

CLS News

Newsletter of the Program in Comparative Literary Studies

Program in Comparative Literary Studies

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News at CLS



It has been an exciting year for Comparative Literary Studies, which has supported events ranging from a reading by inaugural poet Richard Blanco to a centennial celebration of Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*, from a lecture on Kierkegaard and tragedy by Leonardo Lisi (Johns Hopkins) to

an intimate conversation with Ta-Nehisi Coates (*The Atlantic*) about French and the politics of race in France.

The range of the program's course offerings continues to grow through partnerships with the many new literary studies initiatives taking place around the university. The new program in Middle Eastern and North African Studies, with an under-graduate major and a graduate certificate, offers literature courses from our own Brian Edwards, Hannah Feldman, and affiliate Rebecca Johnson. This fall also saw the birth of a new Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, which will have eight literature faculty working on China, Japan, Korea, and South Asia. Together these units will have offerings from elementary language courses (in eight different languages) to graduate seminars on literature, cinema, and culture.

This summer CLS will send two graduate students, Maziyar Faridi and Sonia Li, to the Institute for World Literature in Hong Kong. Generous support from The Graduate School and the Weinberg Office of Research and Graduate Studies will allow CLS to provide full funding for the students, the first from Northwestern to attend the Harvard-based IWL.

CLS continues to collaborate with literature and literary studies groups such as the Comparative Modernisms workshop (led by Harris Feinsod and Alejandra Uslenghi) and the Poetry and Poetics Colloquium (Susannah Gottlieb, Director), as well as numerous critical theory groups on campus, including the Afterlife of Phenomenology workshop, the Critical Theory Undergraduate workshop, and the Program in Critical Theory (co-directed by Peter Fenves and Penelope Deutscher).

Watch for the spring newsletter for announcements about next year, including new graduate-level collaborations with Classics; the expansion of our undergraduate "Reading World Literature" course into a multi-quarter sequence; and an array of new course offerings, including graduate seminars on Nabokov, African post-colonial theory, and Lacan.

Christopher Bush

Herman and Beulah Pearce Miller Research Professor in Literature
Program Director, Comparative Literary Studies
Associate Professor, Department of French and Italian

Student News

Alexandra Becker had an essay published at the end of last academic year in the UC Berkeley Comparative Literature Undergraduate Journal Travel Section titled “Driving Lessons.” She is set to complete her undergraduate studies in three years, at the end of this year, and has been accepted to the BA/MA program in Comparative Literary Studies. In her free time, she writes songs and sings in the choir at the Sheil Catholic Center.

Brett Brehm will be presenting a paper this March, 2014, at the Nineteenth-Century Studies Association’s annual conference in Chicago. The title of his paper is “Resounding Paris: Urban Acoustics in Baudelaire and Mallarmé.” He is currently conducting research on his dissertation, “Kaleidophonic Modernity: Sound, City, Technology” in Paris.

Ruth Martin started her tenure as a Graduate Student Fellow in the Brady Scholars Program in Ethics and Civil Life. This summer, she attended “Transcendentalism and Social Action in the Age of Emerson, Thoreau, and Fuller” as an NEH Summer Institute Scholar. In September 2013, she delivered the panel “Margaret Fuller’s Creative Reading: Excision, Excerptation and the Creation of Woman” at “The Return of the Text: A Conference on the Cultural Value of Close Reading” at the Le Moyne College Religion and Literature Forum. She is currently acting as Research Coordinator for the Classicizing Chicago archive and website: www.classicizingchicago.northwestern.edu.

CLS Alumna **Jennifer Croft** is currently living in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where she is studying and translating contemporary Argentine literature and is the founding editor at *The Buenos Aires Review*. She most recently had a translation, dealing with the crisis in the Ukraine, published in the op-ed section of the NY Times.

CLS Alumna **Julia Ng**, following her post-doc at Harvard University, has taken a position as a lecturer at Goldsmiths, University of London.

Faculty News

Professor **César Braga-Pinto**’s “Othello’s Pathologies: reading Caminha with Lombroso” will be published in *Comparative Literature* in spring 2014. He was a respondent at the MLA Conference panel “Missed Connections and Misencounters: Rethinking Twentieth-Century Inter-American Literature” in January. He will also be presenting on “Black Citizens and the Invention of the Brazilian Gentleman” at the American Comparative Literature Association in March, and on “The Writer in the closet: Raul Pompeia’s Reputation” at the Latin American Studies Congress in Chicago in May. He is currently conducting a research project entitled “Concordia Discors: Race and Sociability in Brazilian Lettered Culture (1888-1940)” to investigate theorizations and literary representations of friendship sociability during the period following the abolition of slavery in Brazil, until the establishment of the discourse that came to be known as “racial democracy” in the 1930s.

Professor **Elisa Marti-Lopez** presented at numerous conferences between May 2013 and January 2014. Her presentations include “The Impertinent Cemetery: Deciphering the Modern City in Narcís Oller’s *La febre d’or*” at the 2014 MLA Conference, Chicago; “Mort, representació i imaginació literària: *La febre d’or* de Narcís Oller” at the Universitat d’Alacant, Spain; “Who is Afraid of Cemeteries? Memory, Oblivion, and Urban Spaces of Death” at the Arnos Vale Cemetery, UK; “On Death” at the University of Sheffield, UK; “Death and the City in the Work of Benito Pérez Galdós and Narcís Oller” at the University of Sheffield, UK; “Cemeteries as Object of Study: An Open Inquiry” at the University of Bristol, UK, and “Urban Spaces of Death: Cemeteries as Narratives of the Modern City” at the University of London, UK.

Professor **Samuel Weber**’s new French book, titled *Inquiétantes singularités*, was published on January 15th by the Parisian publisher Hermann. The book was translated by **Charles Coustille**, a French dual-PhD student in CLS. Professor Weber delivered the keynote address at the Quadrennial Conference of CLAROC (Comparative Literature Association of the Republic of China) in Taipei in Dec. 2013 as well as other lectures in Basel, Frankfurt, London and at Cornell in 2013. He has upcoming lectures at Brown in March, and SUNY-Buffalo in May 2014. He is currently conducting research on Kafka, Hölderlin and his long-standing project, “Toward a Politics and Poetics of Singularity.”

Recent CLS Events

The Program in Comparative Literary Studies Guest Speaker Series

"History, Metaphysics and the Limits of Tragedy in Kierkegaard"

Leonardo Lisi, Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature at the Humanities Center at Johns Hopkins University
 with Response by: Peter Feives, Professor of German, Comparative Literary Studies, and Jewish Studies at Northwestern University

**Thursday, January 23, 2014
 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.**
 John Evans Alumni Center - 1000 Sheridan Rd., Evanston
 A light lunch will be served

Kierkegaard's essay on the tragic in the first volume of *Either/Or* has long been viewed as a mere footnote to Hegel's reading of *Antigone*. In fact, however, the text constitutes one of the most original interventions on the genre during the long nineteenth century. This is the case in two respects in particular. First, Kierkegaard rejects the distinction between ancient and modern forms of tragedy that goes back to the *Querelle des anciens et des modernes* and which grounds our standard notion of historical time. Second, Kierkegaard's discussion rethinks the title of modality in post-Kantian philosophy and the young Schelling in particular. On this basis, the value of tragic suffering is no longer that it reveals the absolute within historical experience, but rather that it lays bare its radical absence.

Leonardo F. Lisi is Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature in The Humanities Center at Johns Hopkins University. His work centers on the long nineteenth century, with a particular interest in the evolution of literary forms in relation to German idealist aesthetics. Lisi is the author of *Marginal Modernity: The Aesthetics of Dependency from Kierkegaard to Joyce* (Fordham UP, 2013), as well as numerous articles on Kierkegaard and European modernism.

To RSVP and receive pre-talk book contact: lisil@jhmi.jhu.edu

Comparative Literary Studies
Senior Essay Colloquium

Colloquium will be facilitated by
 Harrie Feinsod, Assistant Professor of English

**Tuesday, December 3, 2013
 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.**
 Kresge 1-375

Senior Essays Presented By:

Christopher Hoffman
 Hannah Hudson
 Paulina Mateja
 Sacha Perold
 Jordan Wolf
 Monica Yi

Refreshments will be served
 All are Welcome

Co-Sponsored Events

The After-Life of Phenomenology Workshop
 presents

"Badiou, Critique, and the Phenomenology of World"

a lecture by
Paul Livingston
 (University of New Mexico, Philosophy)

**Monday, February 10
 3:00PM**
 Kresge Hall, 2-370

This speaker series is generously sponsored by
 The Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, along with
 the departments of Philosophy, Religious Studies, French & Italian, English,
 German, History, Communication Studies, Performance Studies, Radio-TV-Film,
 and the Program in Comparative Literary Studies and Science & Human Culture

MENA
 Middle East and North African Studies Program

NEW DIRECTIONS IN MENA STUDIES

**"Hashtag Raid led by the Forces of Darkness":
 An Arab-Spring Tale**

Tarek El-Ariss
 University of Texas at Austin
 Monday, February 3, 2014
 12:00-1:30 PM
 University Hall 201, Hagstrum Room (Evanston)
 Lunch will be served.

Acts of violence and repression unfolding online and through persecution and imprisonment are targeting more and more authors and activists in the Arab world today. Processes of recoding and rewriting involved in banning books and arresting individuals for a poem or a tweet are producing a hyper-fictional reality that normalizes violence and collapses the virtual/material or internet/street divide. This talk focuses on these life-and-death encounters in which fiction has taken over completely and the Arab Spring is cast both as a political and an aesthetic awakening.

Tarek El-Ariss is Assistant Professor of Arabic Studies and Comparative Literature at the University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of *Trials of Arab Modernity: Literary Affects and the New Political* (Fordham University Press, 2013).

Co-Sponsored by the Program in Comparative Literary Studies

The Program in Comparative Literary Studies, Department of French and Italian, and Program in American Studies present

A Dialogue with Ta-Nehisi Coates

Please join us for an intimate dialogue with Ta-Nehisi Coates earlier in the day before the "Conversation with Alex Kotlowitz and Ta-Nehisi Coates" evening event. For this Thursday dialogue, Coates will offer introductory remarks that stage his France blogs about learning a language, particularly as an adult, and more broadly about what it means for African-American writers and artists to spend time in France.

**Thursday, February 27th
 11:00-12:30**
 University Hall 201

IN CELEBRATION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PUBLICATION OF
DU CÔTÉ DE CHEZ SWANN (SWANN'S WAY)
 PLEASE JOIN US FOR

A Proust Salon

**NOVEMBER 14TH, 2013
 THE FIG ROOM, CROWE 2-130**

All students and faculty are invited to join NU scholars from various literary traditions read aloud from and discuss their favorite passage from *Swann's Way*, the first volume of Proust's epic novel, *In Search of Lost Time (À la recherche du temps perdu)*. Madeleines, tea, and other refreshments will be served, and the conversation promises to be lively!

SPACE IS LIMITED. RSVP BY NOVEMBER 13TH TO:
FRENCH-ITALIAN@NORTHWESTERN.EDU
 PLEASE BE SURE TO INDICATE WHICH TIME(S) YOU PLAN TO ATTEND.

Sponsored by the Departments of French & Italian, German, and Comparative Literary Studies, and the Café Francophone

Aesthetic Practice: Judgment That Hates Itself

Christoph Menke
 Max Kade Visiting Professor

**Thursday February 20, 2014
 4:30 pm - 6 pm**
 Harris Hall 108
 reception to follow

Funded by the generous support of the Max Kade Foundation

Co-sponsors:
 Department of German
 Critical Theory Cluster
 Weinberg College of Arts & Sciences
 Program in Comparative Literary Studies
 Department of Philosophy
 Department of Political Science

CLS Spring 2014 Schedule

Course	Title	Days	Time	Instructor
CLS 211/SLAV 255	Topics in Genre: What Is Lyric Poetry?	MW (Disc. F)	11-12:20 Disc: F 11	Clare Cavanagh
CLS 301/CLA 350	Practices of Reading: Contemporary Literary Theory and Ancient Texts	TTH	2-3:20	Marianne Hopman
CLS 304-20/ENG 386	Studies in Theme: The Alien as Other	TTH	12:30-1:50	Sarah Valentine
CLS 304-22/SPAN 397	Studies in Theme: Labyrinths	MW	12-1:20	Elisa Marti-Lopez
CLS 311/ENG 306	Theory and Practice of Poetry Translation	MW	11-12:20	Reginald Gibbons
CLS 313-20/ENG 386/ MENA 301-3	Texts and Contexts: 20/21 Century Literature & Film from MENA: National Traditions, Global Influences	MW	2-3:20	Brian Edwards
CLS 375-20/ENG 386	Literature and Its Others: Cowboys and Samurai in Fiction and Film	MW	11-12:20	Andrew Leong
CLS 375-21/MUSICOL 343	Music & Shakespeare	MW	11-12:20	Linda Austern
CLS 383/PHIL 315	Studies in French Philosophy: Reading Foucault	TTH (Disc. F)	6-7:20 Disc: F 12, 1 TH 7:30	Penelope Deutscher
CLS 390/ENG 365	Postcolonial Animal	TTH	3:30-4:50	Evan Mwangi
CLS 390-21/GER 346	Tragedy Ancient & Modern	T	1:00-4:00	Sam Weber
CLS 412	Graduate Student Seminar	T	3-5	Caitlyn Doyle
CLS 413	Comparative Studies in Theme: Ovidian Poetics	M	2-5	Will West
CLS 481/GER 401	German Literature & Critical Thought	M	2-5	Sam Weber
CLS 487/ENG 481	Studies in Literature and the Arts: The Digital Age	TH	2-5	Brian Edwards

Courses in non-Western literatures in translation offered through CLS

Course	Title	Days	Time	Instructor
CLS 211-21/ALC 290	Living Epics: Ramayana and Mahabharata	MW	3:30-4:50	Laura Brueck
CLS 274-3/ALC 274-3	Intro to Chinese Literature in Translation: Modern	TTH	3:30-4:50	Peter Shen
CLS 304-21/ALC 390	Fashion Matters: Clothes, Bodies and Consumption in East Asia	TTH	2-3:20	Paola Zamperini



CLS 311/ENG 306:

Theory and Practice of Poetry Translation

Professor Reginald Gibbons

MW 11:00-12:20pm, Crowe 1-125

Together we will translate several short poems and study theoretical approaches to literary translation and practical accounts by literary translators. We will approach language, poems, poetics, culture and theoretical issues and problems in relation to each other. Your written work will be due in different forms during the course. In your final portfolio, you will present revised versions of your translations and a research paper on translation.