

LMU FALL 2019

FFYS MDGK 1000.37: Greek Stories: Storytelling and Identity (4 units)

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: T/TH 1:00-2:30 pm in Doolan Hall 219

INSTRUCTOR: Pr. Christina Bogdanou

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Office Hours: T/TH 3:00-5:00 pm and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Storytelling is one of the most powerful tools humans have used over their long history to make sense of the world around them. Nonetheless, stories are not just a thing of the past we pass down to the next generations. They are a part of our present lives in many ways and forms (from fiction and film to social media, advertising and political discourse among others). Storytelling can be used to give shape to different experiences, inspire, influence, connect or separate groups of people.

Like most cultures, the Greeks have loved sharing stories about where they came from, who they were, and how they came to live their lives in war and peace. The course explores the connection between storytelling and the formation of a cohesive Greek national identity in the context of a long and complicated history with a sharper focus on the last 200 years, from the nation's independence and formation as a modern European state (early 19th c.) to the present as a chapter member of the European Union and a participant in global politics.

The relationship between myth and history, the reconciliation of conflicting cultural and national identities, war and foreign occupation, urbanization and modernization, the changing geopolitical map of Europe and the European Union, globalization and 21st c. rising nationalism are some of the topics we will explore in our discussions.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students completing the course will:

- be introduced to Greek history and culture through selected literary/cultural texts and make critical connections between past and present; Greece and the rest of the world
- understand how a nation's history and subsequent cultural production contribute to the formation of its cultural and national identity especially in times of contested globalized identities
- read and analyze carefully and critically the primary and secondary sources discussed and understand the time periods and societies that produced them
- engage critically and reflectively in rigorous scholarly discourse, research, and writing. Students will refine their research and writing skills by working closely with library and writing specialists
- exercise critical thinking in oral discussions and formal presentations

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND: None

REQUIRED TEXTS / READING LIST:

N. Kazantzakis, *Zorba* (please buy the 2014 edition, trans. Peter Bien)

Valeria Luiselli, *Tell me How it Ends*. LMU 2019 Common Book. (E-book available in the library)

L. Anagnostaki, *The Parade*

R. Galanaki, *The Life of Ismail Ferik Pasha*

Additional selected poems, short stories, and critical articles will be available at BRIGHTSPACE