



The French Interdisciplinary Group,
Department of French & Italian,
Program in Comparative Literary Studies

present

DERRIDA~LACAN

IN BETWEEN PSYCHOANALYSIS AND DECONSTRUCTION

A lecture by

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4 ~ 6 PM Harris~108

Reception will follow

Isabelle Alfandary is Professor of American Literature at Université Sorbonne-Nouvelle (Paris III) and a specialist of modernist American poetry. She is the author of innumerable articles as well as several books, amongst them *E. E. Cummings ou la minuscule lyrique* (2002); *Le risque de la lettre: lectures de la poésie moderniste américaine* (2012); and *Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan : entre psychanalyse et déconstruction* (Forthcoming 2015). Professor Alfandary has served on the editorial board of journals such as *L'Atelier*, *Rue Descartes*, *Tropismes* and *Transatlantica* and was Program Director at the prestigious *College International de Philosophie* in 2013.

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Paris. City of love. City of dreams. City of splendor. City of saints and scholars. City of gaiety. Sink of iniquity. In two thousand years, Paris had seen it all. It was Julius Caesar who had first seen the possibilities of the place where the modest Parisii tribe made their home.

The Mediterranean lands of southern Gaul had already been Roman provinces for generations at that time; but when Caesar decided to bring the troublesome Celtic tribes of northern Gaul had already been Roman provinces for generations at that time; but when Caesar decided to bring the troublesome Celtic tribes of northern Gaul into the empire as well, it hadn't taken him long. The Romans had quickly seen that this was a logical place for a town. A collecting point for the produce of the huge fertile plains of northern Gaul, the Parisian territory lay on the navigable River Seine. From its headwaters farther south, there was an easy portage to the huge River Rhône, which ran down to the busy ports of the Mediterranean. Northward, the Seine led to the narrow sea across which the island of Britannia lay. This was the great river system through which the southern and northern worlds were joined. Greek and Phoenician traders had been using it even before the birth of Rome. The site was perfect. The Parisian heartland lay in a wide, shallow valley through which the Seine made a series of graceful loops. In the center of the valley, on a handsome east-west bend, the river widened and several big mudflats and islands lay, like so many huge barges at anchor, in the stream. On the northern bank, meadows and marshes stretched far and wide until they came to the lip of low, enclosing ridges, from which several small hills and promontories jutted out, some of them covered with vineyards. But it was on the southern bank the left bank as one went downstream that the ground near the river swelled gently into a low, flat hillock-like a table. And it was here that the Romans had laid out their town, a large forum and the main temple covering the top of the table with an amphitheater nearby, a grid of streets all around, and a north-south road running straight through the center, across the water to the largest island, which was now a suburb with a fine temple to Jupiter, and over a farther bridge to the northern bank. They had originally called the town Lutetia. But it was also known, more grandly, as the city of the Parisii. In the Dark Ages after the Roman Empire fell, the German tribe of Franks had conquered the territory in the Land of the Franks, as it came to be called, or France. Its rich countryside had been invaded by Huns and Viking Norsemen. But the island in the river, with its wooden defenses, like some battered old ship, Viking Norsemen. But the island in the river, with its wooden defenses, like some battered old ship, survived. In medieval times, shed grown into a great city, her maze of Gothic churches, tall timbered houses, dangerous alleys and stinking cellars spread across both sides of the Seine, enclosed by a high stone wall. Stately Notre Dame Cathedral graced the island. Her university was respected all over Europe. Yet even then, the English came and conquered her. And Paris might have been English if Joan of Arc, the miraculous maid, hadn't appeared and chased them out. Old Paris: City of bright colors and narrow streets, of carnival and plague. And then there was new Paris. The change had come slowly. From the time of the Renaissance, lighter, classical spaces began to appear in her dark medieval mass. Royal palaces and noble squares created a new splendor. Broad boulevards began to carve through the rotting old warrens. Ambitious rulers created vistas worthy of ancient Rome. Paris had altered her face to suit the of ancient Rome. Paris had altered her face to suit the magnificence of Louis XIV, and the elegance of Louis XV. The Age of Enlightenment and the new