HU 3253 Topics in World Literatures and Cultures
Summer 2009
Dr. Ciro A. Sandoval-B.
M/T/W/Th 11:05-12:25
Off. Walker 322; Off. Hours: /Tu/W/Th 10:00-10:55 and by appointment

NOTES TO KEEP IN MIND

1- MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). If anyone in this class has a disability that requires a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education and services at MTU, please call Associate Dean of Students Gloria Melton at 487-2212. For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head/chair, or the Affirmative Action Office at 487-3310.

2- The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus for this class, for pedagogical reasons and if special circumstances call for a syllabus change.

3- Academic Integrity. Students who cheat, plagiarize or fabricate information, as well as students who help others cheat, plagiarize or fabricate information, can receive sanctions ranging from warning to special failing grade to expulsion from the University, depending on the severity of the offense. See the MTU Student Handbook or the Academic Integrity Policy: www.admin.mtu.edu/ucenate/propose/02/18-02.htm

4. Absolutely NO LAPTOPS allowed in class, except with a written note to me from Dean of Students.

5. Absolutely NO CELL PHONES set to ring in class.

6. ANY PERSONAL ISSUES or PROBLEMS of ANY KIND SHOULD BE DISCUSSED BY PRIOR APPOINTMENT IN MY OFFICE. Please, NO EMAILS asking to solve personal issues online.

7. If you MISS CLASS, it is your RESPONSIBILITY to find out what you missed in class by contacting either other classmates or ME PERSONALLY. I will not answer this information by email.

General Course Objectives

Literature as a cultural manifestation cannot be understood as art for art's sake only. It cannot be understood outside a social context (historical, political, economic), either. Bearing these ideas in mind, this course on World Literatures and Culture(s) will undertake historical comparative
views of the so-called industrially and non-industrially developed world nations and literatures, i.e., literatures from the so-called "first and third world countries" and their cultures. We will consider different historical stages of economic and political and social development as viewed and presented by acknowledged writers and intellectuals from some selected Latin American, African, and Middle Eastern areas in their essays, novels and short stories assigned for this course. We will reflect on concepts such as the so-called "Gradient of Modification" [of the natural and social landscape] as more faithful depictions of natural worlds drawn into more urbanized and industrialized ones. We will read novels and short stories which present visions of what some ethnocentric critics call fourth, third, second, worlds and their societies or cultures which are seen as being at different "stages of development" (industrialization) and as these societies (countries) face modernizing changing trends in every aspect of their existence which were triggered by colonization and post-colonization by the so-called Western Civilization powers. We will read specific literary genres, mainly novels, essays, and short stories which focus on fictional and autobiographical, political cultural and economic representations, such as José María Arguedas's famous novel Deep Rivers and Ngugi Wathiong'o's The Devil on the Cross, as well as shorter novels and stories which represent different facets of local cultures and history such as those written by the Nobel Prize winner Gabriel García Márquez and Ghassan Kanafani. We will consider the drama of those people who are torn between natural, developing and developed societies in light of processes such as those of "mezizaje," colonization, displacement, and acculturation.

TEXTS
1- Arguedas, José María. Deep Rivers Trans. Transl. Francis Horning Barraclough
2- Wa Thiong'o, Ngugi. The Devil on the Cross
3- García Márquez, Gabriel. No one Writes to the Colonel and other stories
4- Kanafani, Chassan. Men in the Sun and other Palestinian Stories
5- James, Henry. The Beast in the Jungle and other Stories

Student Responsibilities
- Complete the assigned readings and be prepared to actively participate in class discussions
- More than three unexcused absences will jeopardize your achieving the highest grade you expect from this class.
- Write a final paper (6 to 8 pages, font 12, 1" on all margins, no big blank spaces anywhere in your paper) on a theme or topic which has elicited your interest or provoked reactions to any of the readings and discussion completed during this class.
REMINDER: Your paper topic must issue forth from the readings and discussions in class! No internet sources allowed.

NOTE: Two weeks before delivery of your final paper, you MUST either write an outline or prospectus of your final paper and submit to me; OR discuss your paper topic with me personally in my office.

You can comment on your reaction to each of the works read. How do you relate them to other readings you have done before or to other courses you have taken up to now, and finally, how have these works changed (or not) your vision of the world as you have lived/experienced it, as well as the vision you have of the world outside your own.

This final paper is due on the last day of class.

EVALUATION
Class attendance and active participation 50%
Final paper 50%

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE
Two weeks for each of the first listed novels
One week for ASSIGNED READINGS from each of the last three listed books of short stories