COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

451 College Street, Rm. 202, 203.432.2760
http://complit.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
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Director of Graduate Studies
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Professors
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Associate Professors
Robyn Creswell, Marta Figlerowicz, Moira Fradinger, Ayesha Ramachandran

Lecturers
Peter Cole, Jan Hagens

Emeritus
Peter Brooks, Peter Demetz, Carol Jacobs, Rainer Nägeli

Affiliated Faculty
Rolena Adorno (Spanish & Portuguese), R. Howard Bloch (French), Francesco Casetti (Film & Media Studies), Kang-I Sun Chang (East Asian Languages & Literatures), Michael Denning (American Studies), Wai Chee Dimock (English), Alice Kaplan (French), Tina Lu (East Asian Languages & Literatures), John MacKay (Slavic Languages & Literatures), Giuseppe Mazzotta (Italian), Maurice Samuels (French), Ruth Bernard Yeazell (English)

FIELDS OF STUDY
The Department of Comparative Literature introduces students to the study and understanding of literature beyond linguistic or national boundaries; the theory, interpretation, and criticism of literature; and its interactions with adjacent fields like visual and material culture, linguistics, film, psychology, law, and philosophy. The comparative perspective invites the exploration of such transnational phenomena as literary or cultural periods and trends (Renaissance, Romanticism, Modernism, postcolonialism) or genres and modes of discourse. Students may specialize in any cultures or languages, to the extent that they are sufficiently covered at Yale. The Ph.D. degree qualifies candidates to teach comparative literature as well as the national literature(s) of their specialization.

SPECIAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS
Applicants must hold a B.A. or equivalent degree and should normally have majored in comparative literature, English, a classical or foreign literature, or in an interdepartmental major that includes literature. They must be ready to take advanced courses in two foreign literatures in addition to English upon admission. The GRE General Test is required. A ten- to twenty-page writing sample, written in English, should be submitted with the application.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE
Students must successfully complete fourteen term courses, including the departmental proseminar (CPLT 515) and at least six further courses listed under the departmental heading. The student's overall schedule must fulfill the following requirements: (1) at least one course in medieval or classical European literature, philology, or linguistics (or their equivalents in other cultures); one course in the Renaissance or Baroque (or equivalents); and one course in the modern period; (2) three courses in literary theory or methodology; (3) at least one course each in poetry, narrative fiction, and drama; (4) course work that deals with texts from three literatures, one of which may be English or American; and (5) a substantive focus on one or two national or language-based literatures. Any course may be counted for several requirements simultaneously.

Languages
Literary proficiency in four languages (including English, at least one other modern language, and one classical or ancient language, such as Latin, Greek, Biblical Hebrew, Classical Arabic, Classical Chinese, Provençal). The fulfillment of this requirement will be demonstrated by a written exam consisting of a translation of a literary or critical text, to be held by the end of the sixth term; or by an equivalent level in the student's course work.

Orals
An oral examination to be taken in the third year of studies, demonstrating both the breadth and specialization as well as the comparative scope of the student's acquired knowledge. The examination consists of six topics that include texts from at least three national literatures and several historical periods (at least one modern and one before the Renaissance). The texts discussed should also include representatives of the three traditional literary genres (poetry, drama, narrative fiction).

Ph.D. dissertation
Supervised by a dissertation director (or directors) – at least one from the core or affiliate departmental faculty – and approved by a faculty committee, the dissertation completes the degree. Its initial step is a dissertation prospectus, to be submitted and approved by the dissertation director and a standing faculty committee no later than halfway through the seventh term of study.
Admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. is granted after six terms of residence and the completion of all requirements (courses, languages, orals, prospectus) except the dissertation.

**Teaching** Training in teaching, through teaching fellowships, is an important part of every student’s program. Normally students will teach in their third and fourth years.

**COMBINED PH.D. PROGRAMS**

**Comparative Literature and Classics**

**Course work** Students concentrating in Comparative Literature and Classics are required to complete fourteen graduate term courses (including the proseminar in Classics and in Comparative Literature). In Classics, at least seven courses, including the Classics proseminar, four courses (two yearlong sequences) in the history of Greek and Latin literature (usually taken in successive years, each to be followed by the respective oral in that field), and two 800-level Classics seminars. In Comparative Literature, the departmental proseminar and at least five further Comparative Literature courses, including at least four courses in postclassical European literature. The course work across the two programs should also include at least two courses in literary theory or methodology, and at least one course each in poetry, narrative fiction, and drama. At least two courses, excluding directed readings, need to receive the grade of Honors. At least twelve of the fourteen required courses are to be taken in the first two years; the last two, which must be Classics 800-level seminars, are to be taken in the third year, normally one in each term, as necessary.

**Languages** To assess each student’s proficiency and progress in both key languages, two diagnostic sight translation examinations each in Greek and Latin are to be taken before the beginning of the first and third terms. Literary proficiency in German and one other modern language must be passed by the end of the second year. Literary proficiency in English, Greek, and Latin must be demonstrated by course work.

**Orals** **Classics:** oral examinations in Greek and Latin literature, based on the Classics Ph.D. reading list. These are to be taken closely following the surveys in the respective literatures, as follows: the first, at the end of the second term (May of the first year), the second at the end of the fourth term (May of the second year). By the end of the fifth term, translation examinations in Greek and Latin literature, based on the Classics Ph.D. reading list. **Comparative Literature:** oral examination (six topics appropriate to both disciplines, balancing a range of kinds of topics and including poetry, narrative fiction, and drama, and at least one significant cluster of postclassical texts), to be taken by the middle of the sixth term, usually in mid-January. Lists will be worked out with individual examiners, primarily under the guidance of the Comparative Literature DGS, but also with the approval of the Classics DGS, and must be submitted by the end of the fourth term. One of the topics studied will be relevant to the student’s planned dissertation topic.

**Prospectus and dissertation** The prospectus must be approved by the DGS in each department (and by the Comparative Literature prospectus committee) by the end of the sixth term in residence. At least one dissertation director must come from the Comparative Literature core faculty. At the end of each term, each dissertation student will presubmit, then discuss their work in progress in a Classics “chapter colloquium” discussion with interested faculty.

**Comparative Literature and Film and Media Studies**

Applicants to the combined program must indicate on their application that they are applying both to the program in Film and Media Studies and to Comparative Literature. All documentation within the application should include this information.

**Course work** Students in the combined program are required to complete fifteen graduate term courses. In Comparative Literature, the proseminar and at least five further courses, including at least one course in literary theory or methodology beyond the proseminar; at least one course each in poetry, narrative fiction, and drama; two courses before 1900, including at least one before 1800; a wide range of courses with a focus on one or two national or language-based literatures; and at least two courses with the grade of Honors. In Film and Media Studies, two core seminars (FILM 601 and FILM 603) and four additional seminars.

**Languages** At least two languages (besides English) with excellent reading ability (normally one of these languages is French).

**Orals** By October 1 of the third year, students must have fulfilled an assignment related to foundational texts and films. During this third year they must also pass the six-field Comparative Literature oral examination, with at least one examiner from the core Comparative Literature faculty; at least three fields involving literary topics, and readings including poetry, fiction, and drama; the other topics may be on film or film-related subjects; some lists may combine film and literature.

**Prospectus and dissertation** At least one dissertation director must be from Comparative Literature and at least one from Film and Media Studies (in some cases, a single adviser may fulfill both roles). The prospectus must be approved by the Comparative Literature subcommittee and ratified by the Film and Media Studies Executive Committee. The dissertation must pass a presubmission defense of method (with at least one examiner from the graduate Film and Media Studies committee, and at least one member from Comparative Literature).

**Comparative Literature and Renaissance Studies**

**Course work** Students are required to complete sixteen graduate term courses, at least seven of these (including the Comparative Literature proseminar) in the Department of Comparative Literature. Students must take at least ten courses in the field of Renaissance...
Studies (offered in several departments), including two terms of the Renaissance Studies core seminar and three courses in two disciplines other than literature (such as history, history of art, or religious studies). At least three of a student’s overall list of courses must be in literary theory, criticism, or methodology; at least one course each in poetry, narrative fiction, and drama; and at least one course each in ancient or medieval literature and Enlightenment or modern literature. At least two courses must be completed with the grade of Honors. In general, students should take a wide range of courses with a focus on one or two national or language-based literatures.

Languages Latin and Italian, as set by Renaissance Studies—one hour of Renaissance Latin prose; one hour of sixteenth-century Italian prose, one of modern Italian scholarship—and two additional languages, at least one of them European.

Orals The joint oral examination will consist of seven twenty-minute questions (two topics in Renaissance literature from a comparative perspective; three on non-Renaissance literature, including at least one theoretical or critical question; and two questions on Renaissance topics in nonliterary disciplines). Orals should be completed no later than the end of the sixth term.

Prospectus and dissertation The prospectus should be completed in September of the fourth year. Procedures regarding the dissertation will follow departmental practice, although the final readers will normally include at least one member of the Renaissance Studies Executive Committee.

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.Phil. See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

M.A. (en route to the Ph.D.) Students enrolled in the Ph.D. program may receive the M.A. upon completion of ten courses with at least two grades of Honors and a maximum of three grades of Pass, and the demonstration of proficiency in two of the languages, ancient or modern, through course work or departmental examinations. No student is admitted to a terminal M.A.

Program materials are available upon request to the Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Comparative Literature, Yale University, PO Box 208299, New Haven CT 06520-8299, or stacey.hampton@yale.edu.

COURSES

CPLT 501a, Introduction to Renaissance Studies David Quint
An introduction to the major texts, issues, and methods in the interdisciplinary study of the Renaissance, with an emphasis on northern Europe.

CPLT 582a / ENGL 545a, Medieval Translation Ardis Butterfield
Using modern postcolonial as well as medieval theories of translation, memory, and bilingualism we explore how texts are transformed, cited, and reinvented in the medieval period. What happens to language under the pressure of crosslingual reading practices? How can the freedom and inventiveness of medieval poetic practices illuminate modern theories of translation? Texts include material in French, English, Latin, and Italian. Proficiency in any one or more of these languages is welcome, but every effort will be made to use texts available in modern English translation, so as to include as wide a participation as possible in the course.

CPLT 594a / LATN 724a, Latin Lyric Irene Peirano
Reading and analysis of selections from the canon of Latin lyric poetry. Focus on Horace's Odes, with some attention to his Epodes and to works by Catullus and lesser-known Republican poets. Emphasis on literary interpretation.

CPLT 602a / SPAN 698a, Caribbean Baseball: A Cultural History Roberto González Echevarría
A study of the origins and evolution of baseball in the Caribbean (Cuba, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico) in the context of the region’s political and cultural history and its relationship with the United States. The course begins with a consideration of the nature of games and the development and dissemination of sports by imperial powers since the nineteenth century: soccer and rugby by the UK, tennis by France, and basketball and baseball by the United States. Topics to be considered: nationalism, the role of race, popular culture, the development of the media, the rise of stars and famous teams, the importance of the Negro leagues, access of Caribbean players to the major leagues, the situation in the present.

CPLT 614a / FILM 770a, East German Literature and Film Katie Trumpener
The German Democratic Republic (1949–89) was a political and aesthetic experiment that failed, buffeted by external pressures and eroded by internal contradictions. For forty years, in fact, its most ambitious literary texts and films (some suppressed, others widely popular) explored such contradictions, often in a vigilant, Brechtian spirit of irony and dialectics. This course examines key texts both as aesthetic experiments and as critiques of the country’s emerging cultural institutions and state censorship, recurrent political debates, and pressing social issues. Texts by Brecht, Uwe Johnson, Heiner Müller, Christa Wolf, Johannes Bobrowski, Franz Fühmann, Wolf Biermann, Thomas Brasch, Christoph Hein; films by Slatan Dudow, Kurt Maetzig, Konrad Wolf, Heiner Carow, Frank Beyer, Jürgen Böttcher, Volker Koepp. Knowledge of German desirable but not crucial; all texts available in English.

CPLT 618a / GMAN 709a / JDST 680a, Walter Benjamin's Critical Theory Paul North
Careful analysis of central texts in Benjamin’s oeuvre in the context of his philosophical, political, and literary reading.

CPLT 622a / AMST 622a and AMST 625b, Working Group on Globalization and Culture Michael Denning
A continuing yearlong collective research project, a cultural studies “laboratory.” The group, drawing on several disciplines, meets regularly to discuss common readings, develop collective and individual research projects, and present that research publicly. The general
theme for the working group is globalization and culture, with three principal aspects: (1) the globalization of cultural industries and goods, and its consequences for patterns of everyday life as well as for forms of fiction, film, broadcasting, and music; (2) the trajectories of social movements and their relation to patterns of migration, the rise of global cities, the transformation of labor processes, and forms of ethnic, class, and gender conflict; (3) the emergence of and debates within transnational social and cultural theory. The specific focus, projects, and directions of the working group are determined by the interests, expertise, and ambitions of the members of the group, and change as its members change. There are a small number of openings for second-year graduate students. Students interested in participating should contact michael.denning@yale.edu.

CPLT 628b / GMAN 710b, Goethe's Wilhelm Meister  
Kirk Wettters  
A detailed study of Goethe's 1795/96 Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship – the first novel of the nineteenth century and the prototypical novel of education (Bildungsroman) – with critical and scholarly reception starting with Schiller and Schlegel; theories of the novel and transformations of modern society.

CPLT 675b / SPAN 629b, Golden Age Theater  
Roberto González Echevarría  
The development and apogee of the Spanish comedia, as well as contemporary minor subgenres such as the auto sacramental and the entremés. Exploration of how the theater synthesizes post-Garcilaso lyric, the comedia dell'arte, renaissance epic, the romancero, Spanish history, and the European renaissance literary tradition. Works by Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina, Guillén de Castro, Mira de Amescua, Juan Ruiz de Alarcón, Luis Quiñones de Benavente, Pedro Calderón de la Barca, and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Comparison with English and French theater is encouraged.

CPLT 675b / SPAN 660b, El Quijote en español  
Roberto González Echevarría  
A detailed and contextualized reading of Cervantes's masterpiece conducted entirely in Spanish. The study of this iconic text familiarizes students with its literary and cultural values and Cervantes's language.

CPLT 699a / GMAN 603a / PHIL 602a, Heidegger's Being and Time  
Martin Hagglund  
A systematic, chapter-by-chapter study of Heidegger's Being and Time, arguably the most important work of philosophy of the twentieth century. All the major themes of the book are addressed in detail, with a particular emphasis on care, time, death, and the meaning of being.

CPLT 728b / FREN 929b, Chance and Constraints in Literature  
Morgane Cadieu  
The course explores experimental prose in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries by focusing on 'pataphysics, surrealism, Oulipo, the Situationists, New Novel, and post-exoticism. Topics include inspiration and creativity; automatic writing and constrained literature; determinism and free will; the aesthetics of randomness; exceptions to the rule; materialism and atomism. Works by Jarry, Duchamp, Breton, Debord, Père, Queneau, Garrêta, Beckett, Calle, Volodine. Theoretical readings by Lucretius, Spinoza, Althusser, Derrida, Serres, Nancy. Conducted in French.

CPLT 754a / ENGL 915a, Western and Postcolonial Marxist Cultural Theory  
Joseph Cleary  
An introduction to classic twentieth-century Western and postcolonial Marxist theorists and texts focusing on historical and intellectual exchange between these critical formations. The course tracks how key Marxist-Hegelian concepts such as capital and class consciousness, reification, commodification, totality, and alienation have been developed across these traditions and considers how these concepts have been used to rethink literary and mass cultural forms and their ongoing transformation in a changing world system. Writers discussed may include G.W.F. Hegel, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Georg Lukács, Mikhail Bakhtin, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Walter Benjamin, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Toril Moi, C.L.R. James, Frantz Fanon, Amilcar Cabral, Edward Said, Antonio Gramsci, Raymond Williams, Fredric Jameson, Perry Anderson, Giovanni Arrighi, Pascale Casanova, David Harvey, and Melinda Cooper. The object of the seminar is to provide students with a secure intellectual foundation in these still-developing hermeneutic traditions.

CPLT 822b / AMST 623b, Working Group on Globalization and Culture  
Michael Denning  
A continuing yearlong collective research project, a cultural studies “laboratory.” The group, drawing on several disciplines, meets regularly to discuss common readings, develop collective and individual research projects, and present that research publicly. The general theme for the working group is globalization and culture, with three principal aspects: (1) the globalization of cultural industries and goods, and its consequences for patterns of everyday life as well as for forms of fiction, film, broadcasting, and music; (2) the trajectories of social movements and their relation to patterns of migration, the rise of global cities, the transformation of labor processes, and forms of ethnic, class, and gender conflict; (3) the emergence of and debates within transnational social and cultural theory. The specific focus, projects, and directions of the working group are determined by the interests, expertise, and ambitions of the members of the group, and change as its members change. There are a small number of openings for second-year graduate students. Students interested in participating should contact michael.denning@yale.edu.

CPLT 841a / RUSS 776a, The Danube in Literature and Film  
Marijeta Bozovic  
The Danube is Europe's second longest river: it flows through or borders ten countries, while its watershed covers four more. From ancient Rome to the present, the Danube has served both as a connector and a contested terrain: from its beginnings in the German Black Forest to the Romanian and Ukrainian shores of the Black Sea, the Danube flows through a region that has emerged black and blue from imperial aspirations of domination, hostilities in the wake of the Cold War, and civil war. The southeastern portion of the river constitutes Europe’s Other—the “Barbaropa” within the continent’s own geographic boundaries—and faces the expansion of another super-political entity in the European Union. This seminar turns to the physical, historical, and metaphorical uses of the great river. At a time of tenuous unification in Europe, “Danube studies” seek to remap the region by focusing on the river's peoples and their cultural
imaginary and interactions from antiquity to the present, exposing the Danube as a quintessential site of cross-cultural engagement. We study the region's geography and history, engage theoretical paradigms for understanding cultural differences and their negotiation, draw on film theory and cultural studies, and examine transnational cinema, artwork, and literary texts from various Danubian cultural traditions. Through a focus on works of creative and imaginative culture—primarily, on literature and film—the course foregrounds the aesthetic mediation of actual and possible communities, in search of utopian promise even amidst and in the wake of historical atrocities.

**CPLT 891b / GMAN 792b / HSAR 430b, Ernst Cassirer: Form as Function** Rudiger Campe and Nicola Suthor
Cassirer's philosophy of the “symbolic form” — foundational for the art historical method of iconography as well as structural analysis in literature and art — is reexamined for its validity. Cassirer’s revolutionary concept of function as opposed to substance, developed in the Neo-Kantian context of hermeneutics and modern science, is the point of departure for our new engagement with his work. We center on Cassirer’s theory of form in art and literature and repercussions in Aby Warburg, Erwin Panofsky, Edgar Wind, Walter Benjamin, George Kubler, and others. Cassirer’s philosophy of myth and the political gives further importance to the “symbolic form.”

**CPLT 892b / FREN 893b, Realism and Naturalism** Maurice Samuels
This seminar interrogates the nineteenth-century French Realist and Naturalist novel in light of various efforts to define its practice. How does critical theory constitute Realism as a category? How does Realism articulate the aims of theory? And how do nineteenth-century Realist and Naturalist novels intersect with other discourses besides the literary? In addition to several works by Balzac, novels to be studied include Stendhal’s *Le Rouge et le Noir*, Sand’s *Indiana*, Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary*, and Zola’s *Nana*. Some attention also paid to Realist painting. Reading knowledge of French required.

**CPLT 913a / FILM 690a, Radical Cinemas of Latin America** Moira Fradinger
An introductory overview of Latin American cinema, with an emphasis on post-World War II films produced in Cuba, Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. Examination of each film in its historical and aesthetic aspects, and in light of questions concerning national cinema and “third cinema.” Examples from both pre-1945 and contemporary films. Conducted in English; knowledge of Spanish and Portuguese helpful but not required.

**CPLT 917a, Foundations of Film and Media** Dudley Andrew
The course sets in place some undergirding for students who want to anchor their film interest to the professional discourse of this field. A coordinated set of topics in film theory is interrupted first by the often discordant voice of history and second by the obtuseness of the films examined each week. Films themselves take the lead in our discussions.

**CPLT 925b, The Practice of Literary Translation** Staff
Intensive readings in the history and theory of translation paired with practice in translating. Case studies from ancient languages (the Bible, Greek and Latin classics), medieval languages (classical Arabic literature), and modern languages (poetic texts).

**CPLT 929b / FILM 651b, Adaptation and Representation in Film** Dudley Andrew
Cinematic adaptations of works from older arts, particularly literature. Adaptation as a sign of the modernity of cinema. Case studies of filmic transformations; the status of the arts in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This course demands additional reading and a lengthy term paper as well as a short written paper and an in-class presentation.

**CPLT 933a / ENGL 928a / FILM 751a, British Cinema** Katie Trumpener
Key films and topics in British cinema. Special attention to the provincial origins of British cinema; overlaps between filmic, literary, and visual modernism; attempts to build on the British literary and dramatic tradition; cinema's role in the war effort and in redefining national identity; postwar auteur and experimental filmmaking; “heritage” films and alternative approaches to tradition. Accompanying readings in British film theorists, film sociology (including Mass Observation), and cultural studies accounts of film spectatorship and memories. Films by Mitchell and Kenyon, Maurice Elvey, Anthony Asquith, Len Lye, John Grierson, Alfred Hitchcock, Alberto Cavalcanti, Humphrey Jennings, Michael Powell, Carol Reed, David Lean, Karel Reisz, Lindsay Anderson, Richard Lester, Peter Watkins, Stanley Kubrick, Laura Mulvey, Ken Loach, Mike Leigh, Terence Davies, Terry Gilliam, Peter Greenaway, Michael Winterbottom, Patrick Keiller, Steve McQueen.

**CPLT 935b / FILM 755b, French Cinema through the New Wave** Dudley Andrew
This seminar uses a sample of twenty films (with clips from many others) to survey four decades of the tradition of French cinema crowned by the privileged moment of the New Wave. Graduate students are asked to challenge the idea of “national cinema” by reporting on some non-canonical or marginal film before midterm. Keeping the culture industry in view, we question the extent to which such a consistently robust cinema has been bound to — or remained partly independent of — a nation that from 1930 to 1970 underwent a depression, a socialist experiment, an occupation, a liberation, and the humiliations of decolonization abroad and social unrest (May ’68) at home. In addition to the midterm contribution, graduate students write a substantial term paper.

**CPLT 950a / SPAN 601a, Latin American Gender Debates and Feminist Traditions** Moira Fradinger
This seminar is an introductory overview of Latin American gender debates and feminist traditions since the turn of the twentieth century up to today’s conversations around gender identity, human rights, gendered violence, and decolonial feminisms. The seminar consists of three basic units: (1) women’s social movements from anarchism to the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, to indigenous feminisms and the regional debate around practical and strategic gender needs; (2) local theories of patriarchy and gendered violence; (3) new gender identity laws, the discussion around sexual diversity and sexual difference, and the transgender movement today (this unit includes the analysis of one autobiography, two literary texts, and four cinematic representations). We study texts written in Latin America, at times read in comparison with some European and North American texts, and we look at their migration outside the region. The majority
of texts are in Spanish, though there will be as many translations as possible for those who read more comfortably in English. Seminar meetings are conducted in Spanish.

CPLT 960a / SPAN 914a, Microliteratures: The Margins of the Law  Jesus Velasco
Examining marginal writing in manuscripts and printed books from the Middle Ages and the early modern period, we interrogate the productive relations between law and culture. We focus on a wide array of sources from the Iberian Peninsula and the Mediterranean. Likewise, we consider different legal systems.