

ENGL 189: Far Out: The “Orient” in the Romantic Imagination

Professor Rangarajan

TR 11:00-12:20, CHASS 2130

Course Description

The East was the place to be in the early nineteenth century. The English translation of *A Thousand and One Nights* in 1706 had inspired a rage for eastern stories that continued unabated for over a hundred years. Imperial expansion catered to an insatiable demand for Indian shawls, opium, tea, and china. Young men ventured east to win large fortunes, and women went to find husbands (or to escape them). The “Orient” was a space to be plundered and the actual location of the Garden of Eden. Many common stereotypes— of lascivious women, sinister Arabs, effeminate Indians, and gem-encrusted palaces—were codified during this era. But it was also a source of new knowledges and aesthetics to be respected and incorporated, and a place from which the West could be critiqued and found wanting.

This is a reading intensive class and a capstone seminar, so several writing assignments, participation in group discussion, and a research project are required.

Books

Beckford, William *Vathek* (UCR bookstore)

de Quincey, Thomas *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (UCR bookstore)

Scott, Walter *The Talisman* (available online through Abebooks and Amazon)

Course Packet (available for copy at Vision Copy and Print, 1450 University Ave Ste F)

Schedule (subject to change)

9/26: Introduction

10/1 Montagu, from *Turkish Embassy Letters*; William Jones, *On the Poetry of Eastern Nations*

10/3 Beckford, *Vathek* (60 pages)

10/8 *Vathek*, conclusion; Said, from *Orientalism*

10/10 Moore, “The Veiled Prophet”

10/15 “The Veiled Prophet”;

10/17 **NO CLASS**/ Khan, from *The Travels of Mirza Abu Taleb Khan*

10/22 Khan, from *The Travels of Mirza Abu Taleb Khan*; Roddan, “Orientalism is a partisan book”

Poetry Annotation Exercise DUE

10/24 Byron, “The Giaour”

10/29 “The Giaour”

10/31 Scott, *The Talisman* (Chaps 1-3)

PAPER DUE

11/5 *The Talisman* (Chaps 4-7)

11/7 *The Talisman* (Chaps 8-11)

11/12 Library Day

11/14 *The Talisman* (Chaps 12-15)

11/19 De Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (Intro- The Pleasure of Opium)

11/21 De Quincey, (The Pains of Opium)

11/26 Coleridge, "Kublai Khan"

11/28 **NO CLASS**

12/3 Final project presentations

12/5 Final project presentations