

ENG224 STUDIES IN ROMANTIC AND VICTORIAN POETRY

Spring Semester 2017/2018

Course Leader: Dr. Evy Varsamopoulou

Class Times & Dates: Mondays & Thursdays 12:00-13:15

Office Hours: Mondays 14:30-17:15 & Thursdays 13:30-14:15

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Course Summary

This course offers a selective overview of the poetry and poetics of the late eighteenth to the late nineteenth century, encompassing Romanticism and the Victorian period. There will be an in-depth focus on the significance of lyrical poetry in British Romantic and Victorian poetry. Specifically, we will read selected lyrical poems and excerpts from longer works by the following poets: William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Blake, John Keats, George Gordon (Lord Byron), Percy Bysshe Shelley, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Mathew Arnold, Emily Brontë, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Alfred, Lord Tennyson and Christina Rossetti. Attention will be given to themes and issues of Romantic poetics and aesthetics as foregrounded in the prose writings of such key Romantic figures as Wordsworth, Coleridge and Shelley. We will also consider the importance of politics and sage discourse as well as the further development of modern poetics and of new themes in Victorian poetry.

Primary Texts

(compulsory) Varsamopoulou, Evy (ed), *Romantic & Victorian Poetry and Poetics: A Reader* (2018; available at local bookshop)

(optional) Ferguson, M., M.J. Salter & J. Stallworthy, eds, *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, Fourth Edition (New York & London: W.W. Norton & Co., 1996).

COURSE AIMS

1. To develop awareness and appreciation of the particularities and diversity of Romantic and Victorian poetry.
2. To develop critical and analytical ability in reading (late) eighteenth and nineteenth century poetry.

3. To develop an understanding of modern poetics through original critical writings of the Romantic and Victorian periods.
4. To understand key theoretical and critical approaches to poetry in the twentieth century.
5. To reflect on different formulations of the value, role and significance of poetry.
6. To acquire skill in communicating personal readings of poetry in academic essays and verbal exchanges (in class).

Programme of Sessions

Week One

Monday 15/01/18: Introduction to Course

Thursday 18/01/18: William Wordsworth, 'The World is Too Much With Us';

Preface to the Lyrical Ballads (*lecture & seminar*)

Week Two

Monday 22/01/18: Wordsworth, 'Ode, Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood' (*lecture/seminar*)

Thursday 25/01/18: Wordsworth, 'Ode, Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood' (*seminar*)

Week Three

Monday 29/01/18: Coleridge, 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' (*lecture*)

Thursday 01/02/18: Coleridge, 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' (*seminar*)

Week Four

Monday 05/02/18: Coleridge, 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' (*lecture/seminar*)

Thursday 08/02/18: William Blake, 'The Chimney Sweeper', two versions (Songs of Innocence; Songs of Experience) (*lecture/seminar*)

Week Five

Monday 12/02/18: Blake, 'The Sick Rose'; 'Tyger Tyger' (*lecture & seminar*)

Thursday 15/02/18: Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Defense of Poetry* (*seminar*)

Week Six

Monday 19/02/18: NO CLASS – PUBLIC HOLIDAY

Thursday 22/02/18: P.B. Shelley, 'England 1819' & 'Mutability' (2 poems)

Week Seven

Monday 26/02/18: P.B. Shelley, 'Mont Blanc' (*lecture & seminar*)

Thursday 01/03/18: George Gordon, Lord Byron, 'Don Juan' (selection) (*lecture & seminar*)

Week Eight

Monday 05/03/18: Byron, 'Don Juan' (selection) (*lecture/seminar*)

Thursday 08/03/18: Byron, 'Don Juan' (selection) (*seminar*)

Week Nine

Monday 12/03/18: J. Keats, 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' (*lecture & seminar*)

Thursday 15/03/18: J. Keats, 'Sleep and Poetry' (*seminar*)

Week Ten

Monday 19/03/18: **Class Test**

Thursday 22/03/18: Mathew Arnold, 'Dover Beach', Emily Brontë, 'No Coward Soul is Mine' (*lecture & seminar*)

Week Eleven

Monday 26/03/18: Elizabeth Barrett Browning, 'Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point' (*lecture & seminar*)

Thursday 29/03/18: Elizabeth B. Browning, 'Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point' (*lecture/seminar*)

Easter Break (2-15 April)

Week Twelve

Monday 16/04/18: E. B. Browning, 'Aurora Leigh' (Book One) (*lecture/seminar*)

Thursday 19/04/18: Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 'Lady of Shalott' (*lecture & seminar*)

Week Thirteen

Monday 23/04/18: Algernon Charles Swinburne, 'The Garden of Proserpine' (*lecture & seminar*)

Thursday 26/04/18: Christina Rossetti, 'Goblin Market' (*lecture & seminar*)

Week Fourteen

Monday 30/04/18: Christina Rossetti, 'Goblin Market' (*seminar*)

Thursday 03/05/18: Christina Rossetti, 'Goblin Market' (*seminar*)

& Exam preparation

Note: Attendance of sessions is compulsory due to continuous assessment. Notification of absence via e-mail is required. It is the student's responsibility to acquire any notes, handouts or work assignments missed due to their absence.

Course Assessment

There are two written assessments for this course. Participation in seminar discussion and short take-home assignments count for a further 20% of the final mark.

Written Component:

1) Mid-term test (70 minutes): Weighting: 30%. Students will be asked to write a brief essay in response to a question about one of the poems already discussed on the course. The test will take up one full session. Length of essay: 400-500 words.

2) Final Exam (3 hours): Weighting: 50%. Students will choose two questions and write a critical essay in response to each. The essay must demonstrate both personal reflection and engagement with critical sources. Essay length: 600-800 words for each essay. Quotations from the poems are not included in the final word count.

Note concerning assessments:

The department and university take plagiarism very seriously. Trust in your own abilities and do not plagiarize. The consequences are not worth the risk.

Recommended Bibliography (Selection)

1. Abrams, M.H., *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 1985)
2. Abrams, M. H., *Natural Supernaturalism* (W.W. Norton & Co, 1980)
3. Armstrong, Isobel, *Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Poetics and Politics* (London: Routledge, 1993)
4. Bristow, Joseph (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Poetry* (Cambridge University Press, 2000)
5. Butler, Mary, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and its Background 1760-1830* (Oxford Paperbacks, 1981)
6. Campbell, Patrick, *Wordsworth and Coleridge: Lyrical Ballads* (London: Macmillan, 1991)
7. Chase, Cynthia (ed), *Romanticism* (London: Longman, 1993)
8. Day, Aidan, *The New Critical Idiom: Romanticism* (London: Routledge, 1995)
9. De Man, Paul, *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (Columbia University Press, 1986)
10. Hamilton, Paul, *Coleridge's Poetics* (Stanford University Press, 1983)
11. Richards, Bernard, *English Poetry of the Victorian period, 1830-1890* (London: Longman, 1988)
12. Shaw, W. David, *The Lucid Veil: Poetic Truth in the Victorian Age* (London : Athlone Press, 1987)
13. Slinn, E. Warwick, *Victorian Poetry as Cultural Critique : The Politics of Performative Language* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003)
14. Watson, John Richard, *English Poetry of the Romantic Period, 1789-1830* (London: Longman, 1985)
15. Wu, Duncan (ed), *A Companion to Romanticism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999)

Further bibliography as well as a list of recommended e-sources will be provided in the first week of classes.