

What's New in Theory: Animals, Religion, Globalization T-Th 9:30-10:45 / Bunche 3117

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Office hours: M/W 1-3 and by appointment

<http://www.u.arizona.edu/~ehayot/1.htm>

Texts:

Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*

Giorgio Agamben, *The State of Exception*

Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul*

Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees*

Haun Saussy, ed. *Comparative Literature in the Age of Globalization*

Slavoj Zizek, *The Puppet and the Dwarf*

In addition to these books we will be reading a number of essays. They will be available online at <http://www.u.arizona.edu/~ehayot/pdfs.htm> (login space password elevator), and are marked in the syllabus below as (PDF). You will need to access these and print them out so that you can bring them to class.

Course description:

What's new in theory? And how new is it, really? This course brings together some of the major thematic concerns of recent theoretical work in the academic humanities: animals, things, religion, and globalization. Each of these rubrics will be an occasion for considering the relation between the apparent novelty of these theoretical concerns and the current situations of world politics and of comparative literature. Our field of focus will therefore move insistently between the local (what's happening to comp lit?), the regional (what are the major themes of academic work today?) and the global (how do these things connect to what's happening in the world?). Our attempt to maintain this trifocal vision should, if we try hard enough, also allow us to place comparative literature in the optic of globalization, and to discuss therefore what it means to study comparative literature today.

Much of our class discussion will be devoted, therefore, not simply to understanding the texts we read but also to placing them in contexts both large and small. But we will also be attending to the more prosaic, more literary side of theory, asking questions about how these texts generate their meanings through choices in cognitive or literary style.

In order to help you reach these goals, you will write weekly responses (1-2 pages), a short midterm paper (5-7 pages) and a final paper that should showcase the things you've learned in the course (12-15 pages).

Grading:

Your grade will be determined as follows:

Weekly responses:	25 percent
Mid-term paper:	25 percent
Final paper:	50 percent

Failure to complete any of these assignments will prevent you from passing the course. On top of this will be your class participation grade, which can either hurt you or help you (up to 1/3 a grade either way). It will be determined by the degree to which you help the class learn, or keep it from learning. I do not penalize students who do not talk in

class.

In exceptional circumstances I will consider the granting of a grade of incomplete, but only when all but a minor portion of the course work has been successfully completed.

Lateness and absences:

You get two classes off free. Every absence beginning with your third absence will seriously hurt your final grade. There are no excused absences unless you need to represent the university in some official way (as an athlete, for instance) or it is a religious holiday for you. Don't be late to class.

I don't accept late work unless you talk about it with me in advance. Unexcused late work will receive a grade of 0. If you are not in class when something is due, you will receive a grade of 0.

Plagiarism and academic honesty:

If you use someone else's sentences or ideas, whether through direct quotation or paraphrase, you need to say so. Use parenthetical references and a works cited list (as explained in the *MLA Style Guide*, available in the library or at the bookstore) to credit your sources. I expect you to abide by the university's code of academic integrity.

I assert my right to ownership over the content of my course lectures and other statements in class. Any recording of my remarks for uses other than your own personal study requires my written permission.

Daily syllabus. Have everything read before coming to class.

1. April 6 / **Animals**

Th: Coetzee, from *Elizabeth Costello* (PDF)
 Singer, from *In Defense of Animals* (PDF)
 Nussbaum, "Beyond 'compassion and humanity'" (PDF)

2. April 11, 13

T: Wolfe, "In the Shadow of Wittgenstein's Lion" (PDF)
 Baker, "Sloughing the Human" (PDF)
 Th: Derrida, "And say the animal responded?" (PDF)

3. April 18, 20

T: Agamben, *The Open*
 Th: Agamben, *The Open*

4. April 25, 27 / **Religion**

T: Paul, "Letter to Romans" (PDF)
 Th: Badiou, *Saint Paul* 1-39

April 28 is the last day to drop this class without a transcript notation

5. May 2, 4

T: Badiou, 40-111

This evening the French performance artist Orlan will be speaking at the Hammer Museum in Westwood. We will make a class trip to the talk, and will follow it with a group dinner.

Th: Zizek, *The Puppet and the Dwarf*, 1-33

Take-home midterm handed out

6. May 9, 11

T: Zizek, 34-91

Th: Zizek, 92- 143

7. May 16, 18 / **Globalization**

T: Take-home midterm due / no responses due this week

Moretti, "Graphs," from *Graphs, Maps, Trees*

Th: Moretti, "Trees"

Damrosch essay from Saussy, *Comparative Literature in the Age of Globalization*

8. May 23, 25

T: Agamben, *State of Exception* 1-52

Th: Agamben, *SoE* 52-88

9. May 30, June 1

T: Saussy, essays by Saussy, Trumpener, Culler

Th: Saussy, essays by Apter, Lionnet, Unger

10. June 6, 8

T: Castronovo on virtual worlds (PDF)

Butler, "Precarious Life" (PDF)

Th: Debriefing and final paper discussion

Your final paper is due by 5 pm on June 13th to my office in Bunche Hall, or via email.