

**CMLT-C 511 (30619) | Drama | A. Pao | W 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm | 4 cr**

One of the unique properties of the dramatic text is its capacity to establish an environmental field that is both conceptual and material. The spatial relations generated by a dramatic work are both inherent in the text and a potential that is realized only in performance. In this class, we will consider a range of approaches to the study of dramatic space that draw on theories and models from phenomenology, semiotics, and human geography. Among the central issues we will consider are the poetics and politics of place as they function in drama. The existing critical literature focuses primarily on modern and contemporary European and North American drama; one of our tasks will be to expand the perimeters of current work to test their relevance for earlier eras and non-Western forms of drama.



Critical readings:

Una Chaudhuri – Staging Place: The Geography of Modern Drama.

Gay McAuley – Space in Performance: Making Meaning in the Theatre.

Additional readings: Bert O. States, Stanton B. Garner, Anne Ubersfeld, Marco de Marinis, Michel de Certeau, Yifu Tuan, Henri Lefebvre, Gaston Bachelard.

Drama:

Strindberg: *Miss Julie*, Ibsen: *The Wild Duck*, Jean Genet: *The Maids*, Samuel Beckett: short plays, Ping Chong: *Nuit Blanche*, Pinter: *The Homecoming*, Shepard: *Buried Child*, Caryl Churchill: *Ice Cream*, George C. Wolfe: *The Colored Museum*, Suzan Lori-Parks: *The America Play*, Robert Lepage: *Seven Streams of the River Ota*, Sophocles: *Oedipus at Colonus*, Shakespeare: *Othello*, Racine: *Phaedra*.

Assignments: annotated bibliography, 18-20 page paper, leading one discussion, presentation of seminar paper.

**CMLT-C 525 (30624) | Renaissance & 17<sup>th</sup> Century | S. Van der Laan | TR 11:15-12:30 | Meets with CMLT-C325 | 4 cr**

The word “renaissance” means “rebirth”; the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century writers, artists, philosophers, and rulers who claimed to preside over it argued that they were reviving the glories of classical Greece and Rome after a thousand years of darkness and decline. The Renaissance is also known as the “early modern” period, so named by scholars who believe that it laid the foundations for our modern era of individualism and unfettered scientific and intellectual inquiry. In this class, we will trace the cultural movement known as the Renaissance from its origins in fourteenth-century Italy, through France, Spain, and northern Europe, to its final flowering in seventeenth-century England. We will discover the origins of modern drama and opera, of representations of the individual in lyric poetry and essays, and of celebrations of the human body in art. We will witness the Protestant Reformation, the birth of modern science, and the development of new ideas about humanity’s place in the universe. We will observe new developments in art and architecture. Finally, we will explore the origins and the legacy of the Renaissance. To what extent was the Renaissance really the revival of

ancient Greek and Roman culture that it claimed to be? How much did it owe to the Middle Ages it so contemptuously dismissed? And how did it set the scene for the birth of modernity?

**CMLT-C 573 (30629) COMP TOPICS MID EAST&WEST LIT | P. Losensky | MWF 10:10-11:00 am | 4 cr | Meets with CMLT-C370**



Sindbad, Scheherazade, Ali Baba, and Aladdin—the stories of these characters have been retold so often that they have become part of our global literary imagination. In this course, we will examine how *The Thousand and One Nights*, or *Arabian Nights*, took shape in medieval Islamic culture and, like Sindbad, voyaged around the world. To begin our journey, we will study the origins and structure of the work, its narrative techniques, typical character types, and the social values and aspirations they embody. We will

then map the travels of the *Nights* around the world through the history of its translations into western languages, comparing some of its many English versions. Finally, we will track the stories of the *Nights* into the mediums of visual art and film and discuss a few of its many rewritings in modern literature by authors such as William Beckford, E. A. Poe, Jorge Luis Borges, John Barth, and Naguib Mahfuz. In the course of our voyage, we will make land in the realms of narratology, Orientalism, and gender and translation studies. Students will be expected to attend film screenings on February 4, March 4, and April 8.

**CMLT-C 581 (30634) Workshop in Literary Translation | B. Johnston | MW 2:30 pm -3:45 pm | 4 cr**

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 (30639) Topics in Comparative Literature: History, Empire and Destruction: The Cases of Bolaño and Sebald | P. Dove | TR 9:30am – 10:45am | 4 cr**

In this seminar we will explore the possibility of common ground between two major writers of the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, Roberto Bolaño (Chile, México and Cataluña) and W.G. Sebald (Germany, England). We will be reading Bolaño’s 1100 page magnum opus *2666* (2004) and Sebald’s novel *The Rings of Saturn* (1995) as well as selections from his *On the Natural History of Destruction* (1999). Some fairly obvious common ground can be found in the ways these literary works are marked by histories of



dictatorship, war, exile, displacement and defeat. For instance, both writers are deeply concerned with questions of historical memory and forgetting—Sebald in the context of the destruction and historical traumas of WWII together with post-war “amnesia”; Bolaño in relation to the crisis of the Latin American left during the early 1970s (the failure of the Chilean experiment with socialism and the equally disastrous “Padilla Affair” in Cuba), as well as the global hegemony of neoliberalism in the 1990s and beyond. Less obvious, but by no means less interesting or important, is the matter of how Bolaño and Sebald—as writers but also as literary phenomena or “events”—open up new possibilities for historically-attuned reflection on “literature” and its status in our time. It that light, it is surely not coincidental that *2666* and *The*

*Rings of Saturn* share a key literary point of reference: Borges’s short story “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius,” a classic meditation on the relation between language, thought, knowledge and empire—which we will also read alongside Bolaño and Sebald. But the anchoring of these novels in a celebrated example of literary self-reflection should not obscure the possibility that the works of Bolaño and/or Sebald are also concerned with how contemporary world events (globalization, global war, the crisis of national sovereignty) portend the exhaustion of old ideological narratives that have served to define “literature” and assign it specific historical tasks since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Critical readings that will help guide our conversations include selections from Avital Ronell’s *Crack Wars*, Jacques Derrida’s *The Beast and the Sovereign* (volume 2), Jean-Luc Nancy’s *The Creation of the World or Globalization*, Carlo Galli’s *Political Spaces and Global War*, as well as shorter essays by Walter Benjamin, Maurice Blanchot, George Steiner, Andreas Huyssen and others.

**CMLT-C 647 (30644) Literary Studies & Philosophy: Doubles, Copy Clerks, and Clones | J. Emery | TR 4:00 pm – 5:15 pm | 4 cr**

Without doubling there is no art, but doubling itself takes a host of interrelated forms. For example, critics often define art as a mirror of the world or of the artist’s soul; we typically distinguish aesthetic objects from other kinds of objects insofar as they refer to and reflect upon themselves; artworks are disseminated through technologies of reproduction; and of course our own understanding comes with revisiting and reflecting on the artworks we encounter. Organized through an engagement with three literary types—



the *uncanny double*, the *copy clerk*, and the *clone*—this course explores narrative doublings in tandem with a set of philosophies of repetition. It aims both to develop sensitivity to the range of techniques and functions of doubling in art and to anatomize a related set of philosophic concepts including mimesis, reflection, homology, isomorphism, recurrence, re-presentation, eternal return, iteration, reproduction, simulation, and repetition. Literary works might include texts by Ovid, Shakespeare, Dostoevsky, Gogol, Nabokov, Flaubert, Melville, Murakami, Lispector, Rivette, Tarkovsky, Krzhizhanovsky, Wolfe, and O’Brien; authors of theoretical texts might include Plato, Aristotle, Schiller, Lotman, Freud, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Baudrillard, Benjamin, Krauss, and Owen.

## Comparative Literature Graduate Courses Spring 2013



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