

Global Detection

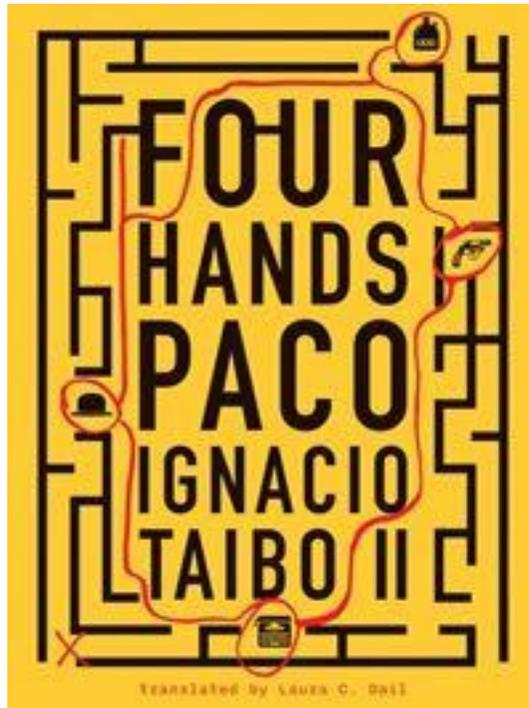
History 312W/412
Spring 2018

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Laure Berthaud (Caroline Proust), *Engrenages*.

Crime novels and police procedurals are a crucial type of genre literature and have been for over a century. On the one hand, they appeal to readers' enjoyment of suspense and challenge their puzzle-solving abilities. Crime and detective novels can also be read as guidebooks and historical accounts. Since such fiction depends in large measure on context, they are often filled with clues to customs and social practices. So, for instance, readers of Swedish novels learn that the country drinks more coffee per capita than any other nation. Our interest will be slightly different. Because crime is by definition nearly always a transgression of cultural norms, they can also be read as a commentary on a nation's social fabric and political health. They can show how a society is structured, where its weak points are, and the condition of social and political justice. All our reading comes from authors who are or were citizens of the country about which they write and are, with two exceptions, non-native English speakers (but one American, and no Canadian, British, or Australian writers). For purposes of limitation, all write about events that take place after World War II.



Reading:

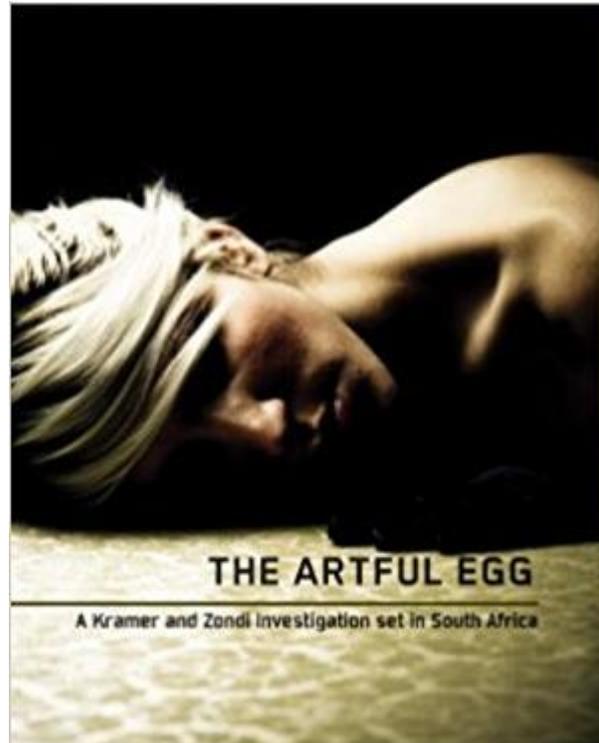
The following books are assigned. Some are out of print, but are available at used book sites. All other books will be available at the College Town Barnes and Noble and fine internet shopping sites everywhere. When possible, reading will be on reserve. * Indicates a book out of print; + indicates a book **not** on reserve.

Michael Chabon, *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*
Raymond Chandler, "Simple Art of Murder"
Didier Daeninckk, *Murder in Memoriam*
Kego Higashino, *The Devotion of Suspect X*
Diane Wei Liang, *The Eye of Jade*+
Ernest Mandel, *Delightful Murder**
Henning Mankell, *Dogs of Riga*
James McClure, *The Artful Egg*+
Manuel Vazquez Montalban, *Buenos Aires Quintet*
Jo Nesbo, *The Redbreast*
Leonardo Padura, *Havana Fever*
Serge Quadruppani, *The Sudden Disappearance of Worker Bees*+
Maj Sjewell and Per Wahloo, *Murder at the Savoy*
Paco Ignacio Taibo II, *Four Hands**
Janwillem Van de Wetering, *Outsider in Amsterdam*+

Assignments:

There are two assignments:

Two **oral reports** setting the context for the upcoming reading. Reports will be offered a week before the relevant reading and should convey to the class the central features of social and political life in the country in which the novel is set. Reports need not be exhaustive or original but should be constructed so that the class knows the relevant context for the novel it is about to read. So we might want to know about racial politics in South Africa (*The Artful Egg*) or the strength of fascism in Norway (*The Redbreast*). Reports should take no more than fifteen minutes and can rely on standard research works, including, judiciously, Wikipedia.



A screen treatment, due 3 May 2018. It is now your turn. Rather than write a novel or short story, your work will culminate in a proposal for a movie. Pick any non-English speaking nation, select a postwar political or social problem, sketch the context (date, location, significant social and political practices), indicate the major figures, and the basic plot. You should establish a motive for the crime and indicate how that motive is connected to problem or condition that defines the history. Treatments should be a minimum of twelve pages.

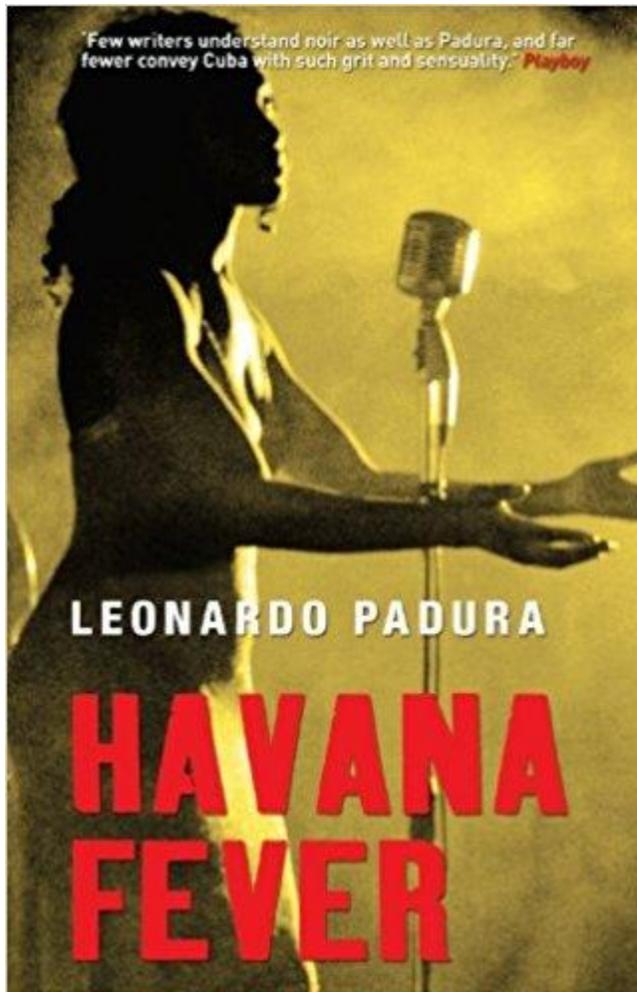
Students are reminded of University plagiarism rules: www.rochester.edu/college/honesty

Schedule

January 23: Ernest Mandel, *Delightful Murder* and Raymond Chandler, “Simple Art of Murder” (<http://www.en.utexas.edu/amlit/amlitprivate/scans/chandlerart.html>)

January 30: Maj Sjöwell and Per Wahloo, *Murder at the Savoy* (Sweden)

February 6: Henning Mankell, *Dogs of Riga* (Latvia, Sweden)



February 13: Jo Nesbo, *The Redbreast* (Norway)

February 20: Janwillem Van de Wetering, *Outsider in Amsterdam* (Netherlands)

February 27: Didier Daeninckk, *Murder in Memoriam* (France)

March 6: Serge Quadrupani, *The Sudden Disappearance of Worker Bees* (Italy)

March 20: Manuel Vazquez Montalban, *Buenos Aires Quintet* (Argentina, Spain)

March 27: Paco Ignacio Taibo II, *Four Hands* (Mexico, Nicaragua)

April 3: Leonardo Padura, *Havana Fever* (Cuba)

April 10: James McClure, *The Artful Egg* (Natal Province, Republic of South Africa)

April 17: Diane Wei Liang, *The Eye of Jade* (China)

April 24: Kego Higashino, *The Devotion of Suspect X* (Japan)

May 1: Michael Chabon, *The Yiddish Policemen's Union* ("Sitka")

May 3: Screen Treatment Due