

English 445
Islam and Medieval Western Narrative
Professor Teresa Kennedy
tkennedy@umw.edu
301 Combs Hall
Office hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00-10:00

The purpose of this course is to explore the complex and often paradoxical relationship between Islamic sources in literature, art, and philosophy with the Western tradition of the High Middle Ages (12th-14th centuries). This course will be reading intensive, and will draw on multiple sources both online and in print.

Course requirements are as follows:

Group Work, including class blog: 25%
Seminar paper (at least 12 pages, fully documented): 50%
Presentations: 25% (including one 20 minute paper presentation)

Because of time constraints during the summer session, your final research draft will not be due until August 10.

The following texts are required and are available in the bookstore:

Menocal, Maria Rosa. *Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History*
Byatt, A.S., ed. *Arabian Nights*
Said, Edward. *Orientalism*
Boccaccio, Giovanni. *Decameron*
Irwin, Robert. *Companion to the Arabian Nights*
Dronke, Peter. *Medieval Lyric Poetry*

e-texts: (available on line)

Dante. *Vita Nuova*: <http://www.adkline.freeuk.com/TheNewLifeI.htm>

Inferno: <http://dante.ilt.columbia.edu/new/comedy/index.html>

Islamic Philosophy. *Routledge Encyclopedia*: <http://www.rep.routledge.com/article/H057>

Class schedule:

Week of June 25:

Backgrounds to Islam in the West

Monday: Explanation of group work on blog; group assignments, course outline

Reading: Irwin, "Oceans of Stories;" (Chapter 3); Menocal, " Chapters 1 and 2 (1-70).
Comment on reading on class blog, noting themes and categories in common.

Tuesday: Theoretical Frameworks: Mysticism & Platonism

Reading: Dronke, "History of 12-century Philosophy": 113-150; Colish 175-264; (posted on class blog—remember to comment).

Wednesday: Imagining the Moslem in the European Middle Ages

Reading: Frassetto, ed. Chapter 2 (Cruz) "Popular Attitudes towards Islam" 55-82 (On blog). Byatt, *Arabian Nights*: 3-154; Edward Said, *Orientalism* (especially first three chapters).

Thursday: Troubadors and Courtly Love

Reading: Menocal, 71-114; Dronke, *Medieval Lyrics* (Selections to be announced); Also read http://www.arabworldbooks.com/Literature/troubadour_poetry.htm.

Week Two: Exoticism and Psychosexual anxiety

Monday: The Matter of Troy

Reading: Roman d'Eneas 199-257 (On blog); Burger & Kruger, eds. "The Sodomitic Moor" 99-122; "Chaste Subjects" 123-142 (On blog).

Tuesday: The Matter of Britain

Reading: *Lancelot*, Chretien de Troyes. (<http://omac1.org/Lancelot/>)

Wednesday: The Matter of Greece???? *Decameron*

Reading: Irwin, Chapters 7 and 8.; *Decameron* Days 1-3. *Arabian Nights* 254-360.

Thursday: *Decameron* Day 4, Day 6, Day 7

Week Three: Anxieties of Crusades

Monday: Eleanor of Aquitaine and the 2nd Crusade

Reading: Research this topic independently

Tuesday: Chivalry?

Reading: Malory: <http://www.luminarium.org/medlit/malorybib.htm> Book 8 (Tristan)

Wednesday: Arthurian legends and the Arabian Nights

Reading: TBD

Week Four: The Italian Tradition

Monday: Dante and the Arabic Tradition

Reading, Menocal Chapter 5; Dante *Vita Nuova*. *Inferno*.

Tuesday: Dante and the Arabic lyric

Reading: TBD (Dronke)

Wednesday: Dante and religious narrative

Reading: Cantor (online)

Thursday: Encyclopedic Texts

Reading: Decameron, Book X

Week Five: Conclusions, Seminar paper presentations