

**CMLT-C 501 (11801) Intro to Contemporary Literary Studies: Comparative Literature and the Questioning of Borders: Rethinking the World, Universalism, and Multiplicity | E. Peretz | T 4:45-8:15 pm | 3cr**

One of the most pressing questions of our time is the need to rethink the concept of the world and of what it can mean for us today to live in a world, rather than exclusively within the borders of a specific nation, language, or religion. A major contribution of some of the most advanced theoretical developments of the last fifty years, this course will argue, is to allow us to develop such a rethinking of the concept of a world, thus, of that which is *shared and communicated* across humanity *in excess of every delimiting border*. This new thinking of a dimension, the



dimension of the world, communicating in excess of every border, should be distinguished, we will argue, from several previous models of thinking: It should be distinguished from the dream of a cosmopolitanism, of a *unification* of humanity through the cancellation of the borders and languages separating it, as well as from the dream of finding the ultimate ideal of truth, value, and meaning in which all of humanity can share (enlightenment humanism). It should also be distinguished from the conception of the world as consisting of a relativistic plurality of separate and autonomous cultures, each having its own ideals and values which cannot be judged by another. If there is a dimension of humanity which communicates across borders, it will not mean the cancellation of borders but a new thinking of the logic of the border, a thinking which will also have to invent a new logic of the universal. If there is an essential thinking of multiplicity in this new logic, it will not be the thinking of a relativistic plurality of separate and complete entities, but of an *essential multiplicity* of fragmented and incomplete entities exposed to each other. It is the task of comparative literature, we will argue, to become the discipline activating this new thinking of the borders and of the discovery of a new notion of the world, and it will be the task of this class to elaborate this new way of thinking by creating a framework through which to think together several of the essential theoretical contributions of our time.

**Comp Lit graduate students must also enroll in C502.**

**CMLT-C 502 (11802) Fields and Methods of Comparative Lit**

**E. Peretz | R 7:00 -7:50 pm | 1 cr**

See above description

**CMLT-C 535 (27964) Late 19<sup>th</sup>/Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries: The Affect of Realism | J. Turk | R 4:00 – 6:30 pm | 4 cr**

Literary realism is the major literary movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century reaching from Balzac to Stifter, Raabe, Flaubert, Schnitzler and Fontane. Since its first use in 1826, the term “realism” has not been limited to this historical meaning. It was also used as a polemic as well as a typological term that defines a type of text. The notion is commonly held to stand for a specific form of *mimetic* prose that is characterized by its relationship to political and social actuality, its exactitude in the representation of temporal and special details as well as its psychological differentiation. As such, it determines the contours of the literary until today. This course examines realist fiction and introduces to major texts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The question that will guide our readings of literary and theoretical texts is how and if literary language can relate to psychological, social, and political reality and what constitutes this literary reference. The thematic focus of the course is the question of affect. Affects and feelings not only play a crucial role in narrative intrigue, their production is also

one of the major effects of literature. A narrator that is impassible or absent from the text and does not display emotions often characterizes realist literature, while affects are limited to the analyzed fictive characters. How affects and feelings can be described and examined is far from clear. They resist representation and challenge concepts of realism. We will also read short excerpts from rhetorical, philosophic, psychological and scientific texts that provide paradigms for the observation of affects. Readings (not finalized and open to suggestions; readings in brackets might be too time consuming to be read in the course)

Balzac, *Colonel Chabert*

Keller, *Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe*

Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*

(Gustaf Freytag, *Soll und Haben*)

Wilhelm Raabe, *Die Akten des Vogelsangs*

Arthur Schnitzler, *Lieutenant Gustl*  
(Stendhal, *La Chartreuse de Parme*)

Adalbert Stifter, *Brigitta*

Theodor Storm, *Immensee*

Kafka, *Der Heizer*

Musil, *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* (first chapter)

Excerpts from philosophic and scientific texts on affect will be provided on oncourse.

**CMLT-C 576 (30400) Comparative Approach to Chinese Literature: Late Imperial Chinese Literature | K. Tsai | R 4:00 – 6:30 pm | 4 cr**

This course surveys the literary and filmic representations of the Chinese knight-errant (*wuxia*) from antiquity to the present day. In the earliest days ancient philosophers regarded the knight-errant as supermoral, transgressive, and anti-authoritarian, this portrait evolved through historiography and the rise of fiction and film to assimilate a range of gender, social, and literary issues within its framework of the heroic narrative, and as such, it offers a unique vantage point for Chinese literature and society. How does this masculine tradition come to have such a central place for the female knight-errant, of which there is no analogue in the West? How does her very existence question and affirm social order simultaneously? After examining the knight-errant in classical tales and in early modern vernacular novels (e.g., *The Water Margin*) in the first half of the course, we will explore the knight-errant in modernity, including topics such as the birth of the Cantonese school of *wuxia* fiction, Jin Yong and his debt to Cervantes, and the explosion of popular

Hong Kong action cinema as well as art house films by Wong Kar-wai and Zhang Yimou. Though the readings will be available in English, those with a command of modern, early modern vernacular, and/or literary Chinese will be encouraged to tackle the texts in the original language. No language requirement is met through this course.



**CMLT-C581 (11805) Workshop in Literary Translation | B. Johnston | TR 2:30 – 3:45 pm | 4cr**

This workshop will focus on practical issues of literary translation. We will consider the problems of translating poetry, prose, drama, and other genres. Class time will be devoted to the analysis of existing translations, workshops on translation issues, and to work on our own translations. A strong emphasis will be placed on professional aspects of literary translation such as publication and representation. Evaluation will be by a series of practical assignments revolving around short translation projects in different genres. A wide range of languages will be represented in class, though we will always be translating into English. You will need a thorough knowledge of English and at least one other language. No prior experience of literary translation is required.

**CMLT-C 603 (21943) Topics in Comparative Literature: Renaissance and 17<sup>th</sup>Century | S. Van der Laan | TR 2:30 – 3:45 pm | 4 cr**



The Renaissance saw the last great flowering of the Western epic tradition. After centuries of relative neglect, the epic became once again the form of choice for poets intent on exploring nationhood, community, and the human spirit on a grand canvas. More than any other literary genre, the epics of Christian Europe reached back to those of classical Greece and Rome for their poetic vocabulary of nationhood and the role of the individual in that nation. Why should the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, so “early modern” in many other respects, have been the last to turn to this ancient form for their national poems? How did the belatedness of this recovery shape these epics? How did the epic tradition change in response to the transformed cultural and religious context—or, to paraphrase a recent study of this problem, how does epic make the transition “from many gods to one”?

In this course we will concentrate on four major Renaissance epics. The small northern Italian city-state of Ferrara, in the sixteenth century a cultural powerhouse to rival the Florence of a century before, provides half our syllabus: Ludovico Ariosto’s *Orlando furioso* (1532), the astonishing fusion of the medieval tales of Arthurian and Carolingian knights with the epic and contemporary concerns of nation-building and a clash of civilizations, and Torquato Tasso’s *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581), a narrative of the first Crusade composed at the height of the Counter-Reformation. Luiz Vaz de Camões’s *Os Lusíades* (1572) celebrates the Portuguese explorations of Africa and the Indian subcontinent; John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (1667) responds to the fall of the English commonwealth and the restoration of the monarchy by looking back to a greater Fall and imagining a final, triumphant recovery. By studying these poems together, we will locate them in a European epic tradition stretching back to Homer, a tradition that reaches across linguistic and national boundaries. We will uncover the extraordinary intertextual and allusive richness of the epic tradition. At the same time, we will situate each poem in its contemporary literary and historical context in order to understand how the epic responds to and attempts to reshape its cultural and political environment. We will also examine both Renaissance and modern theories of epic. Assignments will include presentations and a research paper of approximately 25 pages. NB: Students who are not familiar with Vergil’s *Aeneid* should read that epic before the course begins.

## Comparative Literature Graduate Courses Fall 2010



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The comparative study of literature is concerned with the relationships between literature and other arts and fields of knowledge. Its emphasis has traditionally been on the systematic comparison of literary works from more than one culture. This comparison may be made in the framework of a literary genre, a period in literary history, or dominant themes and motifs; or it can be undertaken in the context of the mutual impact of two national cultures or entire civilizations. In recent years, comparative literature has been increasingly concerned with theoretical approaches to literature and with exploring relationships between literature and such areas as music, the visual arts, film, philosophy, religion, political thought, and the natural and social sciences. In essence, the mission of the Department of Comparative Literature at I.U. is to be on the cutting edge of international interdisciplinary studies in literature and related arts.