**THE ROMANTIC ATLANTIC**

English 178A.1 Fall 2010

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**TEXTS**: *British Literature: 1780-1830* (eds. Mellor/Matlak, Harcourt); Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution* (ed. J.C.D. Clarke, Stanford UP); Paine, *Rights of Man, Common Sense, and Other Political Writings* (ed. Philp, Oxford); Sansay, *Secret History* (ed. Drexler, Broadview); Austen, *Mansfield Park* (Penguin); Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (ed. Cowley, Penguin)

**AIMS AND SCOPE**

Transatlantic studies, particularly as an emerging discipline in the humanities, has been central in generating new conceptual frameworks for thinking through the complex issues related to the interconnectedness of Atlantic rim cultures. Focusing on the ways in which cultures, ideologies, and political identities are reworked and reinscribed by the transatlantic movement of peoples, ideas, and cultural artifacts, this course will seek to expand our notions of romanticism (typically understood within exclusively British and US American contexts) to include transoceanic perspectives that understand early-nineteenth-century romantic literature as a transatlantic phenomenon. Topics for discussion will include literature and the transatlantic slave trade, travel and exploration, transatlantic revolution and independence movements, global feminisms, cosmopolitanisms, and other “contact zone” experiences created by travel, migration, and colonial enterprises across the Atlantic. In addition to Anglophone romantic literary works by writers such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Whitman, Emerson, and Poe, we will consider hispanophone and continental writings by writers like José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi and Alexander von Humboldt. All texts are in English.

The course will proceed primarily through lecture, classroom discussion, and an online discussion forum, and students will be assessed on the basis of the following: class participation, two short writing assignments, and a final research paper. Lectures will be brief and will focus on setting up the historical context for the literature to be discussed and other relevant background material that may illuminate our discussions. Class discussion will build off of responses to the online discussion forum and proceed with an eye towards developing the course theme. The short writing assignments will consist of the following: a) a one page abstract of an argument of the student’s choosing and related to the course theme in which students will be graded on how well they set up the critical context for the argument to be advanced, chart an original critical intervention, and concisely articulate a clear and persuasive argument; and b) a five- to eight-page paper developing the argument articulated in the abstract. Students will have the option of choosing any topic for their presentation so long as it relates to the course theme and will be evaluated in terms of how well the student has organized and integrated his or her material with the course aims and objectives. Finally, the final research paper will be ten to fifteen pages on any topic related to the course theme and will be judged on how well you incorporate my comments to the two short writing assignments, clarity of writing, substance of argument, and substantiality of research.

# **Grade Assessment:**

Participation: 50%

Final Paper: 30 %

Short Writings: 20 %

**Attendance:**

You may miss two classes without penalty. After the third unexcused absence, your grade is dropped by one degree (i.e., B+ becomes a B). Coming to class with all necessary materials is mandatory to be counted as present.

**Participation:**

Participation involves both an active involvement in class discussions and fulfillment of your short response responsibilities as described below.

**Short Responses:**

These responses consist primarily of answering discussion questions posted on the online discussion forum prior to attending class. I ask that you complete and post your response no later than 7 a.m. the day of the class. Responses should be thoughtful and relevant to the course theme. Posts following the first response should engage with those arguments that come before it to avoid repeating ideas already posted.

**Deadlines:**

All deadlines are final unless cleared with me prior to the class meeting on which the assignment is due. If you have special circumstances that prevent you from getting your work in on time, feel free to contact me and we’ll make arrangements.

**READINGS:**

INTRODUCTION:

9/28 What is the Romantic Atlantic?

Keats: “On First Looking Into Chapman’s Homer”

THE ATLANTIC REVOLUTION

10/5 Burke, “Speech on the Conciliation with America” (E)

Paine, *Common Sense* (1-59)

10/12 Burke, *from* Reflections on the Revolution in France (141-314; 412-415)

Paine, *Rights of Man* Part I (83-197)

Coleridge, *from* Biographia Literaria (E)

10/19 Mary Wollstonecraft, “Wrongs of Woman”

Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound*

Wordsworth, from Preface to Lyrical Ballads (Mellor 573-581)

Keats, “A Prophecy: To George Keats in America”; *selections* Letters (E)

10/26 NO CLASS

11/2 THE SOUTH ATLANTIC

Simón Bolívar, “Carta de Jamaica” (E)

Leonora Sansay, *Secret History;* *or the Horrors of St. Domingo*

Wordsworth, “To Toussaint L’ouverture” (Mellor 598)

**SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE: one- to two-page abstract**

11/9 ROMANTICISM AND THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

Bellamy: *The Benevolent Planters* (64)

Edgeworth: “The Grateful Negro” (546)

More: *Slavery, A Poem* (206)

Yearsley: *A Poem on the Inhumanity of the Slave Trade* (263)

Prince: from *The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave* (868)

Equiano: from *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (192)

Coleridge: *The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere* (698)

Southey: “The Sailor, Who Had Served in the Slave Trade” (68)

11/16 IMAGINING THE “NEW WORLD”

Blake: *America, A Prophecy* (E); *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (E)

*from* Mary Shelley *Frankenstein* (E)

Barbauld: *Eighteen Hundred and Eleven* (181)

Shelley: “Ozymandias” (E)

Hemans: “The Indian with his Dead Child”

“The American Forest Girl.”

Wordsworth: “The Complaint of a Forsaken Indian Woman”

Robertson: Selections from *History of America* (E)

**SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE: 5- to 8-page paper**

11/23 ROMANTICISM AND LATIN AMERICA

Southey, *Madoc* (E)

11/30 THE TRANSATLANTIC ROMANTIC NOVEL

Austen: *Mansfield Park*

12/2 Austen: *Mansfield Park*

12/9 Finals (Presentations)

**ABBREVIATIONS:**

LION = Literature Online (available through UCLA Electronic Resources)

E = Electronic Reserve