ENG 385

Eng 385, World Literature, Fall, 2008
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:10 am—12:30 pm, Cherry Hall 103
(Eng 385.610, Owensboro; Eng 385.630, Glasgow)
Professor Lloyd Davies
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Texts (All texts, in these editions, are required)
The Bible. (Any edition)

Course Description:
The designation of “World Literature” is a vexed term with multiple meanings; for our purposes it will mean any literary text not originally written in English, i.e., literature in translation (Hoffman’s text is the only exception). The course in World Literature can take many forms, but its essential purpose is to expose American students to literature outside our own English/American linguistic literary tradition. The course is often conceived of as a survey of Masterpieces in the Western Literary Tradition, from Ancient Hebrew and Classical Greek and Latin sources through the great modernists of Europe and South America. This course of readings will follow that path to some extent, while also choosing some works that help show the continuity, interconnectedness, and intertextuality of the literary tradition. You should achieve a broad historic and cultural perspective on literature while becoming familiar with several classic works.

Assignments and written Work:
This is a reading course, and it is extremely important for you to keep up with your reading of these texts. This will require daily reading, sometimes up to forty or fifty pages a day. I expect you to purchase the required texts and to have them in class with you; don’t come without the text! A study guide is no substitute for the text itself. As in traditional literature courses, you should be prepared to demonstrate your comprehension of these texts by talking about them in
class and writing on them in formal essays. You will write three single-page commentaries on
our texts (one for each period), as well as prepare two short oral presentations (each from a
different period), which will give you an opportunity to organize your thoughts and speak
formally about the literature you have read. You will also write one longer term paper of five to
six pages, with three sources (books and articles; not internet) and appropriate MLA
documentation. Remember to observe the rules for writing listed in the Supplement to this
syllabus.

Grades:
You will receive a letter grade on each of your three commentaries and two presentations;
your term paper will receive two grades: one for content and one for form, mechanics, etc.
Students who make a substantial and meaningful contribution to class discussions will receive
an extra credit grade of A. I will average your seven (or eight) grades to reach your final grade.
There will be no final exam.

Paper Requirements:
1. Commentaries: typewritten, double-spaced, one inch margins, Times New Roman 11 font,
three paragraphs, title, Work Cited/Reference given in full, on a single page. The first and third
paragraphs should have three sentences; the middle paragraph at least four. I will not accept
more than one page of text, but a good paper will develop the middle paragraph as fully as the
page allows. Each commentary should quote from the text one time, using MLA documentation.
The quotation should be embedded in the middle paragraph; i.e., not in the first or last
sentence. Commentaries should be short, formal essays in which you discuss and explore an
important aspect, idea, or theme in the work. Avoid self-referential comments.
2. Term paper: similar requirements as for the commentaries, but 5-6 pages, and with three
sources, including one secondary book that allows you to engage a critical point of view on your
primary texts.

Oral Presentations:
These presentations should be five to seven minutes long, and should lead us through some
aspect of the text that you find particularly interesting or important. Do not give background
information about the author or period except insofar as it is of literary interest; the presentation
should direct us to crucial scenes or lines in the text that deserve commentary (but do not
simply retell the plot). Do not read from notes. Be prepared to accept questions from other
students. You will be graded holistically on the quality of your content as well as the clarity and
organization of your presentation.

Schedule

Part I: the Ancient World: Hellenism and Hebraism
Texts: Homer (Greek), Aeschylus (Greek), the Bible (Hebrew)
Week One
August 26, Tuesday **Introductions**
1. August 28, Thursday
Week Two
2. September 02, Tuesday
3. September 04, Thursday
Week Three
4. September 09, Tuesday
5. September 11, Thursday
Week Four
6. September 16, Tuesday
7. September 18, Thursday

**Week Five**
8. September 23, Tuesday
9. September 25, Thursday

**Week Six**
10. September 30, Tuesday
October 02, Thursday **Fall Break Day: No Class**

**Part Two: The European Tradition of Romantic Love**

Texts: Dante (Italian), Bedier (French), Mann (German), Goethe (German)

**Week Seven**
1. October 07, Tuesday
2. October 09, Thursday

**Week Eight**
3. October 14, Tuesday
October 16, Thursday

**Week Nine**
4. October 21, Tuesday
5. October 23, Thursday

**Week Ten**
6. October 28, Tuesday
7. October 30, Thursday

**Week Eleven**
November 04 Tuesday **Presidential Election Day: No Class**

**Part Three: Some Modern Responses to the Literary Tradition**

Texts: Kushner/Ansky (Yiddish); Kafka (German); Agnon (Hebrew);
Shalev (Hebrew); Hoffmann (English)

1. November 06, Thursday

**Week Twelve**
2. November 11, Tuesday
3. November 13, Thursday

**Week Thirteen**
4. November 18, Tuesday
5. November 20, Thursday

**Week Fourteen**
6. November 25, Tuesday
November 27 Thursday **Thanksgiving Break: No Class**

**Week Fifteen**
7. December 02, Tuesday
8. December 04, Thursday

**Week Sixteen**
Finals week—no final

This syllabus and its requirements, texts, and procedures are subject to change if necessary or appropriate.

Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services, Room 445, Potter Hall. The OFSDS telephone number is (270) 745-5004 V/TDD. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.