

## SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

**Discipline: English Literature**

**Fall 2008**

**ENSP 287Z: Questions of Travel: World Literature and Film**

**Lower Division**

**Instructor Name: Joseph Chapman**

**Suggested Pre-requisites:** Completion of at least six credit hours in college level English or Comparative Literature.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The Western study of literature has changed from a Euro-centric discipline to a culturally diverse one. On Semester at Sea, our own Western perspectives as students and professors will broaden. However, as the course title suggests, I want us to focus on a few “Questions of Travel”: Do we create cities of the imagination when we travel? Do different settings, for example Namibia or Brazil, become metaphors rather than the places themselves? Using the radically different stories and poems of Paul Bowles and Elizabeth Bishop, the course will attempt to answer the following question: What happens when a foreign city becomes the Imagined City? Can the author prevent—or does she want to prevent—such a transformation? You will write two very short but focused papers in the class; you will also take Midterm and Final exams. Lively classroom discussion will play a key role. By the end of the class, I want you to have examined the beauty and risks of authorial travel.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Address key questions of travel.
2. Model methods of interpretations in literature.
3. Further students’ critical thinking skills.
4. Further students’ essay writing skills.

## TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

- CLASS 1: Introduction
- CLASS 2: THE WOUND OF HISTORY IN THE CARIBBEAN  
Selections from *Omeros*, Derek Walcott (1990)  
“The Wound of History: Walcott’s *Omeros* and the Postcolonial Poetics of Affliction,” Jahan Ramazani (1997)
- CLASS 3: Selections from *Omeros*, Derek Walcott (1990)  
“The Man Who Keeps the English Language Alive: An Interview with Derek Walcott,” Rebeka Presson (1992)  
“Thinking Poetry: An Interview with Derek Walcott,” Robert Brown and Cheryl Johnson (1990)  
“An Interview with Derek Walcott,” J.P. White (1990)
- CLASS 4: QUESTIONS OF TRAVEL: ELIZABETH BISHOP  
Selections from *Geography III*, Elizabeth Bishop (1976)  
“The Poems of Elizabeth Bishop,” Helen Vendler (1987)
- CLASS 5: Selections from *Questions of Travel*, Elizabeth Bishop (1965)
- CLASS 6: Selections from *Questions of Travel*, Elizabeth Bishop (1965)  
Selections from *The Collected Prose*, Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Giroux (1984)
- CLASS 7: Film: *City of God*, Fernando Meirelles (2002)  
**Essay 1 due**
- CLASS 8: PAUL BOWLES’ AFRICA  
Selections from *The Stories of Paul Bowles*, Paul Bowles (2006)
- CLASS 9: Selections from *The Stories of Paul Bowles*, Paul Bowles (2006)  
“The Subject of Paul Bowles,” Wayne Pound (1986)
- CLASS 10: Selections from *The Stories of Paul Bowles*, Paul Bowles (2006)
- CLASS 11: **Midterm Exam**
- CLASS 12: EXILE AT HOME: SOUTH AFRICA  
Film: *A Dry White Season*, Euzhan Palcy (1989)
- CLASS 13: Selections from *Windcatcher*, Breyton Breytenbach (2007)  
“Paradise and Loss in the Mirror Vision of Breyten Breytenbach” Brian F. Doherty (1995)

- CLASS 14: THE TAMIL ANTHOLOGIES: MYSTICISM/FEUDALISM  
Selections from *Poets of the Tamil Anthologies*, George L. Hart III (1979)  
“Introduction” George L. Hart III (1979)
- CLASS 15: Film: *Pather Panchali*, Satyajit Ray (1955)  
“The Artist in Politics. From an Interview with Satyajit Ray in Kolkata” Karuna Shankar Roy, Satyajit Ray, Samik Bandyopadhyay (1970)  
**Essay 2 due**
- CLASS 16: LI-YOUNG LEE AND THE IMAGINED CITY  
*The City in Which I Love You*, Li-Young Lee (1990)
- CLASS 17: *The City in Which I Love You*, Li-Young Lee (1990)  
“Working to Hear the Hum” Li-Young Lee (2006)
- CLASS 18: SHADOWS IN JAPANESE CULTURE  
Junichiro Tanizaki, *In Praise of Shadows* (1980)
- CLASS 19: Junichiro Tanizaki, *Shunkinsho*
- CLASS 20: Junichiro Tanizaki, *Shunkinsho*  
“Dialect in Tanizaki’s *Shuninsho*” Ward Geddes (1984)
- CLASS 21: Film: *Rashomon*, Akira Kurosawa (1951)
- CLASS 22: “Traditional Theater and the Film in Japan” Donald Richie and Joseph L. Anderson (1958)
- CLASS 23: **Final Exam**

## FIELD COMPONENT

Each student is required to complete THREE practica (either Faculty Directed or Independent). You are required to participate in TWO FDPs under my direction since they are central to the material covered in this class. The third practica can be an Independent Practicum developed as part of a regularly-offered SAS trip, or it may stand alone. If an Independent Practicum is selected, then the student must meet with the instructor prior to arriving in the port-of-call to discuss his or her approach and objectives.

We will use the field component to inform and expand our classroom readings. In this way, our travel experiences will become an essential part of the class. Your grade in the field component section will come from a journal you keep throughout the trip. Your journals will be graded for the quality of notes taken while in the field. Additional instructions will be provided before each field trip. To further integrate the field component of this trip, the midterm, and final exam will also ask you to synthesize your field experiences with the readings of the course.

### SUGGESTED PRACTICA:

BRAZIL: Sacatar: International Artists' Residency/Community (FDP)  
NAMIBIA: Salt Mines (FDP)  
SOUTH AFRICA: Authors in Cape Town (FDP); Township Visit and District Six Museum  
INDIA: Temples of India; Women Writers of India  
CHINA: Suzhou (FDP)  
JAPAN: Poetry Reading; Rokko Mountain Hike and Public Bath; Japanese Tea Ceremony;  
Takarazuka Review

### METHODS OF EVALUATION

ESSAY 1: 15%  
MIDTERM EXAM: 25%  
FIELD COMPONENT: 20%  
ESSAY 2: 20%  
FINAL EXAM: 30%  
PARTICIPATION: 10%

**Assignments:** You will write two very short essays in the class. I will not accept late assignments. You will also take a Midterm and Final exam. However, one of our goals is to learn from one another, and your participation in this class is essential. You are expected to contribute to class discussions (of readings and films), participate in group assignments, and complete short individual assignments.

**Attendance/Participation Policy:** You will receive an "A" in participation for the following: responding critically and thoughtfully to the readings and your classmates' responses to the readings. That means completing all reading assignments and contributing to class discussion multiple times per meeting. You will receive a "B" in participation for the following: contributing to class discussion once or twice per meeting and completing most of the reading assignments. You will receive a "C" or lower in participation for the following: missing class and/or contributing to class discussion erratically and irregularly. Do not be late. Do not miss class. You will get two free absences, but after that your grade drops by a letter with each absence. Two tardies equal one absence.

### REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

**AUTHOR:** Elizabeth Bishop  
**TITLE:** The Complete Poems 1927-1979  
**PUBLISHER:** Farrar, Strous and Giroux  
**ISBN #:** 0374518173  
**DATE/EDITION:** 1984  
**COST:** \$14

**AUTHOR:** Paul Bowles  
**TITLE:** The Stories of Paul Bowles  
**PUBLISHER:** Harper Perennial  
**ISBN #:** 0061137049  
**DATE/EDITION:** 2006  
**COST:** \$15

**AUTHOR:** Li-Young Lee  
**TITLE:** The City in Which I Love You  
**PUBLISHER:** Boa Editions Ltd.  
**ISBN #:** 0918526833  
**DATE/EDITION:** 1990  
**COST:** \$15

**AUTHOR:** Junichiro Tanizaki  
**TITLE:** In Praise of Shadows  
**PUBLISHER:** Leetes Island Books  
**ISBN #:** 0918172020  
**DATE/EDITION:** 1980  
**COST:** \$10

**AUTHOR:**  
**TITLE:** Course Pack  
**PUBLISHER:**  
**ISBN #:**  
**DATE/EDITION:**  
**COST:**

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Film: *City of God*, Fernando Meirelles (2002)

Film: *A Dry White Season*, Euzhan Palcy (1989)

Film: *Pather Panchali*, Satyajit Ray (1955)

Film: *Rashomon*, Akira Kurosawa (1951)