

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Discipline: Comparative Literature

Fall 2008

ENSP 361Z: Space as Literature: travelers, dreamers, natives

Upper Division

Instructor: Professor Gustavo Fares, Ph.D.

This course is an introduction to the study of space and borders as presented in three types of texts from or about the regions we will visit. We will examine travel literature authored by Europeans who visited other areas of the world, including Columbus' entries in his diary about the Antilles, Cortez's letters about Tenochtitlan, and Marco Polo's writings on China, among others. We will study descriptions of space from writers who never traveled to the places they discuss, such as Montesquieu to Persia, Thomas More to Utopia, and Borges to China or to Tlön. Finally, students will analyze the role of space in contemporary literature by native authors who write about the regions we will visit. Throughout the course, students will give presentations based on their fieldwork done in the ports, relating the literary and visual spaces we discuss to their impressions of the spaces we visit. The course will include relevant examples of spatial representations both in the visual arts and in films. Suggested background or pre-requisite is the successful completion of at least three previous credit hours in college level English or Comparative Literature courses

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course aims to improve each student's ability to read and to understand literature and to convey that understanding to others through both written and spoken English. The readings and activities are geared to enrich the students' experience of other cultures by combining classroom discussions, readings, writing exercises, and their field experiences. To achieve this goal, the class will explore the presentation of different spaces in literature and relate them to the students' experiences in the ports we will visit.

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

August 29. Depart Nassau, Bahamas

Class Session 1 - Welcome. Orientation to class. Space as topic. Theoretical approaches.

Class Session 2 – Travelers: Columbus, Cortes.

Class Session 3 – Guimarães Rosa. *The third bank of the river* (Selections). Utopian: *Brazil* (DVD)

2 page essay

September 7-11. Salvador, Brazil

Class Session 4 – Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Introduction to African literatures.

Class Session 5 - Travelers: *Equiano's Travels*. Selections from *Under African skies: modern African stories*.

Class Session 6 – Selections from *Under African skies: modern African stories*. Poems from *Dreams*.

September 19-23. Walvis Bay, Namibia

Class Session 7 - Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Selections from *Under African skies: modern African stories*.

September 26-October 2. Cape Town, South Africa

Class Session 8 – Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Introduction to Indian literatures.

2 page essay

Class Session 9 - Borges as Utopian: "Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" *The Darjeeling Limited* (DVD)

Class Session 10 - Travels of Marco Polo: Book 3. Rushdie. *East, West, Stories*.

Class Session 11 - Traveler & Native: Rushdie. *East, West, Stories*.

Class Session 12 – Traveler & Native: Rushdie. *East, West, Stories*. Utopians: Moro, Montaigne, Montesquieu.

October 14-18. Chennai, India

Class Session 13 - Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Asian Utopia: *Peach Blossom Spring. In Custody* (DVD)

2 page essay

Class Session 14 - Travels of Marco Polo: Book 2. Borges as Utopian: "Garden of Forking Paths"

October 22-26. Penang, Malaysia

Class Session 15 - Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Introduction to Vietnamese literature. *Cyclo* (DVD)

October 30- November 3. Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Class Session 16 – Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Introduction to Chinese literature. Utopia: *Flowers in the Mirror* (Selections). *Blade Runner* (DVD)

November 6-7. Hong Kong

November 10-11. Shanghai, China

Class Session 17 - Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Introduction to Japanese literature. *Once upon a time in Shanghai* (DVD)

November 14-15. Kobe, Japan

November 17-18. Yokohama, Japan

Class Session 18 - Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Murakami's *After the quake: stories*. (Selections)

Class Session 19 - Murakami's *After the quake: stories*. (Selections)

2 page essay

Class Session 20 – Murakami's *After the quake: stories*. (Selections) Japanese Poetry: Haikus. Japanese Arts: Hiroshige's xilographies.

Class Session 21 – Queen Lili'uokalani's songs and poems. *An account of the creation of the World*.

November 27. Honolulu, Hawai'i

Class Session 22 - Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Queen Lili'uokalani's *Hawaii's Story* (Selections). *Hawaii's Last Queen* (VHS)

Class Session 23 – Discussion of overall topics

FINAL EXAM

December 7-9 Puntarenas, Costa Rica
December 11, Panama Canal
December 12. Fort Lauderdale, Florida

FIELD COMPONENT

Field component provides twenty percent of course work. Following each field excursion, students will engage in discussions centered on the extent on which the presentations of spaces they have encountered in the literature they have read, and written about in their papers, correspond to the cultures on shore. Initial ideas which students draw from readings and from written assignments will be tested against the students' real experiences. The field component will be reflected in the students' journals, and it will also be part of their written assignments and class discussions.

Grade Distribution

The grade will be based on the following components:

40 % of grade based on four 2 page essays over the course of the semester. The papers will have at least 800 words, regardless of formatting. DUE in classes 3, 8, 13, and 19.

20 % will be based on the final exam

20 % class participation

20 % Field component. The field component will be reflected in the students' journals and on their written assignments. Each student will have a reading and traveling journal. The journal will have a summary of the reading for the class, a list of at least 5 words that the student considers relevant to the topic of the course, and two questions, related to each of the readings and to the shore excursions, which will be shared in class. The journal will be checked periodically for completion.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Author: Larson, Charles
Title: *Under African skies: modern African stories*
Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux
Date/Edition: Noonday Press 1997.
ISBN: 10:0-374-52550-1
Cost: \$12.00

Author: Rushdie, Salman
Title: *East, West, Stories*
Publisher: Pantheon Books
Date/Edition: any
Cost: \$12.00

Author: Murakami, Haruki
Title: *After the quake: stories*
Publisher: Vintage
Date/Edition: any
Cost: \$11.00

RESERVE LIBRARY LIST

AUTHOR: Oyekan Owomoyela
TITLE: *African literatures: an introduction*
PUBLISHER: Crossroads Press
ISBN #: 0918456185
DATE/EDITION: any
COST: \$35.00

AUTHOR: Dimock, Edward C.
TITLE: *The Literatures of India: an introduction*
PUBLISHER: University of Chicago
ISBN #: 0266152324
DATE/EDITION: any
COST: \$5.00

AUTHOR: Idema, Wilt, and Lloyd Haft
TITLE: *A Guide to Chinese Literature*
PUBLISHER: University of Michigan
ISBN #: 0892640995
DATE/EDITION: 1997
COST: \$25.00

AUTHOR: Bachelard, Gaston
TITLE: *The poetics of space*
PUBLISHER: New York, Orion Press
ISBN #:
DATE/EDITION: 1964
COST: \$11.00

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

In addition to course texts and reserve library materials, each faculty member will have an electronic course folder housed on the ship's intranet. The University of Virginia library will scan articles and chapters identified by the faculty member as needed supplementary materials for the courses they are teaching. These supplementary materials will be placed in the faculty member's intranet folder for students to access from their own computers or from the computer lab.

AUTHOR: Polo, Marco
CHAPTERS: Book 2 (chapters 10-20 included), and Book 3 (chapters 1-10 included)
BOOK TITLE: *The travels of Marco Polo (the Venetian)*.
VOLUME: Revised from Marsden's translation and edited with introd. by Manuel Komroff.
DATE: 1953

AUTHOR: Li, Ju-chen
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE:
BOOK TITLE: *Flowers in the mirror*.

VOLUME: Translated and edited by Lin Tai-yi
DATE: Berkeley, University of California Press, 1965
PAGES: Chapter 6 through 10 (Pages 44-86)

AUTHOR: Borges, Jorge Luis
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: "Tlon, Uqbar. Orbis Tertius" (pgs 68-81) & "The Garden of Forking Paths" (pgs 119-128)
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *Collected fictions*
VOLUME: Translated by Andrew Hurley. New York: Viking,
DATE: 1998

AUTHOR: Cortés, Hernán
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE:
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *The five letters of relation from Fernando Cortes to the Emperor Charles V.* Translated and edited by A. R. Pagden
VOLUME: New York, Grossman Publishers
DATE: 1971
PAGES: From the "Second Letter" (Pgs 101-112)

AUTHOR: Edward Everett Hale
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE:
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *The Life of Christopher Columbus: from his own letters and journals and other documents of his time* (Chicago: G. L. Howe & Co. 1891)
VOLUME: University of Virginia Library <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/HalLife.html>.

AUTHOR: Guimarães Rosa, João
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: *The third bank of the river, and other stories*
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE:
VOLUME: New York, Knopf
DATE: 1968
PAGES: 189-212

AUTHOR: Equiano, Olaudah
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE:
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *Equiano's travels*
VOLUME: Abridged and edited by Paul Edwards. Oxford; Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann,
DATE: 1996
PAGES: Chapter 3

AUTHOR: White, Frederic Randolph
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: *Famous utopias of the renaissance.*
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE:
VOLUME: Putney, Vt.: Hendricks House
DATE: 1981
PAGES: 41-46 & 137-152

AUTHOR: Appadurai, Arjun
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE:
VOLUME: Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

DATE: 1996
PAGES: Chapters 2 and 3

AUTHOR: Frank, Joseph
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: "Spatial Form in Modern Literature."
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *The idea of spatial form*
VOLUME:
DATE: 1991
PAGES: 1-66

AUTHOR: Montesquieu
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE:
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *The Persian letters of Montesquieu*
VOLUME: New York: L. MacVeagh, The Dial Press, Toronto: Longmans, Green & Co.,
DATE: 1929
PAGES: Letters 1 through 12

AUTHOR: Queen Lili'uokalani
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE:
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *Hawaii's Story*
VOLUME:
DATE: 1898
PAGES: Chapters 42-44.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

DVD/VHS clips from the following titles:

1. *The Darjeeling Limited* (DVD)
2. *Blade Runner*
3. *Brazil*
4. *Cyclo*
5. PBS: The American Experience *Hawaii's Last Queen*