



European College of Liberal Arts Berlin

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Under Western Eyes

International Summer University 2006

July 14 to August 25, 2006

ECLA's International Summer University is a unique intellectual adventure that takes place for six weeks in July and August of each year. Great texts of European intellectual history and eternal questions about the human condition are discussed day and night, not only after lectures and movies or during seminars and tutorials, but also over meals, on or off campus, with the professors or just among students. The small seminar groups, the weekly essays, the individual attention in one-to-one tutorials, and the close-knit international community of students and faculty, who live together on campus throughout the programme, provide the framework for the joy of this intellectual experience.

Under Western Eyes is the title of Joseph Conrad's famous novel on repression and betrayal in the context of late 19th and 20th century Russian socialism and autocracy. In a broader sense it can be used to describe Western perceptions of cultural otherness as part of constructing self-identities of the West. Its questions thus address the themes that we will develop in the next summer programme:

How did the discovery of the New World influence the emergence of modern European self-consciousness?

Is "orientalism" an effective strategy of the Enlightenment's cosmopolitan project?

To what extent did the contact with other cultures frame the philosophical discussions on equality, inequality, and the state of nature?

Are cruelty and resentment essential features of colonial and post-colonial experiences?

And, finally, is the opposition to Russia a factor of strengthening Western identity? Is there not also a "Russian eye" that scrutinizes our life in Central Europe?

ECLA's Summer University offers a variety of activities that complement the text-based part of the programme. ECLA's art historian gives lectures and leads field trips or gallery visits, taking students out to Berlin's great museums and historical sites. Other Berlin walks are incorporated in the [Explore Berlin](#) component of the programme in which students focus either on the architecture or history of the city. An integrated film course looks at how some of the same themes students encounter in texts and city sites reemerge through the medium of film. Finally, there is typically a [mid-term trip](#) (we went to Dresden last year) to discover cultural treasures and understand cities' histories.

In all we do, we want to encourage spontaneity, creativity and versatility in the passionate commerce with ideas.

The 2006 Curriculum Outline by Week:

1. Modernity and the New World

Montaigne, *On the Cannibals & On Coaches*
Pierre Clastres, *Society against the State*
Shakespeare, *The tempest*
Films: Murnau, *Taboo*

2. Reason and Enlightenment

Mozart, *The Magic Flute*
Kant, *History from a Cosmopolitan Viewpoint*
Montesquieu, *The Persian Letters*
Films: Bergman, *The Magic Flute*

3. Inequality

Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*
Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*
Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*
Films: *The Servant*

4. Resentment

Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground*
Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*
Montaigne, *On Cruelty and Cowardice*
Films: Scorsese, *Taxi Driver*

5. Russia Under Western Eyes

Conrad, *Under Western Eyes*
Marx, *Report on Bakunin*
Pipes, *The Degaev Affair*
Films: Eisenstein, *Ivan the Terrible*

6. The Grand Inquisitor

Schmitt, *Roman Catholicism*
Dostoyevsky, *The Legend of Grand Inquisitor*
The Life of Father Zossima
Montherlant, *The Cardinal of Spain*
Films: Verdi, *Don Carlo*