

**CMLT-C 501 (16693) Intro to Contemporary Literary Studies: Comparative Literature and the Questioning of Borders: Rethinking the World, Universalism, and Multiplicity | E. Peretz | T 5:45 – 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 (16694) Fields and Methods of Comparative Lit  
E. Peretz | R 7:00 – 7:50 pm | 1 cr**

See above description

**CMLT-C 537 (30087) The Twentieth Century | E. Julien | TR 4:00 – 5:15 pm | 4 cr**

A survey of figures and currents in literature of the twentieth century via creative and critical texts from Europe, the Americas, Asia and Africa. These are likely to include works by Anna Akhmatova, Guillaume Apollinaire, Antonin Artaud, Walter Benjamin, Samuel Beckett, Jorge Luis Borges, Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, William Faulkner, Sigmund Freud, Franz Kafka, Lu Xun, Marcel Proust, Edward Said, Jean Paul Sartre, Wole Soyinka, Rabindranath Tagore, Virginia Woolf, Raymond Williams, William Butler Yeats. Close reading and discussion. Student presentations. Two papers. Please contact Professor Eileen Julien for more information: <ejulien>.

**CMLT-C580 (30090) History and Theory of Translation | P. Losensky | MW 11:15 am — 12:30 pm | 4cr**

This seminar will explore the burgeoning field of translation studies and the central role of translation in the field of comparative literature. We will first look at the history of translation, with an emphasis on the English tradition, and examine some representative translations from the Renaissance to the present. Close readings of influential, “pre-theoretical” statements on translation will provide a foundation for our study of the development of translation studies since the 1960s. Concepts such as translatability, equivalence, resistance, uncertainty, naturalization, and foreignization will be analyzed in terms of various models of language, social communication, and poetics. We will also consider how the field of translation studies engages other trends in contemporary criticism, such as structuralism, deconstruction, gender studies, and post-colonialism. Participants in this seminar are expected to play an active role in leading and participating in discussions of the readings and of their own research. They are also required to prepare written discussion questions for one or more of the readings, to write a formal proposal of a seminar project, and to present the final project orally to the class before submitting it in written form. A good knowledge of English and at least one other language is a prerequisite for this seminar.



**CMLT-C 601 (30093) History of Theory and Criticism: Reading Poetry Across Cultures | K. Tsai | TR 2:30 pm – 3:45 pm | 4 cr**

What is poetry, what does it do, and what makes a good poem? By examining key works of poetry and criticism, we will tackle these fundamental questions in literary traditions across the world and throughout history. From originating moments in antiquity to contemporary America, poetic practice and criticism have formed a dynamic relationship of mutual influence, bringing the aesthetic into a unique relationship with the social, the political, and the cultural. As such, poetry embodies the unique mode of cognition fundamental to literature. The other sense of “reading across” is the circulation of poetry far beyond its originating context. The problem here is (at least) twofold: the reception of one cultural and aesthetic system by another, and the real and subtle effect of translation. If both the Japanese and the Romans had to address the crisis of native literary identity in confronting the giants of the Chinese and the Greek tradition respectively, how did the different political relationship shape the reception? If, as Charles Simic said, modern American poetry is deeply indebted to classical Chinese poetry, how did the translation practices of Waley, Pound, and Rexroth fashion the operative image of Chinese poetry? Finally, though haiku is so widespread in the poetic experimentations of world, why does so much of it outside the original cultural environment stink of failure? Students are encouraged to bring in authors and critics from any tradition for the class to explore. All readings will be in English translation.

**CMLT-C 603 (30097) Topics: The Renaissance Epic | S. Van der Laan | MW 2:30 pm - 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

