

UC Center Program Courses - Fall 2015
PCC 129. **Parisian Voices in Literature**
Prof. Carole Viers-Andronico

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Lecture

Tuesday 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Thursday 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Office Hours

TBA and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, students will engage in discussions prompted by a multiplicity of voices that make up what has been often referred to as the Parisian mosaic – a mosaic whose colorful tiles represent a collection of diverse and multivalent identities. Students will explore how the voices that have emerged in the past several decades bring myriad perspectives, ranging from “traditional” French culture to first and subsequent generation immigrant cultures, many of which come from former French colonies in the Francophone world, to bear on Parisian society and how these contemporary voices take a sometimes playful but often critical look at the identity of their post-war and postcolonial society. Through the study of historical events alongside critical and literary texts, students will analyze representations of the city as a playground for desire, as a forum for consumer delight, and as a breeding ground for social inequality, among other things. The course will, therefore, focus on examining the different social worlds that make contemporary Paris such a fascinating, diverse, and culturally important city. Through readings and class excursions to sites important to their understanding of the texts, students will trace some of the ways French alongside the more problematically termed Francophone writers and filmmakers have made their sundry voices heard over the past half a century. **5.0 credits.** Suggested subject areas for this course: *Comp Lit/French/History*

Goals

The overriding goal of this course is to provide students with a literary-historical and critical overview of the various social worlds that comprise contemporary, post-WWII Parisian society through close study of literary, filmic, and visual representations. In order to meet this goal, the course focuses on the following themes/topics/texts:

Texts:

- Literary selections of Tahar Ben Jelloun, Bernard Binlin Dadié, Jean Echenoz, Paul Fournel, Faïza Guène, Jacques Jouet, Patrick Modiano, Georges Perec, Raymond Queneau, Leïla Sebbar, and Patrick Süskind
- Selected films/film segments of Kassovitz, Malle, and Ophuls
- Selected works of Delacroix, Fromentin, Matisse, and Ingres
- Selected critical works of Roland Barthes, Tom Conley, Alec Hargreaves, Kristin Ross, Edward Saïd, and Gayatri Spivak

Themes/Topics:

- Modernity, Hygiene, and Cinema
- Representation in Consumer Culture and Advertising
- Agency, Inter-language and the Transnational
- Class, Gender, and Race in Paris
- Immigration, Hybridity, and Identity

Learning Outcomes

The course also seeks to develop students' written and oral rhetorical skills as well as their analytical skills through the following activities and assignments:

- Class discussion on readings, in which close attention is paid to both form and content of literary works and the use of textual evidence to support an argument
- Through in-class analysis of things like paintings, façades, and neighborhoods during “off-site visits,” students are presented techniques to read and interpret visual evidence
- Writing assignments in essay-format, which are evaluated in terms of argumentation, structure, close reading, and students' choice of evidence to support a thesis

The midterm and final exams test students on how well they have engaged with the social, historical and literary-artistic questions raised over the course of the term and serve as an effective way for them to measure what they have gained from their experience of Paris.

COURSE MATERIALS

Faïza Guène, *Just Like Tomorrow*

Jacques Jouet, *Mountain R*

Patrick Modiano, *Missing Person*

Georges Perec, *Things: A Story of the Sixties*

Raymond Queneau, *Zazie in the Metro*

Leila Sebbar, *Sherazade: Aged 17, Dark Curly Hair, Green Eyes, Missing*

Patrick Süskind, *The Pigeon*

Course Reader ([CR] hereafter)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance at lectures and site visits is mandatory. It is essential that you attend all classes and participate actively. As per the UC Paris Attendance Policy, excessive absences and tardies will result in a lowered final grade. Please refer to UC Paris Academic Handbook for the policy on absences and tardies.

Participation and reading assignments are critical. For the purposes of this class, participation means reading the materials in advance, coming to class on time, staying for the entire class period, and actively taking part in discussions and other in-class exercises and activities. **Reading quizzes are within the realm of possibility.** A large part of this portion of your grade is simply **paying attention**; in order to pay attention, you must be present! Any tardies or absences will have a strong negative effect on your participation grade.

Grade Breakdown:

Participation in Class Discussion 15%

Close Reading Essay (1-2 pages) 10%

Short Essay 1 (3-5 pages) 15%

Short Essay 2 (4-6 pages) 20%

Mid-term Exam 20%

Final Paper or Exam 20%

A Note on Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a serious offense and could result in your dismissal from the program. All instances of suspected plagiarism will be reported to EAP for disciplinary action. If you borrow words or an idea from any source, whether it be a book, journal, magazine, the Internet, or a lecture, you need to indicate where the information came from. Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference* identifies three different acts that are considered plagiarism: "(1) failing to cite quotations and borrowed ideas, (2) failing to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks, and (3) failing to put summaries and paraphrases [of other texts] into your own words" (Hacker 261). (By both citing the source of this definition of plagiarism and by "enclosing borrowed language in quotation marks," this syllabus has avoided charges of plagiarism.) If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please ask me.

A Note on Electronic Devices

As a courtesy to your instructor and fellow students, please do not use cell phones, laptops, tablets, e-readers, or other electronic devices during class, even to check the time. Make sure phones are turned off. Use of these devices will lower your participation grade. No recording (audio or visual) of class sessions will be permitted.

COURSE SCHEDULE (Subject to change at instructor's discretion)

**Purging / Re-membering the Past: The Language of Cleanliness, Consumerism,
Cinema, Hybridity, and Immigration**

Week 1

T – 15 Sept: Introduction
Film: selections from *The Sorrow and the Pity* & *Inglourious Basterds*

TH – 17 Sept: Patrick Modiano, *Missing Person*

Week 2

T – 22 Sept: Patrick Modiano, *Missing Person*
Kristin Ross, “Hygiene and Modernization” from *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* [CR].

TH – 24 Sept: Jean Echenoz, “Plan of Occupancy” from *Paris Tales* [CR]

Week 3

T – 29 Sept: **Site visit – “Plan of Occupancy” and the Canal Saint Martin**

TH – 1 Oct: **Close Reading Essay Due (11:30 am, beginning of lecture)**
Raymond Queneau, *Zazie in the Metro*

Week 4

T – 6 Oct: Roland Barthes, “The Eiffel Tower” [CR]
Raymond Queneau, *Zazie in the Metro*
Film: selections from Louis Malle’s *Zazie in the Metro*

TH – 8 Oct: Faïza Guène, *Just Like Tomorrow*

Week 5

T – 13 Oct: Faïza Guène, *Just Like Tomorrow*
Alec Hargreaves, “Perceptions of Ethnic Difference in Post-War France.” [CR]
Site visit – Temporary exhibition on contemporary photography (Details TBA)

TH – 15 Oct: Edward Saïd, “Reflections on Exile” [CR]
Tahar Ben Jelloun, selections from *Solitaire* [CR]

Week 6

T – 20 Oct: Jacques Jouet, *Mountain R*

TH – 22 Oct: Jacques Jouet, *Mountain R*

Week 7

26 Oct-30 Oct: **First Short Essay Due Tuesday, October 27th at 11:30 am**
Session 1- Catch-up, Discussion, Review (Date & Time TBA)
Session 2- Midterm Exam (Date & Time TBA)

FALL BREAK & ARMISTICE HOLIDAY (October 31st – November 8th)

Transnational Perspectives: The Language of Advertising, the “Other,” and the Tourist

Week 8

T – 10 Nov: Georges Perec, *Things: A Story of the Sixties*

TH – 12 Nov: Georges Perec, *Things: A Story of the Sixties*

Week 9

T – 17 Nov: Georges Perec, *Things: A Story of the Sixties*
Leila Sebbar, *Sherazade: Aged 17, Dark Curly Hair, Green Eyes, Missing*

TH – 19 Nov: **Site visit – Paintings in *Sherazade* – Meeting at Musée du Louvre 11:30 am**
Edward Saïd, selections from *Orientalism* [CR]
Leila Sebbar, *Sherazade: Aged 17, Dark Curly Hair, Green Eyes, Missing*

Week 10

T – 24 Nov: Leila Sebbar, *Sherazade: Aged 17, Dark Curly Hair, Green Eyes, Missing*
Gayatri Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” [CR]

TH – 26 Nov: Paul Fournel, “Story” [CR]

Week 11

T – 1 Dec: Paul Fournel, “Story” [CR]
Patrick Süskind, *The Pigeon*

TH – 3 Dec: Patrick Süskind, *The Pigeon*
Second Short Essay Due (11:30 am, beginning of lecture)

Week 12

T – 8 Dec: Bernard Binlin Dadié, selections from *An African in Paris* [CR]

TH – 10 Dec: Mathieu Kassovitz’s *La Haine*
Tom Conley, “Cronos, Cosmos, and *Polis: La Haine*” [CR]

Week 13

14 Dec-18 Dec: **Session 1- Catch-up, Conclusions, Review** (Date & Time TBA)
Session 2- Final Exam (take-home or in-class) (Date & Time TBA)