

- Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines
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Sém. Ang. II/TG: Elizabeth Bishop & Robert Lowell: The Poetics of Geography and History (2AN2091)

Filières concernées	Nombre d'heures	Validation	Crédits ECTS
Pilier principal M A - littératures	Séminaire: 2 ph	Voir ci-dessous	5
Pilier secondaire M A - littératures	Séminaire: 2 ph	Voir ci-dessous	5

ph=période hebdomadaire, pg=période globale, j=jour, dj=demi-jour, h=heure, min=minute

Période d'enseignement:

- Semestre Printemps

Equipe enseignante:

Boris Vejdosky (University of Lausanne)

Objectifs:

Students should become familiar with the work and the biography of two major poetic figures of the twentieth century, Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Lowell. By contrasting their poetics, students will gain a deeper understanding of poetic forms in English (meter, rhyme, tone, etc.) and relate this to the contexts in which Bishop's and Lowell's poetry was produced. Students will also interrogate the presence and the role of poetry in the 20th and 21st centuries and pose the question of the relation of poetry to our contemporary sense of space and history.

Contenu:

Robert Lowell and Elizabeth Bishop spent most of their lives in separate places and often on separate continents. What brought them together was their individual poetics between which they established correspondences in some 450 letters. This essay explores these correspondences and distances between what I call Lowell's poetics of history and Bishop's poetics of space. I read these correspondences as the two poets' different and mutually influential ways of apprehending the materiality of the world, assessing the role of the poet, and the aesthetic, ethical and political importance of poetry. In "The Map," Bishop writes, "More delicate than the historians' are the map-makers' colors"; this essay proposes to show the personal but also the political correspondences between the poetics of history and the poetics of space of Lowell and Bishop to show how their correspondences have shaped the works of two major American poets of the twentieth century.

Forme de l'évaluation:

Short class presentation and 4000-word essay due June 15th, 2018. Please consult with me about your essay and presentation.
Retake: a new essay or a fundamental rewrite of the first essay (100%)

Documentation:

Primary texts:

Elizabeth Bishop, *Poems: The Centenary Edition* (London: Chatto&Windus, 2011)
Robert Lowell, *New Selected Poems* (Katie Petersen, ed. New York: Faber&Faber, 2010).

Further reading:

Robert Lowell, *Collected Poems* (Frank Bidart and David Gewanter, eds. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003). [Can replace the *Selected Poems*.]
Thomas Trevisano and Saskia Hamilton, eds. *Words in the Air: The Complete Correspondence Between Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Lowell* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008).

A Selected Bibliography will be made available on the MOODLE site of the course toward the end of January 2018. Please go to the UNIL Moodle site and look up: Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Lowell_UNINE_2018. Key: Bishop&Lowell.

Pré-requis:

BA in English; C1.

Students are encouraged to start reading as early and as widely as possible in the primary texts. Books are available from Amazon and will be on order at local bookstores.

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Forme de l'enseignement:

The class will meet weekly and will consist of lectures by Boris Vejdovsky and class discussions and text analysis that will require the students' regular attendance and active participation. Students will also contribute a short class report.