

GS HUMA/ ENG/ TRANS 6157 3.0

Comparative and World Literature Seminar: History and Practice FS 2019, M 18:00-21:00, YH A214 (Glendon)

Course Instructor

Susan Ingram

Office: 242 Vanier

Office Hour: T 2:30–3:30 or by appointment (singram@yorku.ca)

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?

Evaluation

- **weekly contributions (30%):**
 - before each class, post reflections on the readings on the Moodle and come to class prepared to discuss both the readings and the reflections
- **moderations with a short (not more than 2-page) written reflection due the following class (20%)**
 - Each week, a group of students will help facilitate discussion. Moderators should aim to get at the most important issues in the readings, which will also mean prioritizing them, since we won't be able to discuss every aspect of every reading every week. In addition to addressing the Moodle posts, they should bring in discussion questions and topics, which can range from basic content questions (like "what does the passage on p. 25 mean?") to "big picture" issues that connect the week's readings with previous or other readings and discussions.
- **oral midterm to be held in class on 21 Oct + short written reflection (20%)**
- **final assignment: due 16 Dec (30%):**
 - a 15-20 page reflection on "What World Literature and/ or Comparative Literature Mean to My Academic Work." For those interested in completing either the Graduate Diploma in Comparative Literature or World Literature, this reflection will provide the basis for your capstone paper.

Required Readings – The two texts below are on reserve in Scott library. The other readings are provided as links or pdfs on our Moodle site:

- PSCL: *The Princeton Sourcebook in Comparative Literature: From the European Enlightenment to the Global Present*. Eds. David Damrosch, Natalie Melas, Mbongiseni Buthelezi. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton UP, 2009.
- Cusset, François. *French Theory: How Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, & Co. Transformed the Intellectual Life of the United States*. Translated by Jeff Fort with Josephine Berganza and Maron Jones. Minneapolis, London: U of Minnesota P, 2008.

Recommended Readings

- *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature/ Revue canadienne de littérature comparée*
- <https://www.worldliteraturetoday.org>
- https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/kz4e3e/millions-of-books-are-secretly-in-the-public-domain-you-can-download-them-free

Schedule

1) 9 Sept: Introductions

- Hanne, Mike. "A Short History of Comparative Literature."
- Hamilton, John T. "Ellipses of World Literature." *Poetica* 46.1-2 (2014): 1-16.
- 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.
- Cusset, François. "Preface to the English Edition."

2) 16 Sept: Theory before Theory

- Williams, Raymond. "Literature." *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. London: Fontana, 1981. 183-188.
- 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.
- 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.
- Arnold, Matthew. "Cultural Anarchy." *Cultural Anarchy*. Ed. Samuel Lipman. New Haven: Yale UP, 1994. 28-48, 66-86.

3) 23 Sept: *Weltliteratur*

- Herder, Johann Gottfried. "Results of a Comparison of Different Peoples' Poetry in Ancient and Modern Times (1797)." PSCL: 3-9.
- De Staël, Germaine. "Of the General Spirit of Modern Literature (1800)." PSCL: 10-17.
- Goethe, J.W. von and J. P. Eckermann, "Conversations on World Literature (1827)." PSCL: 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).

4) 30 Sept: Comparing the World

- Meltzl, Hugo. "Present Tasks of Comparative Literature (1877)." PSCL: 41-49.
- Posnett, Hutcheson Macaulay. "The Comparative Method and Literature (1886)." PSCL: 50-60.
- Brandes, Georg. "World Literature (1899)." PSCL: 61-66.
- Gayley, Charles Mills. "From *What is Comparative Literature?* (1902)." PSCL: 67-78.

5) 7 Oct: Europeans and Literature

- Curtius, Ernst Robert. "Preface to *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (1948)." PSCL: 120-124.
- Auerbach Erich. "Philology and *Weltliteratur* (1952)." PSCL: 125-138.
- Carré, Henri. "Preface to *La Littérature comparée* (1951)." PSCL: 158-160.
- Wellek, René. "The Crisis of Comparative Literature (1959)." PSCL: 161-174.

14 Oct – READING WEEK

6) 21 Oct: oral midterm

7) 28 Oct: American Institutionalization

- Cusset, "Introduction: The Sokal Effect," chs 1 & 2 ("Prehistories" and "The Academic Enclave"), 1-53.
- *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature Vol. 1*. New York: Russell & Russell Inc, 1965.
- *Proceedings of the Second Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association*. Ed. Werner P. Friedrich. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina Press, 1959.
- Block, Haskell M. "Introduction." *Comparative Literature Studies*, Special Advance Number (1963): xiii-xiv.
- 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.

8) 4 Nov: Literature and Theory

- Barthes, Roland. "The Structuralist Activity (1963)." PSCL: 176-182.
- Johnson, Barbara. "Writing (1990)." PSCL: 227-239.
- Cusset, chs 3-5 and 8 ("The Seventies: A Turning Point," "Literature and Theory," "Deconstruction Sites" and "Academic Stars"), 54-128, 193-216.
- Shumway, David R. "The Star System in Literary Studies." *PMLA* 112.1 (Jan. 1997): 85-100.

9) 11 Nov: Questions of Identity and Ideology

- Kristeva, Julia. "Women's Time (1977)." PSCL: 183-207.
- Moi, Toril. "I am not a woman writer - , About women, literature and feminist theory today." (<http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2009-06-12-moi-en.html>).
- Cusset, chs 6 & 7 ("The Politics of Identity" and "Ideological Backlash"), 131-192.
- Weigel, Moira, "Political Correctness: How the Right Invented a Phantom Enemy." <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/30/political-correctness-how-the-right-invented-phantom-enemy-donald-trump>

10) 18 Nov: The Making of Ages and the Rise of 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>
- "Comparative Literature/World Literature: A Discussion with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and David Damrosch." *Comparative Literature Studies* 48.4 (2011): 455-485.
- Spivak, Gayatri. "Crossing Borders (2003)." PSCL: 380-398.

11) 25 Nov: What is the World Now?

- Cusset, chs 13 & 14 ("Worldwide Theory: A Global Legacy" and "Meanwhile, Back in France..."), 287-327.
- Connery, Christopher Leigh, "Introduction: Worlded Pedagogy in Santa Cruz." *The Worlding Project: Doing Cultural Studies in the Age of Globalization*. Eds. Rob Wilson and Christopher Leigh Connery. Santa Cruz: New Pacific Press and Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2007. 1-11.
- D'Haen, Theo. "Worlding World Literature." *Recherche littéraire Literary Research Volume 32* (Été 2016 / Summer 2016): 7-23.

12) 2 Dec – Against World Literature?

- Keynote CCLA 2019 : David Palumbo-Liu, Stanford University: "Ethics Before Comparison," <https://complit.ca/congres-2/congres/>
- Ball, Tyler. "A Tale of Two Worlds" *World Literature Working Group Blog*, 18 May 2019, <http://www.worldlitworkgroup.com/category/blog/>.
- 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>.
- Brouillette, Sarah. "On the African Literary Hustle." *Blind Field: A Journal of Cultural Inquiry*, 14 Aug. 2017, <https://blindfieldjournal.com/2017/08/14/on-the-african-literary-hustle/>