

## Syllabus

LIT 3328. Ecology: Land and Water . A European Perspective

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Office: Brunnenburg Castle

Lecture: TBA

### Course Description

This course will explore the history of ecology and environmental ethics from the vantage point of Brunnenburg Castle and Farm and of agrarian communities in the Tyrolean Alps, which have been a meeting point of the Mediterranean world and Central European cultures since the times of „Oetzi“ the Iceman.

Students will be introduced to the history of environmental sustainability as reflected in the folklore and mythology of alpine peoples, their tools and their technology .

Special attention will be devoted to the sustainable use of land and water resources in the course of history, to the development of strategies against erosion , waste and pollution . Students will learn to trace the development of environmental ethics from antiquity to present-day ecological thinking.

Special field-trips will provide first-hand observation of both the positive and negative impact of human activities on the delicate eco-systems of mountainous regions, the impact of tourism, modern technologies and intensive agriculture. There will be a special focus on ancient vs modern irrigation systems, on the harnessing of water power for agricultural and industrial uses and on measures take to counteract erosion and landslides in an alpine context.

### Course Goals

To explore the cultural history, ecology and geography of the Mediterranean world and Central Europe from the vantage point of a small alpine region that served as bridge between North and South from pre-history to the present.

To explore survival strategies and techniques devised by human beings confronted by extreme climatic and geographical conditions and the emergence of environmental awareness in such a context.

To retrace the history of the legal battles against land and water pollution and specifically against the use of pesticides in agriculture from the vantage point of alpine communities (such as Mals in South Tyrol), where people have been trying to ban pesticides from their territory.

To enable students to interpret landscapes in terms of biodiversity, exploitation and management of nature and of the sustainable use of land and water.

### Expected Learning Outcomes

Students completing this course will be able to:

Retrace the development of environmental awareness and ethics from antiquity to the present.  
Understand the interaction between human economies and ecology.  
Employ interdisciplinary approaches.

#### Required Readings

Readings will be drawn from various chapters and essays in books located in Brunnenburg's vast library, with these readings being placed on reserve in the library. Multiple copies of the following books are available:

Attfield, Robin. Environmental Ethics: An Overview for the Twenty-First Century  
DesJardins, Joseph. Environmental Ethics: An Introduction to Environmental Philosophy  
Cole, J. and Wolf, E., The Hidden Frontier: Ecology and Ethnicity in an Alpine Valley  
Ward, Martha, The Hidden Life of Tirol  
Douglas, Mary, Purity and Danger  
Carson, Rachel, Silent Spring  
Homer, The Odyssey  
Hesiod, The Works and the Days  
Sloane, Eric, Diary of an Early American Boy  
Jenkins, J.G., Traditional Country Craftsmen