

CMLT 2211: World Literature I

Natural and Supernatural Motifs in Religious and Epic Literature

Instructor: Mike Paparone

Office: Joe Brown 125

Office Hours: MW 10am-11am and by appointment

Course Description

This is an introductory Comparative Literature course covering representative selections of non-European literature from antiquity to 1650 C.E. Our examinations of these texts will be based on, but not limited to, the role of natural and supernatural motifs in relation to structure and representation, basic philosophical thought, and culture. There will be some discussion of Eastern religions, and students for whom this proposes a serious conflict should reconsider their course options.

Required Texts

All students must purchase every text listed below. There are many editions and translations of these texts; do not purchase a translation or edition different from what is listed below. These texts are available at the University and local bookstores.

The Vimalakirti Sutra trans. Burton Watson, Columbia Univ. Press, New Ed.

Monkey Wu Cheng-en, trans. Arthur Waley, Grove Press, Reissue Ed.

The Ramayana (Shortened Modern Prose Version) Narayan, Penguin Classics, New Ed.

Sundiata D.T. Niane, Longman African Classics, 2nd Revised Ed.

The Niebelungenlied trans. A.T. Hatto, Penguin Classics, Reprint Ed.

CMLT 2211/Paparone Coursepack at Bel-Jean

Assignments and Grading

Students' grades will be based on attendance (5%), 3 short writing assignments (5% each), 1 long paper (20%), a Midterm exam (20%), a Final exam (20%), and weekly reading quizzes (20%). Reading quizzes will not be announced. There will be no make-up quizzes for unexcused absences. Each student is allowed 3 unexcused and 4 excused, documented absences. Being late to class 4 or more times in any month will result in an unexcused absence. Any student who has met or exceeded their allowed absences by the midpoint of the semester will be dropped from the class.

Expectations

Many of the topics addressed in this class do not resemble Western thought. Students will be expected to demonstrate proper respect for other cultures and to examine these texts from a variety of perspectives. Contrary to popular belief, many Western representations of these cultures are distorted and inaccurate. Preconceived notions about these cultures and religions, especially Buddhism, have no place in this class. However, students are strongly encouraged to bring any questions they have to class and to participate in discussions. Use this class as an opportunity to establish factual conceptions of non-Western cultures as well as to cultivate your critical reading, writing, and thinking skills.

Academic Honesty, Students with Disabilities, Legal Statements

“All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” All students are responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.”

“The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.”

Any student with disabilities must coordinate all appropriate correspondence between the University Health Center and the Instructor no later than the end of the second week of class. Reasonable accommodations will be made for these students according to University policy.

Any student experiencing debilitating physical or psychological problems are strongly encouraged to seek help from University and community resources.

Reading Schedule

We will be covering the readings listed below on that day in class. Make sure you complete the readings before class and don't fall behind, as it will be difficult to pass quizzes and catch up later.

Introduction

Aug. 17- course intro

Aug. 20- History of early China- no reading assignment

Aug. 22- Taoism and Buddhism in China- no reading assignment

Classical Chinese, Philosophy, Poetry, and Ghost Stories

Unannounced reading quizzes begin

Aug. 24- Zhuang Zi *Autumn Floods*

Aug. 27- Chinese Poetry: Han Dynasty

Lu Chi *Wen Fu*

Ssu-Ma Hsiang-ju from *'The Shang-lin Park'*

Tao Chien *Peach Blossom Spring*

Aug. 29- Chinese Poetry: T'ang Dynasty

Li Po *Four Poems on Wine, Fighting South of the Ramparts*

Tu Fu *Autumn Meditation, Looking Out Over the Plains, Thoughts on a*

Night Journey, Recruiting Officer at Shih-hao Village

Wang Wei *The Hill of Hua-tzu, The Deer Enclosure, The Path of the Ash Trees*

Po Chü-yi *A Song of Unending Sorrow*

Han Yü *A Poem on the Stone Drums*

Aug. 31- Chinese Ghost Stories

Eternal Prisoner Under the Thunder Peak Pagoda

Buddhism in China

Sept. 3- Labor Day- no class

*Sept. 5- 1st short writing assignment due

Anon. *Heart Sutra*

Han Shan *selected poems*

Han Yü *Memorial on the Bone of Buddha*

Sept. 7- Vimalakirti Sutra 1-50

Sept. 10 - Vimalakirti Sutra 51-100

Sept. 12- Vimalakirti Sutra 101-150

Sept. 14- Vimalakirti Sutra 151-192

Sept. 17- Monkey 1-50

Sept. 19- Monkey 51-100

Sept. 21- Monkey 101-150

Sept. 24- Monkey 151-200

Sept. 26- Monkey- 201-250

Sept. 28- SCLA conference- no class

*Oct. 1- 2nd short writing assignment due

Monkey- 251-300

Oct. 3- Monkey- 301-320

Oct. 5- film

Oct. 8- film

Oct. 10- Midterm exam

Indian, African, and Norse Epic Literature

Oct. 12- Ramayana 1-50

Oct. 15- Ramayana 51-100

Oct. 17- Ramayana- 101-150

Oct. 19- Ramayana- 151-192

Oct. 22- Sundiata 1-50

*Oct. 24- 3rd short writing assignment due

Sundiata 51-101

Oct. 26- Fall Break- no class

Oct. 29- Nieb.- 1-50

Oct. 31- Nieb. 51-100

Nov. 2- Nieb. 101-150

Nov. 5- film

Nov. 7- film

Nov. 9- Long paper due, class assignment TBA

Nov. 12- Nieb. 151-200

Nov. 14- Nieb. 201-250
Nov. 16- Nieb. 251-300
Nov. 19- Nieb. 301-350

Nov. 21-Thanksgiving
Nov. 23-Thanksgiving

Nov. 26- Nieb. 351-400
Nov. 28- Nieb. 401-416

Nov. 30- TBA/ Catch-up
Dec. 3 & 5- Final exam review, course evaluations, etc.