COURSE DEPICTIONS: DR. CIVANTOS

Spanish 321: Introduction to Literary Themes
Dra. Civantos

VIAJES Y VIAJEROS
EN LA LITERATURA Y EL CINE HISPANOAMERICANOS
Travel, like few other experiences, has the ability to make us re-think who we are. In this course we will analyze texts and films that were produced by travelers and/or depict travel. These will include essays, travel diaries, short stories, poems, novels, and films, ranging from the writings of aristocratic 19th-century women to Che Guevara's motorcycle diaries. Our overarching questions will be: (1) How do these Hispano-American writers and filmmakers describe that which is new and foreign to them? and (2) How does the experience of travel, in its different forms (vacation and adventure, work and study abroad, immigration and exile, and also voyages of return) affect the traveler’s sense of self. Within these broader questions, we will consider how sexuality and established gender roles, as well as socio-economic difference and conceptions of race, ethnicity, and nationality, play a part in the encounter with that which is new—both in its description and in its effect on identity.

SPA 322: The Culture and Politics of Immigration to Latin America
Dr. Civantos

The topic of Latin American migration to the U.S. and other parts of the globe has received a great deal of attention—but what about the on-going history of immigration into Latin America? This course focuses on the cultural, literary, social, and political dimensions of immigration to Latin America from Europe, the Middle East and East Asia, from the 19th century to the present. We will study Japanese immigration to Brazil, Arab immigration to Argentina, Central America, and Mexico, Italian immigration to Argentina, Jewish immigration to Argentina and Mexico, and Chinese immigration to Peru and Mexico. Some of the issues we will examine are conceptions of race and ethnicity, notions of passing or assimilation, types of bilingualism, the cultural and political reception of immigrants in different contexts and historical moments, and the self-expression (in poetry and prose as well as visual and performance art) of immigrants. Our ultimate question will be how immigration to Latin America has an impact on conceptualizations of Latin American identity.
This course explores the cultural life of Muslim Spain as well as its “afterlife” in contemporary Arab literature and film. During the European Middle Ages the cities of present-day Spain, ruled by Muslims but inhabited by Christians and Jews as well, flourished as centers of intellectual inquiry and artistic production. Known in Arabic as al-Andalus, Arab and Berber rule in the Iberian Peninsula came to an end in 1492 and the remaining Muslim and Jewish population was expelled by the early 1600’s. Long after this period, the accomplishments of al-Andalus continue to be admired and the period continues to be invested with symbolic value. For some, medieval Iberia stands as a testament to humanity’s capacity for religious tolerance and co-existence while for others it is an example of the results of religious fundamentalism. For others still, it is a symbol of loss—loss of cultural dominance and loss of paradise on Earth. In this course, we will learn about al-Andalus’s political, social, and religious life, and its cultural achievements. In addition to getting a taste of the art, architecture, and music of Arab Spain, we will focus especially on the Arabic literature of the period. Our ultimate goal will be to examine how al-Andalus operates to this day as a cultural sign—an icon or symbol of identity—within 20th and 21st-century Arab poetry, narrative, and film from Egypt, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Morocco, Tunisia, and the diaspora.

Which version of the al-Andalus story do we believe? What are the stories that al-Andalus continues to tell?

Arab Migration and Cultural Representation: An Intercultural Dialogue
Dr. Civantos

FSS 191 Q is an exciting, hands-on interdisciplinary inquiry into migration studies and cross-cultural representation with a focus on the Arab and Muslim world and the Americas. Students will discuss and analyze a wide range of texts, songs, and art works that arise from or impact this pressing contemporary issue. As part of this, students will participate in the Soliya Connect Program (www.soliya.net), in which they will engage in cross-cultural dialogue with their peers in universities in the Middle East/North Africa. Throughout the course, students will ask questions and formulate conclusions about "East"/"West" contact and the relationship between immigration and individual, national, religious, racial, and cultural identities.
In this course we will be analyzing writings by 19th-century Spanish American women from several different countries with a particular interest in their relationship to the contexts of positivism and nation-building. Thus, we will consider the impact of metropolitan and local discourses about women’s education and the production of literature, as well as nationalism, and consider how women intellectuals used and responded to positivism’s dictums regarding women, knowledge, and national progress. Within this two of our main foci will be 1) public space, domestic space, and the relationship to the conceptual and geographic space of the nation and 2) the use of narrative voice and other textual techniques. We will explore both of these with an eye to understanding how the relationship to space and voice are used to claim authorial and social legitimacy—to establish social authority and participate in nation formation in spite of, or through, positivist conceptions of gender.

We will work with poetry, essays, travelogues, short stories, and novels by Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, Juana Manuela Gorriti, Eduarda Mansilla de García, Soledad Acosta de Samper, Mercedes Cabello de Carbonera, and Emma de la Barra among others. We will enrich our discussions by considering the theoretical and critical works by scholars such as Susan Lanser, Mary Pickering, Gabriela Nouzeilles, Susan K. Harris, María Cristina Arambel-Guíñazú and Claire Emilie Martin, Francine Masiello, and Mary Louise Pratt.

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SPA 635: LA COLONIALIDAD Y LOS ORIENTALISMOS HISPANOS
Dra. Civantos
Han creado las conquistas, el comercio, los viajes y la emigración una larga historia de contacto cultural entre el mundo árabe, España, y Latinoamérica que se manifiesta en las artes y los textos escritos. En este curso estudiaremos principalmente ejemplos de este contacto que surgen en la literatura hispanoamericana decimonónica. Las preguntas a las que responderemos a través del semestre son: ¿Cómo se caracterizan las representaciones del mundo árabe producidas en España e Hispanoamérica? ¿Cuáles son los efectos políticos y culturales de estas representaciones? ¿Cómo complican el concepto de orientalismo desarrollado por Edward Said? ¿Qué revelan con respecto a las identidades latinoamericanas y en cuanto a la poscolonialidad latinoamericana y las relaciones Sur-Sur? Además de textos primarios de Juan Francisco Manzano, Domingo Sarmiento, José Martí, Rubén Darío, Enrique Larreta, Enrique Gómez Carrillo, Jorge Luis Borges y Roberto Arlt, trabajaremos con ensayos críticos de Edward Said, G. W. F. Hegel, Julia Kristeva, Homi Bhabha, Araceli Tinajero, Walter Mignolo, Aníbal Quijano, Mabel Moraña, Enrique Dussel, y Carlos A. Jáuregui.