



## Being and Nothingness

ENGLISH

Proposed as LIT 3191

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### Overview:

Fascism. Communism. Totalitarianism. Nationalism. Existentialism. Cubism. Dadaism. Surrealism. To the student of culture in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it would seem that the century was driven by belief systems and movements that controlled art and politics. The individual caught in the force and current of these movements often had few options for survival; the currents of destruction and terror and isolation seemed overwhelming. This course examines these historical forces, but more importantly, it looks at the human response to these historical forces: the attempt on the part of the individual to maintain some semblance of routine and normality, the attempt on the part of the individual to maintain some sense of self and individuality, the attempt on the part of the individual to maintain some sense of meaning and purpose.

Please note that the schedule of activities for this course will likely change and evolve as we make final plans for the summer in Europe.

### The Catalyst Experience Sessions:

Students are required to participate in each academic session of The Catalyst Experience, which is our program's active orientation to the four cities that we use as our classrooms. These sessions will include walking tours and museum visits, in addition to formal elements of Catalyst orientation that will focus on safety, wellness, and local transportation. You may not miss any of these required sessions under any circumstances.

## Learning Outcomes

1. To understand what the study of literature is and how the analysis of literature differs from other forms of critical enquiry
2. To identify and understand key persons, movements, events, and concepts important to European literature during the period covered by this course.
3. To develop and hone critical skills in reading, interpretation, discussion and writing that are at the heart of active citizenship and effective communication.
4. To learn how to think about the relationship between text and context and to see the interplay between the past, the present and myriad debates about the future where literature is concerned

## Texts:

Hans Fallada, *Little Man, What Now?*

Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*

Albert Camus, *The Stranger*

Franz Kafka, "The Metamorphosis"; "In the Penal Colony"; "A Hunger Artist"

## Evaluation:

Students in this course will be evaluated on the basis of their performance on a final examination, a Journal/BLOG, and attendance/ participation.

Students are expected to contribute to the discussions of the topic on a particular class day and to reflect on the class' daily activities/discussions in their journal/BLOG. A student's participation grade will be based on overall attitude, willingness to participate, and on the quality of that participation. Daily participation is worth **50 points; the Journal/BLOG, which must be posted online or privately emailed to the professor, will be worth 100 points.**

There will be one final exam in this class that will consist of questions taken from academic lectures, visits, readings and cultural experiences encountered during the Catalyst Program. **This exam is worth 100 points**, and will be given on the last day of class in Prague.

## Grading:

The final grade you earn in this class will be per the following:

90+%	A
80-89%	B

70-79%	C
60-69%	D
0-59	F

## Calendar

- June 6: Arrive in Berlin  
Berlin Orientation
- June 7: Berlin Overview  
Tour: Walking Tour of Berlin
- June 8: The Coming Fury: Germany between the Wars  
Weimar, Communism, Fascism  
Reading: Hans Fallada, Little Man, What Now?  
Tour: Deutsches History Museum
- June 9: The Reich in Power  
Reading: Hans Fallada, Little Man, What Now?  
Tour: Topography of Terror
- June 10: City Sojourn
- June 11: Fall and Aftermath  
Reading: Arthur Koestler, Darkness at Noon  
Tour: Memorials and Monuments
- June 12: East and West  
Reading: Arthur Koestler, Darkness at Noon  
Tour: Hohenschonhausen
- June 13: Travel Day to Prague; Prague Orientation
- June 14: Prague Overview
- June 15: Alone in Prague  
Reading: Kafka, The Metamorphosis  
Tour: A Walking Tour of Kafka's Prague

- June 16: Alienation  
Reading: Kafka, "In the Penal Colony"; "The Hunger Artist"  
Tour: Kafka Museum; The Statuary of Prague
- June 17: City Sojourn
- June 18: The Existential Dilemma; Being and Nothingness  
Reading: Camus, The Stranger  
Tour: National Memorial to the Heroes of Heydrich Terror
- June 19: Final Examination
- June 20: Departure from Prague

### **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is when an individual paraphrases or quotes another writer's work without proper acknowledgement or citation. Any material falsely presented as one's own is considered plagiarism. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask before submitting your work. In that way, you can avoid any charges of plagiarism.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act Statement:**

(ADA) If a student has a disability that qualifies under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, he/she should contact the Office of Disability Accommodations (ODA) for information on appropriate policies and procedures. Disabilities covered by the ADA may include learning, psychiatric, physical disabilities, or chronic health disorders. Students can contact ODA if they are not certain whether a medical condition/disability qualifies.