

On Location: The Place of Literature in Global Cultures

COLT 102, 22000R, Spring 2014, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00-3:20 pm, WPH B27

This course provides a survey of global literatures in comparative contexts with a particular emphasis on the representation of the modern urban city. Reading authors ranging from James Joyce, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Virginia Woolf to Zakes Mda and Zadie Smith, we will study the representation of modern urban spaces, and more precisely, how these literary texts attempt to narrate the shifting experiences of modernity. We will ask, how do these texts imagine or attempt to re-imagine social spaces and their modes of mediating social relationships and modes of habitation? For example, reading William Shakespeare alongside contemporary Vietnamese-American writer, Monique Truong, we will examine how the port city becomes a dynamic site for both colonial encounter and cultural exchange as well as social transgression and sexual deviance. How do these representations of the city make

sense of the relationship between “the Home” and “the World” as we will examine in Rabindranath Tagore’s classic novel? More broadly, we will ask, how do these portrayals of modern urban spaces mediate the imaginings of “the local” and “location” in relation to “the global”?

COLT L/M/CT Track: This is a **Literature** concentration course.

This course fulfills the Category II Western Cultures and Traditions requirement.



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