

Course Syllabus The Gothic Imagination
ENGLIT 0636
Summer II 2018
Study Abroad Program Syllabus
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Most definitions of The Gothic begin by describing it as a reaction to the rationalism of the Enlightenment, and Italy is the locus, and focus, of so much of the anxiety emerging from the Enlightenment's discourse of reason against "superstition" as well as (Protestant) England's simultaneous fear of and fascination with Catholic Europe (Italy and Spain). Many of the emerging anxieties and repressed desires of Enlightenment England/France are expressed and examined in the subversive "Gothic" texts: anxieties about the place of the imagination in the face of the emphasis on the "rational," for instance; about the fear of female desire for agency and equality in the Age of Revolution; about the Orientalist suspicion of the lure of the "foreign(er)"/"Eastern(er)," and so on.

Given the location of the course, I view this iteration of the course as an opportunity to focus on the importance of location, the sense of place, in the way the issues are worked out in the "Gothic Imagination." Being anchored in Prague, the city in Central Europe looking both ways to the East and the West, the city at the crossroads of the emergence of secular humanism and religious dispute, we will be able to explore both the myth of "Gothic Italy" as represented in *The Castle of Otranto* and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, and the more complicated historical reality. Radcliffe's novel, in particular, is an excellent example of the division between England/France as spaces of the Enlightenment; Italy and places east—Budapest, Transylvania—are, by contrast associated with the mysterious, menacing East represented by Dracula. Prague Castle will be our representative space for a wide-ranging exploration of the themes. We will investigate the extent to which locus and habitus (as defined by Bourdieu: "a set of dispositions which generate practices and perceptions") are related in the development of the Gothic Imagination.

Required Texts:

***Bram Stoker's Dracula* (film version)**

Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* (U of Oxford P edition)

Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (U of Oxford P edition)

***The Monk* (U of Oxford Press edition)**

Franz Kafka, *The Castle* (Oxford UP edition)

Materials online, on CourseWeb, and Photocopies

Policies

Student Preparation: This is a reading-intensive course, requiring a commitment to reading, comprehending, and analyzing demanding texts. In addition, I require students to be fully engaged with the material, and will demand your utmost attention in class and rigorous devotion to preparation for the course outside it. While you are not expected to have fully mastered every aspect of the materials, you are required to have **at least** a basic understanding of and response to the materials--what is happening in the text, who's doing what, to whom, where, and why--when you come to class. I am willing to provide help in figuring this out **before** the class period appointed for the analysis, because, as a rule, class time cannot be squandered on resolving basic comprehension problems.

· **Read and reread, and mark up your texts to make it easier to find your way back into it in class.**

We will not be able to go over all the readings in class, but you are still responsible for knowing what was not discussed in class.

Course evaluation:

Students will write three short essays or one long (12 pages) essay at the end, in addition to shorter (one page) regular reports on historical/textual issues as assigned, such as, The architecture of Prague Castle and its effect on their understanding of Kafka, or even *Dracula*.

Plagiarism Policy: See University Plagiarism Policy Statement.

As per the University guidelines: If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 or 412-383-7355 (TTY) as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Plagiarism and other kinds of academic dishonesty will be reported to the authorities concerned. Please review accompanying handout on the subject.

Papers, exams and out-of-class assignments must be printed or typewritten, double spaced with 1-inch-wide margins. All documentation must follow the latest MLA style. Please consult me before beginning, and handing in, papers. I should be happy to look at drafts at any stage, but the final submissions will be graded for originality of thinking, perceptiveness in reading, quality and clarity of writing, and breadth of scholarship.

Tentative Schedule of Readings and Assignments*

Divide the number of pages with the number days on which we will talk about them, and read that many; **only volumes 1 & 2 of *Mysteries of Udolpho* are required**

Week One:

Monday 9th July: MORNING MEETING

Introduction: What is Gothic? Some terms defined, as Socrates urges us to do: Sublime, Picturesque; Grottesque; Horror; Terror; Romanticism and Gothic Revival Terror vs. Horror

Principles of Romantic Poetry: Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" & Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner" as best-known expressions of emerging attitudes towards nature, modernity and tradition (The Sublime and the Grottesque); Literary Gothic as a resistance to Renaissance Humanism and Enlightenment skepticism; Afternoon tour of Castle

Guided Tour of Prague Part 1

Tuesday 10th July gothic/Gothic *Castle of Otranto*; Italy as the locus of medieval "superstition"; the fiction of history; elements of the Miraculous and the Absurd; precursors to Surrealism and Dadaism? National politics and linguistic and cultural/literary nationalism; Guest Lecture

Guided Tour Part 2

Wednesday 11th July: scenes from *Dracula* film; *Castle of Otranto* (Gothic as Romance of the Past/Distant) (Renaissance Europe); anxieties about past and future; strategies of containment of social and gender upheavals ; fragmentation and magnification; the part as representing/threatening the whole; "travel"/being a stranger as an important theme in Gothic Literature

Thursday 12th July: 1-2:00 P.M. *Mysteries of Udolpho* Vol. 1 (The Enlightenment Ideal: Wordsworthian landscape and Nature; Masculine/Domestic Virtue); **Guest lecture 2**

Friday 13th July: *Mysteries of Udolpho* Vol. 1; the Byronic hero; the lure of the Forbidden ; virtue and desire; from country to castle to city: degrees of corruption; The

theory of the Sublime; Self-control and “sensibility”; Stoicism updated The Gothic as a philosophical genre

Week Two:

Sunday July 15th Český Krumlov

Monday July 16th Český Krumlov: Enclosures and Gothic use of space/containment (Read *Mysteries of Udolpho*)

Tuesday July 17th *Mysteries of Udolpho* Vol. 2 The Journey as a definitive experience in the Gothic Genre; the travel to temptation and danger; city of decadence and corruption (“Horror” and “Terror”); the castle as isolation; the city as dissolution/dissipation; Martin Krumholz?: Architecture and the Gothic

Wednesday July 18th morning condensed class; *Mysteries Of Udolpho*; The Veil and St. Agnes of Bohemia and (Essay 1 Due Midnight?)
NO Afternoon Class

Thursday July 19th Kutna Hora excursion

Friday July 20th Essay 1 due; *Mysteries of Udolpho* vol. 2 (Legitimacy and Women’s Property Rights); (The Sublime and its Civilizing Effects); Desire and Askesis; self-control and deferred gratification

Monday July 23rd *Mysteries of Udolpho* vol.3 (I will catch you up! But only as much as you want!); The control of suspense in the Gothic; “supernatural” events/superstition; Terror/fainting *Mysteries of Udolpho* vol.3 (The Construction of the Ideal Female); *Mysteries of Udolpho* vol. 3 (Female Gothic) *Mysteries of Udolpho* vol. 4 (Romance and Realism: Sentimental Novel) (**Volumes three and four are optional; I will talk about them without giving away any mysteries**); **Beginning *The Monk***

Tuesday July 24th: Morning class, *The Monk* (Afternoon Visit to Sternberg Palace)

Wednesday July 25th Vol 1 *The Monk* (Exoticism and Orientalism; Reason and the Occult); (The “Masculine Gothic”) (JEWISH QUARTER TOUR)

Thursday July 26th *The Monk* Crisis of British/Post-Enlightenment Masculinity and the Imperial Mission); Masculinity and femininity defined and redefined;

Friday July 27th *The Monk* The sin of hypocrisy; fear of sexuality; the Angel in the House/The New Woman, and Victorian gender Roles;gender-bending; the Faustian theme of spiritual complacency and over-reaching hubris; *The Monk* as the figure of Protestant Suspicion of Catholic beliefs and practices; The French Revolution; Spain as aligned with a grotesque past

Sunday 29th July: Terezin Trip

Monday July 30th: the madness of “utopia”; quest for “purity” and the failure of “civilization”; the madman as Monster; the quest for reason as “madness”/surreal

Kafka *The Castle* : Introduction; Lectures on Kafka and Modernism; Prague as the locus of the suspension between modernity and the Medieval Past;
Evening: OPERA!

Tuesday July 31st: *The Castle* Kafka and Kafka's Castle: the Horror of a Faceless, Unresponsive Bureaucracy; *The Castle* the non-rational nightmare of reality; the horror of the Absurd, and the Absurdity of horror;

Wednesday August 1st Kafka *The Castle* and the emergence of Modernism; the repressed; society and individual; consciousness of horror, and the horror of consciousness;

Thursday August 2nd: *The Castle*: Kafka's nightmare: existential angst, as opposed to nationalist; the triumph of "horror" as a definitive Gothic genre in the mid-twentieth century, especially in cinema.

FAREWELL Dinner

Friday FUNDAY

Saturday Depart Prague