

The Water Crisis in Literature & Film

**FRENCH 228 A offered
with LIT 228 A/CHID 270 A**

Autumn 2019 TTh 1:30-3:20

Prof. Richard Watts

5 credits (VLPA/I&S)

Taught in English

Questions? email

frenital@uw.edu



We will interpret a variety of documents and objects—literature (e.g., *Masters of the Dew*), cinema (e.g., *Even the Rain*), landscape architecture (from the fountains of Versailles to the Brightwater sewage treatment plant)—that address the cultural significance of water with the aim of understanding how water's meaning is changing as we become more conscious of risks in supply posed by pollution and natural/man-made scarcity and as access to it is increasingly mediated as a result of its privatization, commodification, etc. While no ten-week course could pretend to give a comprehensive and global view of a problem as complex as our relation to water, we will study novels, essays, films and other cultural documents from Western Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, the Maghreb, Asia, the Caribbean, and North America with a view to understanding the differential distribution of the water crisis and the variety of aesthetic responses to it.