patrick Irish) and date-stamped will be accepted.

\* No rewrites.

\* Unannounced quizzes and in-class exercises will take place regularly. The purpose of the quizzes and exercises is testing for preparedness and comprehension. The quizzes will contribute to the “participation” portion of your grade.

Some basics:

\* No laptop use is allowed in lecture or discussion. Similarly: no cell phones, video games, ipods, etc.

\* Keep up with the reading schedule and plan ahead. Think about budgeting your time.

\* Come to class prepared to discuss the day’s text.

\* Bring to class the text we’re discussing.

\* Keep up with handouts and other class notes.

\* Be sure to use the Blackboard site for this class—the syllabus, announcements, and other important documents and links will be posted there.

\* Avail yourself of our consultation times and schedule at least one consultation this semester.

\* Turn in a hard copy of the papers, in class, to me personally, on the dates due.

\* Be punctual; class will always begin on time.

\* Consult the reading schedule often and make note of any changes as announced.

\* Do not miss class; unexcused absences will lower your final grade.

\* Do not leave class before the end.

\* Do not request extensions for papers or alternate dates for exams.

\* And never turn in written work that is not strictly your own.

\*Missing work will have a significant impact on your ability to pass this course.

Students with disabilities and academic accommodations:

Students requesting accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. DSP is open Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00. The office is in Student Union 301 and their phone number is 213.740.0776.

Plagiarism Note:

All your work must be original, with proper citation for use of outside sources; there are high penalties for plagiarism, including reporting the infraction to the Dean.

Email etiquette:

It is common for students to contact their professors by email. When doing so, please follow the following rules: Be polite and clear. Use a polite address such as “Dear Professor so and so” or “Professor so and so.” Avoid the following forms: “Hi Professor” “Hi” “Hello Professor” “Hey,” etc. The professors in all your classes will appreciate you doing so.

I will do my best to respond to your emails within 24 hours. In some rare cases, however, I may be busy or away from email for a day or two.

Schedule of Classes:

--East-Central Europe: a historical overview from Monarchy to State Socialism (Hrabal)

January 9: Introduction

January 11: *In-house Weddings*, pp. 3-41. Additional discussion: close reading literary texts

January 16: no class

January 18: *In-house Weddings*, pp. 42-171

-- Memory and Trauma (Kertész, Koltai)

January 23: Koltai (dir.), *Fateless*. Watch film before coming to class. First, 2-page paper is due

January 25: *Kaddish*, 1-40

January 30: *Kaddish*, 41-80

February 1: Kaddish, 81-120

-- Chaos and Order (Krasznahorkai, Tarr). View Tarr (dir.), *Werckmeister Harmonies* by February 13

February 6: *Melancholy*, pp. TBD

February 8: *Melancholy*, pp. TBD

February 13: *Melancholy*, pp. TBD

-- Childhood and Dictatorship (Dragomán)

February 15: *White King*, 1-48

February 20: no class

February 22: *White King*, 49-130. Second Paper Due (4 pages)

February 27: *White King*, 131-261

-- Realism and Satire (Porumboiu, Bózai)

February 29: Porumboiu (dir.), *12:08 East of Bucharest*. View film before class

March 5: Mid-term exam

March 7: *To Err Is Divine*, pp. 1-61

March 12-14: no class. Finish reading Bózai during the Spring recess

March 19: *To Err Is Divine*, pp. 61-end

-- Underground, Underworld, and Minorities (Nimród)

March 21: Nimród (dir), *Kontroll*. View film before class

-- Exile and Return

March 26-28: *Innocence*

-- The Eastern-European Perspective (Nemescu and Ponge)

April 2: Nemescu (dir.), *California Dreamin’*. View film before class

April 4: *My New American Dream*, pp. TBD

April 9: *My New American Dream*, pp. TBD

April 11: *My New American Dream*, pp. TBD

April 16, 18, 23: Student presentations

April 25: Conclusion, Exam Preparation. Third Paper Due (6 pages)