

Cosmopolitanism

Prof. Roberto Ignacio Díaz

Fridays 10:00 a.m. – 12:50 p.m. | WPH 204



Rameau's *Les Indes galantes* at the Opéra National de Paris, 2019. © Little Shao

This course explores the concept of cosmopolitanism in literature, opera, film, philosophy and political theory. Our point of departure will be Immanuel Kant, but our readings will soon move from the “heart” of Europe to reach – in a cosmopolitan spirit – far-flung parts of the world and other kinds of cosmopolitanisms, including those “from below” or, as Santiago Silvano would have it, “of the poor.” As we review various formulations of the cosmopolitan stance, we will explore closely related notions and practices, including translation; bilingualism, multilingualism and translanguaging; globalization and world literature; war, peace and global justice; and, by contrast (or not), patriotism and nationalism. We will read literary works by Jorge Luis Borges and Vladimir Nabokov, whom Steiner calls “extraterritorial,” and by Eileen Chang and Octavio Paz, located between “East” and “West;” a novel by José María Arguedas, informed by Spanish and Quechua; plus stories by Jhumpa Lahiri, who writes in English and Italian. We will also study the extraliterary contacts between Victoria Ocampo and Rabindranath Tagore; view films by Wong Kar-wai and Alejandro González Iñárritu; and, returning to Europe, consider a recent staging in Paris of an opera by Jean-Philippe Rameau directed by Clément Cogitore and choreographed by Bintou Dembélé, which we will study alongside a novella about opera by Alejo Carpentier. Our study of these works will be informed by philosophical and critical works by Jürgen Habermas, Jacques Derrida, George Steiner, Bruce Robbins, Anthony Appiah, Martha Nussbaum, Seyla Benhabib, Pauline Kleingeld, Silvano Santiago, Emily Apter, Mariano Siskind and others. Students are encouraged to develop and share their own research questions.