

CULTURAL CROSS-CURRENTS: ROMANTICISMS

ENGL 241 (Tues./Thurs. 2:00 pm - 3:15 pm) Fisk Hall 313
Professor Joshua David Gonsalves
English Dept.@Fisk 225/Office Hrs: Tues./Thurs. 1:00-2:00

The cliché of the Romantic poet(ess) as a wan, expiring figure self-victimized by melancholy, love-sickness, and despair is not only untrue — Keats once beat up a butcher for tormenting a cat and Byron was an avid boxing fan — it is also a misrepresentation of the sheer disparity of Romantic writing, culture, and experience. In this course, we will compare the variegated excesses, extremes, and diversities of British Romanticism with French and German versions of the Same across a variety of genres and media, including decadent novels, heretical drama, sensationalist narratives, perverse poetry and visionary hymns. European texts by Hölderlin, Baudelaire, Lautréamont and Huysmans will enable us to deepen our understanding of Romanticism as we begin and end with a selection of works by Byron, Keats, and Letitia Elizabeth Landon, Romantic poetess *par excellence*. How, we will want to ask, does a survey of a dark, melodramatic, and continental Romanticism sharpen both our insight into Romantic poetry and our ability to interpret it within the context of its cultural surround?

Required Texts:

Baudelaire, Charles, *Les Fleurs du Mal (Flowers of Evil)* (Trans. James McGowan, Oxford University Press).

Hölderlin, *Hymns and Fragments* (Trans. Richard Sieburth; Princeton University Press).

The Decadent Reader: Fiction, Fantasy, and Perversion from Fin-de-Siècle France
(Asti Hustvedt; Editor) MIT Press/Zone Books

Weiss, Peter. *Hölderlin: A Play in Two Acts* (Trans. Jon Swan; Seagull Books).

INTRODUCING THREE **ROMANTIC** POETS:

Tues. Sept. 27. Keats, Byron, and Landon

Thurs. 29: Lamia the Serpent-Woman: Read *Lamia* (Keats; course packet).

Tues. Oct. 4: *Decadent Imaginations* (*Lamia* continued).

Thurs. 6: Cain the Arch-Apostate: Read *Cain: A Mystery* (Byron; course packet).

Tues. 11: *Byronic Transgressions (Cain continued)*.

Thurs. 13: Romantic Metamorphosis: Read *Melusine* (Landon; course packet).

Tues. 18: *En-gendering Romantic Sexual Politics*: Read *Calypso Watching the Ocean and The Altered River* (Landon; course packet).

VISIONARY ROMANTICISM

Thurs. 20: Hölderlin on Fragmentary Genius: Weiss.

Tues. 25: Hölderlin and Visionary Poetry: *At the Source of the Danube*

Thurs. 27: Hölderlin. *Remembrance/Ister/Mnemosyne*

Tues. Nov. 1: Hölderlin and Schlegel: *Patmos* (incl. Fragments of *Patmos*)
AND *Fragments* by Friedrich Schlegel

Thurs. 3: Heidegger & Hölderlin – Poetry of Madness: *In Lovely Blue/Tinian/In the Days of Socrates* AND “*Poetically Man Dwells*” (Martin Heidegger)

TRANSGRESSING IRONY: *Complicity Now!* Baudelaire’s *Les Fleurs du Mal*.

Thurs. 10: *Au Lecteur/L’Albatros/Élévation/Correspondances*

Tues. 15: *Hymne à la Beauté/Parfum exotique/La Chevelure*

Thurs. 17: *À une Madone/L’Irremédiable*

Thurs. 24: *Le Cygne/Les Sept Vieillards/Les Aveugles/À une passante*

Tues. 29: *L’Ennemi/Les Litanies de Satan/La Mort des amants*

Thurs. 1: excerpt from Canto One, *Maldoror* (Lautréamont).

DECADENT DANCES OF SPIRIT:

Tues. 6: Readings from Decadence Reader

Thurs. 8: continued

Tues. 13: continued

Thurs. 15: *concluded*

ROMANTICISM REDUX:

Tues. 20: A Romantic Coda: Swinburne (read "*Dolores*" in course packet).

Thurs. 22: Or, Swine-born?

Tues. January 3, 2012: Keats ("Ode on Melancholy").

Thurs. 5: Byron ("Darkness" & "Prometheus")

Tues. 10: Landon ("City of the Dead").

Thurs. 12 (extra day for review/make up class)

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

Attendance/Participation: 10%

2 Close Reading/Textual Analysis Assignments: 20% each.

'Take-home' Mid-term Exam: 25%.

'Take-home' Final Exam: 25%