

GS HUMA/ ENG/ TRANS 6157 3.0

Comparative and World Literature Seminar: History and Practice (WS 20-21 via eClass and Zoom)

Course Instructor

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Professor, Dept. of Humanities; Coordinator, Graduate Diploma in Comparative Literature
Office hours via Zoom: please email to arrange a mutually convenient time

Course Description

This seminar introduces students to the conditions of emergence and development of the discipline of Comparative Literature from its beginnings in nineteenth-century Europe to its most recent global iteration of World Literature. Students will experience how expanded understandings of cultural translation and textuality have radically altered and expanded the Eurocentric character of the discipline.

Questions for investigation include: How have the aesthetics and politics of Comparative Literature changed over the past two hundred years? What factors have influenced those changes? How is World Literature related to Comparative Literature? How do both relate to colonial, postcolonial, diasporic, cultural and translation studies and digital humanities?

This seminar course is required for both the Humanities Graduate Diploma in Comparative Literature and the English Graduate Diploma in World Literature. The seminar introduces students to the history of both fields, and the theories and methodologies that have forged them. Students who are not enrolled in either diploma are, of course, also welcome.

Evaluation

- **weekly contributions (30%):**
 - before each class, post reflections on the readings on eClass, then come prepared to discuss everything with the class
- **a short presentation of the authors of a week's readings (10%)**
 - to be done in groups, sign up on the wiki on the eClass
- **first written assignment: due 8 Feb (20%)**
 - 500-, 250-, and 100-word summaries of a feasible research project in comparative or world literature, accompanied by a 10-source bibliography formatted in MLA 8 and a paragraph explaining why it is a comparative or world literature topic.

- **final assignment**

- a) **presentation: 5 Apr**

The last class of the term will be spent helping each other plan for the final paper. Each student will have a few minutes to explain the main lines of the paper, and we will then give feedback and suggestions. Those unable to be present in real time should post short summaries online and contact me to arrange an “office hour” to discuss them with me.

- b) **~6000-word paper due 26 Apr (40%)**

→ **whichever option is chosen, the assignment should have a Works Cited section that has been generated by Zotero, and two versions should be submitted: one formatted in MLA 8 and one formatted in Chicago** (Zotero can be downloaded at zotero.org).

- **EITHER** a creative author’s perspective on any culture and period before 1945. See as a guide on eClass: Piero Boitani, “World Literature Two Thousand Years Ago: Reflections of a Senator in 306 A.D.” *Foundational Texts of World Literature*. Ed. Dominique Jullien. New York et al: Peter Lang, 2011, 17-28
- **OR** a final research paper to be used as a basis for **Capstone Diploma Research Paper** (length: 10,000 words)

The Capstone Diploma Research Paper requires that students demonstrate the interdisciplinary, cross-cultural research and critical skills acquired throughout their Comparative or World Literature Diploma studies in an article-length essay, which students are encouraged to submit to a journal for publication.

Students are allowed to expand the essay written for the Diploma in the core course or in their other courses, or to combine two essays into a coherent, sustained argument. For the Graduate Diploma in World Literature, students can choose to expand papers that involve theoretical or methodological discussion with literary analyses, or to use literary analyses performed in another essay as illustration of this theoretical discussion. Students can also choose to write an entirely new paper for the Capstone Research Paper, which will be marked by the primary advisor and then submitted to a second reader (who will also mark and comment); both reports will be sent to the Graduate Program Director.

Required Readings will be provided as pdfs on our eClass site.

Schedule

1) 11 Jan: Introductions

- Hanne, Mike. "A Short History of Comparative Literature."
- Hamilton, John T. "Ellipses of World Literature." *Poetica* 46.1-2 (2014): 1-16.

2) 18 Jan: What is Literature?

- Williams, Raymond. "Literature" and "Culture." *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. London: Fontana, 1981. 183-188, 87-93.
- Bennett, Tony. "Culture." *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Malden: Blackwell, 2005. 63-69.
- Hebdige, Dick. "Ch. 1: From Culture to Hegemony." *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. London: Methuen, 1979. 5-19.
- Goldhill, Simon, "Literary History without Literature: Reading Practices in the Ancient World." *Debating World Literature*. Ed. Christopher Pendergast. London and New York: Verso, 2004. 175-196.

3) 25 Jan: The Hows and Whys of Early Literary Study

- Barry, Peter. "Theory before 'Theory' – Liberal Humanism." *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. 3rd ed. Manchester and New York: Manchester UP, 2009. 11-37.
- Chasles, Philarètes Euphémon. "Foreign Literature Compared." *Comparative Literature: The Early Years*. Ed. Hans-Joachim Schulz and Phillip H. Rhein. Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973. 13-37.
- Arnold, Matthew. "Culture and Anarchy." *Culture and Anarchy*. Ed. Samuel Lipman. New Haven: Yale UP, 1994. 28-48, 66-86.

4) 1 Feb: Weltliteratur

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. "Conversations with Eckermann on Weltliteratur (1827)." *World Literature in Theory*. Ed. David Damrosch. Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2014. 15-21 (also in the *Princeton Sourcebook for Comparative Literature*, 17-25).
- Berman, Antoine. "Goethe: Translation and World Literature." *The Experience of the Foreign: Culture and Translation in Romantic Germany*. Translated into English by Stefan Heyvaert. Albany: SUNY Press, 1992. 53-68 (*L'épreuve de l'étranger: Culture et traduction dans l'Allemagne romantique: Herder, Goethe, Schlegel, Novalis, Humboldt, Schleiermacher, Hölderlin*. Paris: Gallimard, 1984).
- Damrosch, David. "Introduction: Goethe Coins a Phrase." *What is World Literature?* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press. 1-36.
- Yamini-Hamedani, Azadeh. "Foundational Metaphors: Goethe's World Literature; Posnett's Comparative Literature." *Foundational Texts of World Literature*. Ed. Dominique Jullien. New York et al: Peter Lang, 2011. 155-164.

5) 8 Feb: Exile and Institutionalization (assignment 1 due)

- Apter, Emily. "Global Translatio: The "Invention" of Comparative Literature, Istanbul, 1933." *Critical Inquiry* 29.2 (Winter 2003): 253-281.
- Schultz, Hans-Joachim and Phillip H. Rhein, "Introduction." *Comparative Literature: The Early Years*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1973. vii-ix.
- "Table of Contents." *The Princeton Sourcebook in Comparative Literature: From the European Enlightenment to the Global Present*. Eds. David Damrosch, Natalie Melas, and Mbongiseni Buthelezi. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton UP, 2009.
- *Proceedings of the Second Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association*. Ed. Werner P. Friedrich. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina Press, 1959.
- *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature Vol. 1*. New York: Russell & Russell Inc, 1965.
- Block, Haskell B. "Introduction." *Comparative Literature Studies*, Special Advance Number (1963): xiii-xiv.

READING WEEK

6) 22 Feb: Theory, Stars, and Awards

- St. Pierre, Paul. "The Beginnings of Translation Studies." *TTR* 30.1-2 (2017): 101-119.
- Shumway, David R. "The Star System in Literary Studies." *PMLA* 112.1 (Jan. 1997): 85-100.
- Engdahl, Horace. "Canonization and World Literature: The Nobel Experience." *World Literature, World Culture*. Eds. Karen-Margrethe Simonsen and Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen. Aarhus: Aarhus UP, 2008. 195-214.

7) 1 Mar: The Making of Ages

- Bernheimer, Charles. "Introduction: The Anxieties of Comparison." *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1995. 1-17.
- Saussy, Haun. "Exquisite Cadavers Stitched from French Nightmares: Of Memes, Hives, and Selfish Genes." *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 2006. 3-42.
- Marno, David. "The Monstrosity of Literature: Hugo Metzl's World Literature and its Legacies." *World Literature, World Culture*. Eds. Karen-Margrethe Simonsen and Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen. Aarhus: Aarhus UP, 2008. 37-50.

8) 8 Mar: Against World Literature?

- Fisk, Gloria. "Against World Literature: The Debate in Retrospect." <https://theamericanreader.com/against-world-literature-the-debate-in-retrospect/>
- "Comparative Literature/World Literature: A Discussion with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and David Damrosch." *Comparative Literature Studies* 48.4 (2011): 455-485.

- D'Haen, Theo. "Worlding World Literature." *Recherche littéraire Literary Research* 32 (Été 2016 / Summer 2016): 7-23.
- Helgesson, Stefan, and Pieter Vermeulen. "Introduction: World Literature in the Making." *Institutions of World Literature: Writing, Translation, Markets*. Ed. Stefan Helgesson and Pieter Vermeulen. Routledge, 2015. 1-20.

9) 15 Mar: Frameworks of Comparison

- Anderson, Benedict. "Frameworks of Comparison." *London Review of Books* 38.2 (21 Jan 2016)
- Behdad, Ali. "The Orientalist Photograph." *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* 43.2 (June 2016): 265-281.
- Keynote CCLA 2019: David Palumbo-Liu, Stanford University: "Ethics Before Comparison," <https://complit.ca/congres-2/congres/>

10) 22 Mar: Where is the World Now?

- "Table of Contents." *World Literature in Theory*. Ed. David Damrosch. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2014.
- Puchner, Martin. "Learning from World Literature in the South." *Inside Higher Education*, 13 Dec. 2017, <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2017/12/13/scholar-changes-his-view-about-literary-marketplace-and-what-literature-can-do>.
- Ball, Tyler. "A Tale of Two Worlds." *World Literature Working Group Blog*, 18 May 2019, <http://www.worldlitworkgroup.com/2019/01/25/tyler-ball-25-january-2019/>.
- Da, Nan Z. "Language After the Fact: Rey Chow's "Not Like a Native Speaker." *Los Angeles Review of Books*, June 2, 2016, <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/language-fact-rey-chows-not-like-native-speaker/>
- Da, Nan Z. "The Digital Humanities Debacle." *Chronical of Higher Education*, 27 March 2019, <https://www-chronicle-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/article/the-digital-humanities-debacle/>

11) 29 Mar: Comparative and/or World Literature?

- Heise, Ursula K. "Introduction: Comparative Literature and the New Humanities." *Futures of Comparative Literature: ACLA State of the Discipline Report*. Eds. Ursula Heise et al. Routledge, 2017. 1-8.
- 2014-2015 state of the discipline report: <http://stateofthediscipline.acla.org>
- Figueira, Dorothy, "Comparative Literature: Can This Marriage Be Saved?" *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* 44.3 (Sept 2017): 420-435.

12) 5 Apr Presentations and Critical Reflections

- workshopping of final papers