

CLEN W3208 Modern Comparative Fiction

Instructor Information:

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Philosophy 608

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**Office Hours: Wednesday and Friday
afternoon**

New Literary Histories

This class will examine how modern writers from around the world make use of innovative literary elements and narrative methods in order to re-conceptualize "history" and personal identity. In their fictions and histories, our chosen authors reinvent traditional notions of linear time and the discrete self, rewriting in the process the conventions of realistic representation. Whether their characters transcend several lifetimes (Woolf, Eliade, and Grass), travel in time to kill their own predecessors (Barjavel), reach different realms of existence (Kundera, Karahasan, Jabra), or find dreams to be truer than life (Murakami and Dick), their narratives allow us a fresh approach to the ways we perceive and record history, personal and national identity, and our sense of the past, present, and future.

Reading List (in order of reading): Virginia Woolf, Orlando
Gabriel Garcia Marquez, One Hundred Years of Solitude
Salman Rushdie, Midnight's Children
Gunter Grass, The Flounder
Milan Kundera, The Book of Laughter and Forgetting
Dzevad Karahasan, Sarajevo, Exodus of a City
Haruki Murakami, Wind-Up Bird Chronicle
Philip K. Dick, Valis

Shorter readings (stories) and critical readings will be available online, linked in the Courseworks under the day for which they are assigned on the syllabus.

Course Objectives

To read and analyze the assigned novels both in their traditional critical frames -- as novels that deal with modernist, feminist, postcolonial, post-Communist, post-WWII etc. works -- and as new literary histories, attempting to break through "reality" as we know it.

Grading Quizzes 20%
Midterm 25%
Discussion Posts 25%
Term Paper 30%

Course Schedule

Jan-20-09 [Session 1](#) Introduction: New Literary Histories
Jan-22-09 [Session 2](#) Lecture: Key Terms and Periods
Jan-27-09 [Session 3](#) Virginia Woolf ORLANDO (1928)
Jan-29-09 [Session 4](#) Orlando, ctd.
Feb-03-09 [Session 5](#) Orlando
Feb-05-09 [Session 6](#) Magic Realism - Gabriel Garcia Marquez - ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE
Feb-10-09 [Session 7](#) One Hundred Years, ctd. (1967/1970)
Feb-12-09 [Session 8](#) One Hundred Years...(1967/1970)
Feb-17-09 [Session 9](#) Salman Rushdie MINDIGHT'S CHILDREN
Feb-19-09 [Session 10](#) MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN (1981)
Feb-24-09 [Session 11](#) MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN

Feb-26-09 [Session 12](#) Finish Midnight's Children/ Read Gogol The Nose (1835)
Mar-03-09 [Session 13](#) Gunter Grass - The Flounder
Mar-05-09 [Session 14](#) The Flounder, ctd.
Mar-10-09 [Session 15](#) The Flounder
Mar-12-09 [Session 16](#) The Flounder
Mar-17-09 [Session 17](#) SPRING BREAK
Mar-19-09 [Session 18](#) SPRING BREAK
Mar-24-09 [Session 19](#) Midterm Exam - In class - Short Essays
Mar-26-09 [Session 20](#) Milan Kundera, The Book of Laughter and Forgetting
Mar-31-09 [Session 21](#) The Book of, ctd.
Apr-02-09 [Session 22](#) Dzevad Karahasan -- Sarajevo, Exodus of a City
Apr-07-09 [Session 23](#) Sarajevo..., ctd.
Apr-09-09 [Session 24](#) Haruki Murakami, The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle
Apr-14-09 [Session 25](#) The Wind-Up Bird, ctd.
Apr-16-09 [Session 26](#) The Wind-Up Bird, ctd.
Apr-21-09 [Session 27](#) The Wind-Up Bird, ctd.
Apr-23-09 [Session 28](#) Philip K. Dick, VALIS
Apr-28-09 [Session 29](#) VALIS, ctd.
Apr-30-09 [Session 30](#) Murakami - "The Vanishing Elephant" and Class Review