

Spring 2015

CMLT-C545: THE BIBLE & WESTERN LITERATURE (33014)

Instructor: Herbert Marks

This course focuses on the twin pillars, "secular" and "sacred," of the Western literary tradition – Homer's Iliad and the Hebrew Bible – and on an English work, Milton's Paradise Lost, that aims to combine and rewrite them both. We shall be concerned with such questions as the relation of art to ethics and of sacred to secular forms of attention, and we shall be looking at the role that literary revisionism plays in the genesis of ostensibly "original" works. Emphasis will be on close reading of the primary texts, but we shall also be surveying the main trends of modern scholarship and studying examples of pre-critical interpretation, including Stoic and neo-Platonic readings of Homer, and such post-biblical modes as Philonic allegory, rabbinic midrash, and medieval kabbalah, all of which are reflected in Milton's attempt to adapt epic conventions to a sacred theme. Written work: three short papers and occasional exercises. (Graduate students will have the option of writing a longer term paper.) Students are encouraged to begin reading the Iliad, preferably in the translation by Richmond Lattimore, during winter break. For the first class, we shall be discussing Book One. Please bring the text. This course meets with C317.

CMLT-C573: COMP TOPICS MID EAST & WEST LIT (30621)

TOPIC: ORIENTALISM

Instructor: Paul Losensky

Edward Said's controversial book *Orientalism* (1978) condemns Western scholarly, literary, and visual representations of the Near East and other Asian civilizations as components of a larger campaign of economic and political domination. While recognizing the need to analyze and critique how the cultural other is depicted in the West, later scholars have called into question many of Said's premises and findings and argued for more nuanced readings of orientalist texts, images, and soundscapes and their complex motivations and meanings. This seminar-style course begins with a close reading of *Orientalism* and its reviewers, both positive and negative. We then consider three pre-modern literary treatments of the Near East in Aeschylus's *The Persians*, von Eschenbach's *Willehalm*, and Marlowe's *Tamerlane*.

before turning to Orientalist literature and art in the 18th and 19th centuries. Beginning with the Western reception of *The Arabian Nights*, we will examine how works by William Beckford, Samuel Johnson, Gustav Flaubert, Lord Byron, and others not only mingled reality and fantasy in their representation of the "Orient," but criticized their own societies. We will also examine the values that inform the works of Orientalist painters such as Gérôme and Deutsch and the uses of Near Eastern motifs in music from Mozart to Rimsky-Korsakov. We will end by tracing the effects of orientalism in 20th-century modernism and post-modernism in works by Durrell, Borges, Klee, and Yusef Lateef. Although practical concerns dictate a focus on the interactions of the West and Near East, the course should also interest students of other Asian and Muslim cultures.

CMLT-C601: HISTORY OF THEORY & CRITICISM (31396)

TOPIC: THE IMAGE OF MODERNITY

Instructor: Eyal Peretz

The aim of this class is double. First, we will want to ask, what at all is modernity? Is there indeed such a thing, that is, is there an era that has emerged in the last few hundred years and which marks a radical rupture and transformation in the categories guiding human life and in humanity's understanding of itself? Second, we will want to ask, if there is indeed such a thing as modernity, what is the place and significance that the work of art, or what we will call the Image, comes to occupy in it, and why? For it seems that in many of the most significant attempts to think the modern condition the task of understanding the work of art, the task of rearticulating the place that the Image comes to occupy in human life, comes to the fore.

Readings may include: Machiavelli, Hobbes, Diderot, Kant, Nietzsche, Baudelaire, Weber, Adorno, Heidegger, Blumenberg, Foucault, Cavell, Charles Taylor, Michael Fried, Hans Belting.

CMLT-C603: TOPICS IN COMPARATIVE LIT (30627)

TOPIC: BETWEEN RENAISSANCE AND CLASSICISM

Instructor: Eric MacPhail

Course description is not available.

CMLT-C603: TOPICS IN COMPARATIVE LIT (33017)

TOPIC: TRADITIONAL MONGOL LITERATURE

Instructor: Gyorgy Kara

The course gives an introduction to the pre-modern verbal art, secular and religious, of the Mongol peoples from Chinggis Khan's time to the early twentieth century, from the great epic chronicle, the Secret History of the Mongols of the 13th century, to the elegiac poem of Prince Tsoktu of 1621, to the great lyrics of the irregular Buddhist saint Rabjai, the novels of Injannashi (19th-century), the Golden Teachings of Danjinwangjil and the songs of Kesigbatu. Periods, areas and centers, forms, styles and genres, interaction of written and oral tradition, Indo-Tibetan and Chinese as well as western influences will be discussed. No knowledge of a Mongol language is required. This course meets with C301.

CMLT-C603: TOPICS IN COMPARATIVE LIT (33020)

TOPIC: TALES OF BALKAN EMPIRE

Instructor: Emery, Jacob

This class reads historical novels set during the Ottoman period together with fiction set during the communist period. In examining this literature we will gain insight into the history and culture of the crossroads of Catholic, Orthodox, and Islamic culture, and explore how fictionalized narratives of history have shaped the region's cultures as well as their relations to supranational entities like the Ottoman Empire, the Eastern Bloc, and the European Union. At the same time, we will investigate the genre of historical fiction and the interpenetration of fictional and historical narratives in novels and in nationalist ideologies, not least in the case of 'minor' literatures always conscious of their relationship to larger regional powers. This class meets with C347.

CMLT-C603: TOPICS IN COMPARATIVE LIT (33209)

TOPIC: UNFINISHED NOVELS

Instructor: Emery, Jacob

Is it necessary for stories to have endings? We might say of a book we like that 'I can't wait to see how it ends!' or 'I loved it so much, I never wanted to end!' Many theorists of narrative hypothesize that our sense of story is constructed in relation to its ending, which might reveal the answer to a puzzle, match up the characters in appropriate romantic partnerships, or the like. But many stories do not have endings, perhaps because the author died before he finished, or abandoned the story out of boredom or frustration or lack of audience, or because the ending of an ancient text was lost by an accident. Other texts have been made fragments by their authors, as when Nikolai Gogol burned the second part of his novel *Dead Souls*; others still, like Kafka's *The Castle* or a choose-your-own-adventure novel, may be inherently unfinishable. In this course we will read a selection of these unfinished novels, both in order to bring into a focus a corpus of fascinating texts that lack definitive endings and in order to interrogate the function of the ending in storytelling. In particular, we will trace fragmentary texts from Russian Romanticism into the twentieth century in order to create a genealogy of the Russian fragmentary text in practice and in literary theory. Authors include Petronius, Jane Austen, Franz Kafka, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Vladimir Nabokov. This class meets with C313.

CMLT-C655: TOPICS IN INTER-ARTS STUDIES (30633)

TOPIC: DANTE, MONTALE AND THE MODERN POETS

Instructor: David Hertz

Dante is the great Italian poet who comes at the end of the medieval period and the beginning of the modern world. He was often critical of the social injustices of his own period, sending sinners to Hell and the worthy to Paradise. Montale is the great Italian poet of the twentieth century, critical of the fascist and Nazi culture that led to World War II and the holocaust. While Dante loved a woman named

Beatrice, Montale loved a Jewish-American woman named Irma and this had great impact on his writing. Using the other arts, including the art and music relevant to the careers of each poet, we will study their points of view. Among the artists and musicians we will juxtapose against these two great poets are Giotto, Raphael, Dufay, Josquin, Monet and Debussy and we will encounter these figures as we also discuss the historical background in which each of these literary giants wrote. We will also explore other great modern readers of Dante, including T.S. Eliot and Wallace Stevens. Visits to IU Art museum and attendance at IU School of Music concerts required. Required readings will be in translation, but reading knowledge of Italian is welcome, particularly among graduate students. This class meets with C355.

CMLT-C680: TOPICS IN TRANSLATION STUDIES (30639)

TOPIC: ADVANCED TRANSLATION WORKSHOP

Instructor: Bill Johnston

This class offers an opportunity to develop an extensive literary translation project in a workshop setting. Throughout the course the emphasis will be on a collaborative, exploratory approach to literary translation, and one which is grounded in the practical craft of translation, yet makes use of literary theory and translation theory where these are useful and appropriate. Classes will consist primarily of in-depth workshops focusing on ongoing drafts of short extracts from your projects. Other activities and materials will be used as and when they are needed.

This class requires permission of the instructor.