

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE 255 COLLOQUIUM

Fall 2011, UC Davis

W 12:10-2:00 pm, 822 Sproul Hall

Professor Sheldon Lu

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Course Description

History, theory, and methodology of comparative literature; issues of national literature, world literature, and comparative literature; relation between comparative literature and other disciplines and mediums; oral presentation; critique of research papers; discussion of current problems in teaching and research in comparative literature. Required for all entering comparative literature students.

Course Expectation

Steady attendance and participation in class discussion. Read assigned materials for each week on time. One presentation/book report. Circulate, read, and critique fellow classmates' papers (potential conference papers/publishable papers) toward the end of the course.

Required Texts

- Saussy, Haun, ed. *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.
- *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Seventh Edition. 2009.
- Course Reader

SYLLABUS

Week 1 (9/28)

Introduction

Week 2 (10/5)

What is Comparative Literature? Definition, Institution, Discipline

- “Comparative Literature: Its Definition and Function,” Henry Remak, *Reader*
- Three Reports to the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA), in *Reader*
 - The Levin Report, 1965
 - The Greene Report, 1975
 - The Bernheimer Report, 1993

Week 3 (10/12)

The Crisis of Comparative Literature, the State of the Field

- “Introduction: The Anxieties of Comparison,” Charles Bernheimer, in *Reader*
- “In the Name of Comparative Literature,” Rey Chow, in *Reader*
- “Exquisite Cadavers Stitched from Fresh Nightmares: Of Memes, Hives, and Selfish Genes,” Haun Saussy, in Saussy, 3-42.

Week 4 (10/19)

Comparative Literature, Cultural Studies, Area Studies

- *Death of a Discipline*, Chapter 1, “Crossing Borders,” Gayatri C. Spivak, *Reader*
- “On the Complementarity of Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies,” Michael Riffaterre, *Reader*
- “Global Literature and the Technologies of Recognition,” Shu-mei Shih, *PMLA* 119.1 (2004), available online

Week 5 (10/26)

World Literature

- “Goethe Coins a Phrase,” David Damrosch, *Reader*
- “World Literature in a Postcanonical, Hypercanonical Age,” Damrosch, in Saussy, pp. 43-53.
- “Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism,” Fredric Jameson, *Social Text* 15 (Fall 1986), available online
- “Conjectures on World Literature,” Franco Moretti, *New Left Review* 1 (Jan-Feb. 2000), available online

Week 6 (11/2)

Humanism, Eurocentrism, Orientalism

- *Mimesis*, Chapter 1, “Odysseus’ Scar,” Erich Auerbach, *Reader*
- *Culture and Imperialism*, “Connecting Empire to Secular Interpretation,” pp. 43-61, Edward Said, *Reader*
- *Orientalism*, “Introduction,” Edward Said, *Reader*

Week 7 (11/9)

Comparative Literature and Theory

- “Looking Back at ‘Literary Theory,’” Richard Rorty, in Saussy, pp. 63-67.
- “Cultivating Mere Gardens? Comparative Francophonies, Postcolonial Studies, and Transnational Feminisms,” Françoise Lionnet, in Saussy, pp. 100-113.
- “What’s Happened to Feminism?” Gail Finney, in Saussy, pp. 114-126.
- “Comparative Literature, at Last,” Jonathan Culler, in Saussy, pp. 237-248.

Week 8 (11/16)

Comparative Literature and Translation

- “Writing in Tongues: Thoughts on the Work of Translation,” Steven Ungar, in Saussy, pp. 127-138.
- “Global *Translatio*: The ‘Invention’ of Comparative Literature, Istanbul, 1933,” Emily Apter, *Reader*
- *The World Republic of Letters*, Chapter 1, “Principles of a World History of Literature,” Pascale Casanova, *Reader*

Week 9 (11/23)

Comparative Literature and Other Disciplines and Arts

- “World Music, World Literature: A Geopolitical View,” Kate Trumpener, in Saussy, pp. 185-202.
- “Of Monuments and Documents: Comparative Literature and the Visual Arts,” Christopher Braider, in Saussy, pp. 155-174.
- “Situating World Cinema as a Theoretical Problem,” Stephanie Dennison and Song-hwee Lim, *Reader*

Week 10 (11/30)

Practical Matters of the Profession

How to write a conference paper or a publishable paper;
Circulate, read, and critique fellow classmates’ draft papers;
The MLA Handbook;
Journals, associations, institutions, conferences, job lists.

Select Bibliography

(Pick one for a book report; a relevant book outside this list is OK too)

- Aldridge, Owen, ed. *Comparative Literature: Matter and Method*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964.
- Apter, Emily. *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature*. Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Auerbach, Erich. *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Trans. Willard Trask. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953.
- Bassnett, Susan. *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford, UK/Cambridge, USA: Blackwell, 1993.
- Casanova, Pascale. *The World Republic of Letters*. Trans. M. B. Debevoise. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Damrosch, David. *What is World Literature?* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.
- Jost, Francois. *Introduction to Comparative Literature*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1974.
- Guillen, Claudio. *The Challenge of Comparative Literature*. Trans. Cola Franzen. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Levin, Harry. *Grounds for Comparison*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972.
- Spivak, Gayatri. *Death of A Discipline*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Stallknecht, Newton, and Horst Frenz, eds. *Comparative Literature: Method and Perspective*. Revised edition. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1971.
- Wellek, Rene, and Austin Warren. *Theory of Literature*, 3rd ed. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1956.
- Weisstein, Ulrich. *Einführung in die vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft*. Stuttgart: Kohlhanimer, 1968. (There is an English version—*Comparative Literature and Literary Theory*, but our library does not seem to have it.)

COURSE READER CONTENTS

- “Comparative Literature: Its Definition and Function,” Henry Remak (from *Comparative Literature: Method and Perspective*, ed. Newton Stallknecht and Horst Frenz)
- Three Reports to the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA)
 - The Levin Report, 1965
 - The Greene Report, 1975
 - The Bernheimer Report, 1993(from *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism*, ed. Charles Bernheimer)
- “Introduction: The Anxieties of Comparison,” Charles Bernheimer (from Bernheimer anthology)
- “In the Name of Comparative Literature,” Rey Chow (from Bernheimer anthology)
- *Death of a Discipline*, Chapter 1, “Crossing Borders,” Gayatri C. Spivak
- “On the Complementarity of Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies,” Michael Riffaterre (from Bernheimer anthology)
- “Goethe Coins a Phrase,” David Damrosch (from *What is World Literature?* by Damrosch)
- *Mimesis*, Chapter 1, “Odysseus’ Scar,” Erich Auerbach
- *Culture and Imperialism*, “Connecting Empire to Secular Interpretation,” Edward Said
- *Orientalism*, “Introduction,” Edward Said
- “Global *Translatio*: The ‘Invention’ of Comparative Literature, Istanbul, 1933,” Emily Apter (from *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature* by Apter)
- *The World Republic of Letters*, Chapter 1, “Principles of a World History of Literature,” Pascale Casanova
- “Situating World Cinema as a Theoretical Problem,” Stephanie Dennison and Song-hwee Lim (from *Remapping World Cinema: Identity, Culture and Politics in Film*, ed. Dennison and Lim)