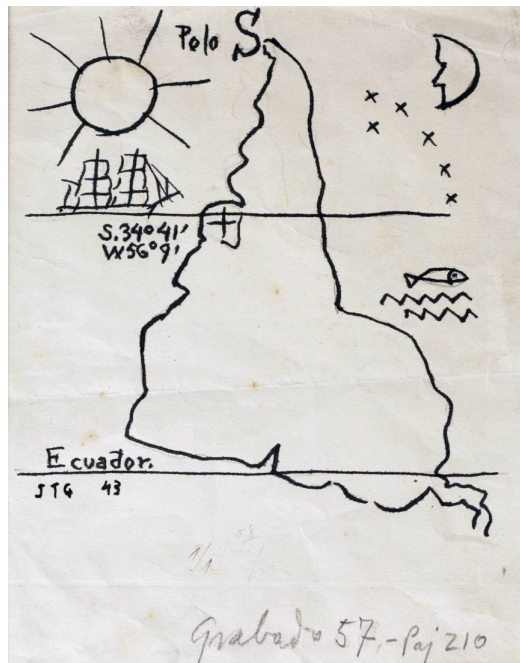


CL 97: Sophomore Tutorial
Wednesday 3-5pm
Dana Palmer 102

Instructor: Matylda Figlerowicz; matyldafiglerowicz@fas.harvard.edu
Office hours: Wed. 1-2pm or by appointment, Dana Palmer 204.

Teaching Fellow: Christine Legros; christinelegros@fas.harvard.edu
Regular meetings will be scheduled, office hours by appointment.



Joaquín Torres García, *América invertida*

If you're taking this course, it means Comparative Literature is your concentration or your secondary field. Welcome to the discipline!

But what does it mean to be a comparatist? This spring, we will wander together through the different paths Comparative Literature offers.

This is a course on history and methods. We will trace how the understanding of what it means to compare has changed through time and space. We will examine the sociopolitical roots of the discipline and think together with the intellectuals who shaped its different stages. To tell the stories of the discipline is, of course, also to inquire into its methods. We will experiment with different analytical modes, and see how they allow us to interact with literary texts. And we will explore theoretical and critical possibilities of both grounding and expanding our readings.

Course goals

- By the end of the course, you'll have a sense of comparative literature as a field: its roots and its main debates.
- The course will prepare you to analyze and design comparative frameworks: identify grounds of comparison a study adopts, as well as propose comparative projects you'd be interested in pursuing and explain their comparative foundation.
- In this course we will practice how to differentiate between different theoretical and methodological approaches, and how to put them to use in literary and visual analysis.
- This course aims to get you into the habit of regular writing, and will allow you to work on writing skills you might want to strengthen.
- In this course we will reflect on—and experience—different challenges and pleasures of comparatism.

Evaluation

The grading for this course will be based on three main elements

- 1) class participation (35%)
- 2) weekly assignments (35%)
- 3) final project (30%)

Class participation: you can miss one class without it affecting your grade in any way; and you can make up for two further absences by handing in an extra assignment (in order to do so, reach out to me after a missed class—within a week—to receive the prompt). Each extra absence will result in not getting credit for participation that week.

Weekly assignments: after each session, an assignment will be due by Friday 5pm, which you will send to the TF, Christine Legros. Each assignment will receive a grade; however, for turning in an assignment on time you receive full credit towards the final grade. The weekly grades are supposed to provide you with helpful information about what skills to work on. Late assignments will result in losing some of the credit for the work, increasing with each day. Assignments will not be accepted after Tuesday of the following week.

Final project: the final project will be due on May 8th. The final assignment is to write a research paper, 10-12 pages long. It will be a **comparative** paper, which will explicitly address the grounds for comparison it relies on. It will be built upon **literary analysis** (using at least one primary text from the course), situated within a **theoretical and critical framework** (using at least one theoretical text from the course, and bringing in at least two critical sources about the primary texts you analyze). You are invited to build the final paper upon the weekly writing assignments—feel free to use them directly or indirectly within the final paper.

All evaluation criteria can be modified in conversation with the Disability Access Office (DAO).

Note on content

Some of the works we will see in this course respond to and speak of different forms of violence and oppression. Some texts might use vocabulary or phrasings that feels inadequate or offensive. You are always welcome to bring up any discomfort with the texts—in class or just to me—to discuss it further.

Consult the “Content warning” document, available via Canvas, if you want to get a better sense of the themes each work deals with before you engage with the material.

Accommodations and support

Look to our Canvas page (tab “Support Resources”) to learn more about academic support, mental health support, and the existing advising network. Also don’t hesitate to reach out to me. To request academic accommodations, reach out to the Disability Access Office (DAO).

Acknowledgment of Land and People — by Harvard University Native American Program

Harvard University is located on the traditional and ancestral land of the Massachusett, the original inhabitants of what is now known as Boston and Cambridge. We pay respect to the people of the Massachusett Tribe, past and present, and honor the land itself which remains sacred to the Massachusett People.

Academic Integrity

Consult the Harvard College Honor Code (<https://oaisc.fas.harvard.edu/honor-code/>) and the Harvard University Plagiarism Policy (<https://usingsources.fas.harvard.edu/harvard-plagiarism-policy>). In this course, the use of AI to assist in the writing of your assignments is not allowed.

Class Attendance and Participation

In-person class attendance is mandatory. The use of computers or other electronic devices is not allowed, unless specified otherwise. If you have the texts for the week on an electronic device, please make sure it’s offline.

Course Schedule

Session 1. January 29th

Introduction to the course

Session 2. February 5th

Read for class:

Elizabeth Bishop, *Geography III*

Erich Auerbach, “Odysseus’ Scar.” In: *Mimesis*, pp. 3-23.

By Friday, 5pm: 2-page poem analysis.

Session 3. February 12th

Read for class:

Helen Vendler, "The Poems of Elizabeth Bishop." *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 12 no. 4, pp. 825-838.
Jahan Ramazani "Traveling Poetry." In: *A Transnational Poetics*, pp. 51-70.

By Friday, 5pm: 2-page analysis of a passage from one of the articles (or comparison between one passage from each article).

Session 4 February 19th

Read for class:

Juan José Saer, *El entenado (The Witness)*.

M.M. Bakhtin "Discourse in the Novel." In: *The Dialogic Imagination*, pp. 259-331
(recommended: the rest of the essay)

By Friday, 5pm: 2-page close-reading of a passage from the novel.

Session 5 February 26th

Read for class:

Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator." In: *Selected Writings*, pp. 253-263.

Barbara Cassin, Introduction to the *Dictionary of Untranslatables*, pp. xvii-xx.

By Friday, 5pm: translation of a poem and one-page commentary.

Session 6 March 5th

Read for class:

Joseph Conrad, "Amy Foster," in: *Typhoon and Other Stories*, pp. 83-114.

Edward Said "Between Worlds", *LRB*, Vol. 20 No. 9, 7 May 1998, pp. 1-9.

By Friday, 5pm: 2-page analysis of one important point made by Said about Conrad.

Session 7 March 12th

Read for class:

Jacques Derrida, *Monolingualism of the Other, or the Prosthesis of Origin*, pp. 1-18.

Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue: The Postmonolingual Condition*, pp. 1-29.

By Friday, 5pm: propose five possible comparative projects, each involving at least one text we've seen so far. The total description of all five should not exceed 2 pages.

March 19th Spring break

Session 8 March 26th

Read/watch for class:

Claire Denis, *Chocolat*.

Siegfried Kracauer, *Theory of Film*, pp. 27-74.

By Friday, 5pm: find two critical sources, each about one of the works we've seen so far; offer a description of their main points (total of 2 pages).

Session 9 April 2nd

Read for class:

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 1-62.

Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle* (“Separation Perfected,” “The Commodity as Spectacle,” “Negation and Consumption Within Culture”).

By Friday, 5pm: offer a 2-page analysis built around one scene from *Chocolat* and one theoretical text we’ve seen so far.

Session 10 April 9th

Read for class:

Luz Jiménez, *Life and Death in Milpa Alta*.

Kelly McDonough, “Introduction. Ixtlamatinih: Nahua Intellectuals Writing Mexican Modernity.” In: *The Learned Ones*, pp. 3-33.

By Friday, 5pm: offer a 2-page analysis built upon a passage from *Life and Death in Milpa Alta* and one theoretical text we’ve seen so far.

Session 11 April 16th

Read for class:

J. W. von Goethe and J. P. Eckermann, “Conversations on World Literature.” In: *The Princeton Sourcebook in Comparative Literature*, pp. 17-25.

Rivera Cusicanqui, “Ch’ixinakax utxiwa: A Reflection on the Practices and Discourses of Decolonization.” *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, vol. 111 no. 1, pp. 95-109.

By Friday, 5pm: propose three topics for the final paper, with short descriptions (total of 1 page).

Session 12 April 23rd

Read for class:

Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider*.

Virginia Woolf “The Modern Essay” pp. 41-50.

By Friday, 5pm: offer a comparative analysis of *Sister Outsider* and another primary texts we saw in class, focused on genre.

Session 13 April 30th

Read for class:

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, “Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading, Or, You’re So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Essay Is About You” pp. 123-151.

Namwali Serpell “Notes on Shade” *Post45*, no. 5, <https://post45.org/2021/01/serpell-notes-on-shade/>

By Friday, 5pm: write a research question for the chosen topic and an abstract of the final paper (total of 1 page).