

ENGL 5059-002
Romantic Imperialism: Britain and the East
Padma Rangarajan
LIBR M549 Wed. 9:30-12:00

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This course covers literature of Empire in Britain from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. We will be reading Romanticism from the outside in; that is, we will be considering the ways in which British culture grappled with its rapidly expanding geographical borders, the influx of foreign peoples and cultures, and its evolving position as a global colonial superpower. As we survey a wide array of drama, poetry, fiction, non-fiction prose, visual culture and accompanying secondary criticism, we will collectively attempt to come to an understanding of that most elusive of literary-historical terms—Romanticism—and its relationship to the early imperial British culture.

Primary Texts*:

The Travels of Dean Mohamet
The Translations of Letters of a Hindoo Rajah
Vathek
The Giaour
The Missionary
Lalla Rookh
The Curse of Kehama (Kessinger publications; this should be purchased from Amazon)
Confessions of an English Opium-Eater
Chronicles of the Canongate
Additional readings available on ereserve

*For this course, I'm presuming everyone is familiar with the concept of Orientalism as defined by Edward Said. We will be working with and against Said's understanding of Orientalism, so I recommend that those of you who haven't encountered it read *Orientalism*, especially the Introduction, Chapter I ("The Scope of Orientalism"), and the section in "Orientalism Now" entitled "Latent and Manifest Orientalism." Copies of these sections are available on ereserve.

Schedule:

1/12: Introduction

1/19: Burke "Speech in Opening the Impeachment on Warren Hastings"; Samuel Foote, *The Nabob*; Suleri, *The Rhetoric of English India*, Chaps. 1-3.

1/26: Hamilton, *Translations of the Letters of a Hindoo Rajah*; Rajan, "Feminizing the Feminine: Early Women Writers on India."

2/2: Beckford, *Vathek*; Saglia, "William Beckford's 'Sparks of orientalism' and the material-discursive orient of British Romanticism"

2/9: the poetry and prose of Sir William Jones; Findlay, " '[T]hat Liberty of Writing': Incontinent Ordinance in "Oriental" Jones";

2/16: Shelley, *Alastor*; from *The Travels of Sake Dean Mohamet*; Makdisi "Beyond the Realm of Dreams: Byron, Shelley, and the East."

2/23: Byron, *The Giaour*; McGann, *Rethinking Romanticism*

3/2: Owenson, *The Missionary*; Leask, "Indian Travel Writing and the Imperial Picturesque"

3/9: Moore, *Lalla Rookh*; Trumpener, "Harps Hung Upon the Willow" from *Bardic Nationalism*; Taylor, "Irish Odalisques and Other Seductive Figures: Thomas Moore's *Lalla Rookh*."

3/16: from Mill's *The History of British India*; Majeed, from *Ungoverned Imaginings*

3/30: Southey, *The Curse of Kehama*; Butler, "Literature as a Heritage"

4/6: de Quincey, *The Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*; TBA

4/13: Scott, *Chronicles of the Canongate*; Duncan, from *Scott's Shadow*

4/20-4/27: Conference, and conclusion

Assignments:

1. Presentation/paper (8-10) pages

Everyone is responsible for leading one class discussion, and preparing questions on both the primary and secondary readings. Besides guiding the discussion, you also need to give a presentation (and submit a paper) based on one of the following topics:

- I. Bibliographic survey: Analyze the critical history of your chosen text. Make sure to include significant or influential reviews, reviews by fellow authors, etc. Consider critical consistencies, the emergence and disappearance of various themes, and the relationship of reviews to their historical period. Which articles do you consider most useful, and why? What does this survey tell us about the history of the text, or the history of criticism in general? You should provide a mix of historical and contemporary criticism.

II. Publication history: present a publication history of the assigned primary text, including manuscript history and various editions. You'll want to consider the following questions: was the text initially published serially, in a chapbook, a story collection, or separately? Has there been any interesting, or noteworthy paratextual material in any edition? If so, discuss its importance. Where can one find the original manuscript or a first edition? What can publication history tell us about the text? Which edition would you use for your own scholarly research? For teaching? You should see if CU's Rare Books room has an old (or even first) edition of your chosen text.

2. Conference-length paper/presentation

Your second paper will be a conference length (i.e., appx. 12 pages, or 20 minutes of spoken text) paper on any subject pertaining to the course. You'll be presenting your papers the last two weeks of class.

Grading

Presentation—15%

Paper #1—35%

Paper #2—40%

Participation—10%