



The Education Tripos

Part I and Prelim to Part II

Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama

Paper Overview:

The plays and poems of William Shakespeare are some of the best-known, most critically admired and popularly loved works in the English language. This course immerses you in these works, inviting you to read and watch as much Shakespeare as you can lay your hands on. Lecture-seminars focus on a different play each week, proceeding roughly chronologically. Over the year you will read and discuss histories, comedies, tragedies, romances, the so-called “problem plays”, and Shakespeare’s non-dramatic verse. You will consider the legitimacy of these generic categories and reflect on new and alternative ways of identifying connections and disjunctions between his works.

The course aims to consolidate your familiarity with some of the more famous texts, as well as to introduce you to some of Shakespeare’s less well-known works. Lecture-seminars are highly interactive and it will be expected that you have read the core reading in advance. Each lecture will introduce you to a major critical position in Shakespeare scholarship, giving you the opportunity to assess recent developments in the field and arrive at your own ideas about how best to handle the primary material. Lectures aim to lay the foundations for you to build on and explore further how a particular critical angle might enable you to flesh out readings of the works you are studying. By the end of the course, you will be able to navigate your way through a range of theoretical approaches, all the while cultivating your own critical voice.

Lecture-seminars are weekly. These are supplemented by fortnightly small-group supervisions, which aim to support your essay-work for the course. You will be required to produce 4 supervision essays over the year, two in Michaelmas and two in Lent.

Assessment:

There will be a 3-hour examination in which you will write 3 essays, one from each section. In Section A, you are asked to write on one of the texts set for the course (the core reading). In Section B, you are asked to discuss a given theme in relation to any work or works of Shakespeare. In Section C, you are asked to discuss a critical argument in relation to two or more works by Shakespeare. There is therefore plenty of scope for you to explore works by Shakespeare not addressed in lectures.

MICHAELMAS TERM

Session 1 *Background and Context: The Age of Shakespeare*

In this session, students will be given a brief overview of Shakespeare's life and works and introduced to the historical context.

Core Reading:

There is no reading to prepare for this session.

Session 2 *King Richard the Third*

This session attempts to equip you with some of the close reading skills required for an appreciation of Shakespeare's artistry. We will attend to Shakespeare's use of rhetoric for literary and dramatic effect, particularly in some of the major soliloquies.

Core Reading:

King Richard the Third

Session 3 *The Taming of the Shrew*

We will discuss the problems this play has posed for audiences over the centuries, particularly considering what many have perceived to be misogynistic elements. The lecture will locate the play in its historical context, considering how the play intervenes in Early Modern debates about gender.

Core Reading:

The Taming of the Shrew

Session 4 *Titus Andronicus*

The violence of this play raises questions about what horror does to an audience or reader, and why we are so drawn to the grotesque. In this session we will grapple with some of these questions, making use, among others, of psychoanalytic ideas about our fascination with the bodily.

Core Reading:

Titus Andronicus

Session 5 *The Merchant of Venice*

To what extent does this play attempt to mount a serious challenge to contemporary ideas about religion, morality and the law? To what extent can a play ever mount such a challenge? This session will think about some of the ways in which audiences and readers might account for the problems – generic and ideological – this play poses.

Core Reading:

The Merchant of Venice

Session 6 *The First Part of King Henry the Fourth*

Shakespeare's history plays are intricately structured so as to set up oppositions and parallels between characters, settings, ideological positions, and different historical eras. This session will interrogate the structural devices Shakespeare uses in this play and analyse their roles.

Core Reading:

The First Part of King Henry the Fourth

Session 7 *Much Ado About Nothing*

What makes a Shakespearean comedy a Shakespearean comedy? Is it that the play is funny? Is it that it has a happy ending? Or does it have more to do with the thematic preoccupations of the play: romance, domesticity, rebirth? In this session, we will consider the inter-relationships between subject-matter and genre, attempting to identify some of the hallmarks of a Shakespearean comedy.

Core Reading:

Much Ado About Nothing

Session 8 *Shakespeare's non-dramatic verse*

In Shakespeare's poetry, we find a more meditative, introspective, often lyrical, quality than we tend to find in the plays. Many critics have mined the poems for biographical clues about Shakespeare's life. But is this a redundant critical gesture? We will consider alternative ways of interpreting the poems, and think about how the poems connect, as well as contrast, with the plays.

Core Reading:

'*Venus and Adonis*'; '*The Rape of Lucrece*'; '*A Lover's Complaint*'; '*The Phoenix and Turtle*'; sonnets.

Session 1 - *Henry V*: Play and Performance

Using *Henry V* as an example, this session will look at the performance of Shakespeare both in the Renaissance and in contemporary theatre and film. We will consider the potential impact of the nature of the Elizabethan theatres and their audiences on the structure of the play and examine the ways in which it has been appropriated by subsequent generations and cultures as a means of expressing contemporary attitudes to war. We will also consider the notion of *Henry V* as part of a history cycle, and the way in which this has manifested itself in productions of the play.

Core Reading:

Henry V

Worthen, William B. 'Deeper Meanings and Theatrical Technique: The Rhetoric of Performance Criticism' in *Shakespeare An Anthology of Criticism and Theory 1945-2000*. Ed. Russ McDonald. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004

Further Reading:

Smith, Emma. *King Henry V: Shakespeare in Production*. Cambridge University Press, 2002

Olivier's *Henry V*

Davies, Anthony. 'Lawrence Olivier's *Henry V*' in *Filming Shakespeare's plays: the adaptations of Laurence Olivier, Orson Welles, Peter Brook and Akira Kurosawa*. Ed. Anthony Davies, Cambridge University Press, 1990

Davies, Anthony. 'The Shakespeare Films of Laurence Olivier' in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Film*. Ed. Russell Jackson. Cambridge University Press, 2000 - AVAILABLE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, E-BOOKS, CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS

Branagh's *Henry V*

Branagh, Kenneth, ed. *Henry V: The Screenplay*. London: W. W. Norton, 2007

Crowl, Samuel. 'Flamboyant Realist: Kenneth Branagh' in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Film*. Ed. Russell Jackson. Cambridge University Press, 2000 - AVAILABLE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, E-BOOKS, CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS

Hedrick, Donald K. 'War is Mud: Branagh's Dirty *Henry V* and the Types of Political Ambiguity' in *Shakespeare, the movie: popularizing the plays on film, TV, and video*. Ed. Lynda E. Boose and Richard Burt. London: Routledge, 1997

Henry V on the Renaissance Stage

Danson, Lawrence. 'Henry V: King, Chorus, and Critics'. *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 1983 – AVAILABLE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, JSTOR.

Henry V on the Modern Stage

Kiernan, Pauline. *Research Bulletin 2: Henry V*. March 1998. 26 March 2008.

http://www.globelink.org/docs/Henry_V_1997.pdf

Rokison, Abigail, 'Shakespeare's history cycle in performance: Actor and audience perspectives' in *Shakespeare*, vol 5. Issue 1, Routledge, 2009

Session 2 - *Twelfth Night*: Festive Comedy?

In this session, using *Twelfth Night* as a key text, we will examine the genre of Shakespearean comedy. Looking at plot, structure, language and character, we will consider influences on Shakespeare's conception of the genre and developments in his writing. In particular we will consider definitions such as 'Festive comedy' and 'Middle comedy' in relation to the play.

Core Reading:

Twelfth Night

Laroque, François. "Popular festivity." *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Comedy*. Ed. Alexander Leggatt. Cambridge University Press, 2001 - AVAILABLE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, E-BOOKS, CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS

Further Reading:

Twelfth Night

Bryant, Peter, *Twelfth Night and Shakespeare's Comic Art*. University of Port Elizabeth, 1967

Leech, Clifford, *Twelfth Night and Shakespearian Comedy*. Dalhousie University Press, 1965.

Wells, Stanley, ed. *Twelfth Night: Critical Essays*. New York: Garland Press, 1986.

White, R. S., ed. *Twelfth Night: Contemporary Critical Essays*. London: Macmillan, 1996.

Festive Comedy

Mahood M. M. 'Shakespeare's Middle Comedies: A Generation of Criticism'. *Shakespeare Survey* 32. - AVAILABLE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, E-BOOKS, CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS

Barber, C. L. *Shakespeare's festive comedy: a study of dramatic form and its relation to social custom*. Princeton University Press, 1972

Bryant, Joseph Allen. *Shakespeare & the uses of comedy*. University Press of Kentucky, 1986

Beiner, G. *Shakespeare's agonistic comedy: poetics, analysis, criticism*. Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1993

Session 3 - *Hamlet*: The variant texts, character and staging

In this session we will look at *Hamlet* in its three variant texts. We will examine what the nature of the Folio, Q1 and Q2 might tell us about the way in which the play was conceived and performed, and the implications for plot and character of the variant texts. This session aims to provide students with some understanding of the process from authorial manuscript to printed text in the Renaissance period.

Core Reading:

Hamlet

Irace, Kathleen O. 'Origins and Agents of Q1 *Hamlet*' in *The Hamlet First Published*. Ed. Thomas Clayton. London: Associated University Press, 1992.

Further Reading:

Hamlet

Greenblatt, Stephen, J. *Hamlet in purgatory*. Princeton University Press, 2002 Hapgood, Robert. *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark: Shakespeare in Production*. Cambridge University Press, 1999

John Jump, William. *Hamlet: a casebook*. Macmillan Press, 1983

- Wilson, John Dover. *What happens in Hamlet*. Cambridge University Press, 1959 Variant Texts
- Chambers, E.K. *William Shakespeare: A study in facts and problems*, vol I. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930
- Gurr, Andrew. 'Maximal and Minimal texts: Shakespeare v The Globe'. *Shakespeare Survey* 52 - AVAILABLE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, E-BOOKS, CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS
- O'Irace, Kathleen. *Reforming the "bad" Quartos: Performance and Provenance of Six Shakespearean First Editions*. University of Delaware Press, 1994
- Maguire, L.E. *Shakespearean Suspect Texts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996

Session 4 – Shakespeare’s Language: Verse, Prose, Rhetoric and Semiotics

This session examines Shakespeare’s use of language. We will consider the way in which content and style interact in the plays, in particular the ways in which distinctions between verse and prose and the use of particular metrical or rhetorical structures impact on meaning.

Core Reading:

- Wright, George T. 'Hearing Shakespeare’s Dramatic Verse' in *A companion to Shakespeare*. Ed. David Scott-Kastan. London: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999.
- Vickers, Brian. 'Shakespeare's Use of Prose' in *William Shakespeare: His World, His Work, His Influences*. 3 vols. Ed. John F. Andrews. New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1985.

Further reading:

- Serpieri, Alessandro and Elam, Keir. 'Reading the signs: towards a semiotics of Shakespearean Drama' in *Alternative Shakespeares*, vol 1. London: Methuen, 1985.
- Abbott, E.A. *A Shakespeareian Grammar*. London: Macmillan, 1869.
- Alexander, Peter. *Shakespeare’s Punctuation*. London: Cumberlege, 1945.
- Blake, N.F. *A Grammar of Shakespeare’s Language*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002.
- Hussey, S.S. *The Literary Language of Shakespeare*. London: Longman, 1982.
- McDonald, Russ. *Shakespeare and the Arts of Language*. Oxford: OUP, 2001.
- Partridge, A. C. *Orthography in Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama*. London: Arnold, 1964.
- Wright, George T. *Shakespeare’s Metrical Art*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1988.

Session 5 – Othello: Race and Gender

In this session we will look at Shakespeare’s treatment of ‘the other’ in *Othello* – notably in terms of race and gender.

Core Reading:

Othello

- Loomba, Ania, 'Sexuality and Racial Difference' in *Shakespeare An Anthology of Criticism and Theory 1945-2000*, ed. Russ McDonald, Oxford: Blackwell, 2004

Further reading:

Othello

- Allen, Ned, B. 'The Two parts of *Othello*'. *Shakespeare Survey* 21 - AVAILABLE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, E-BOOKS, CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS
- Kolin, Philip C. *Othello: new critical essays*. Routledge, 2005

Magnusson, Lynne. 'Voice Potential: Language and Symbolic Capital in *Othello*.
Shakespeare Survey 50 - AVAILABLE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY,
E-BOOKS, CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS

Orgel, Stephen. '*Othello* and the End of Comedy'. *Shakespeare Survey 56* – AVAILABLE
THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, E-BOOKS, CAMBRIDGE
COMPANIONS

Race and Gender

Bates, C. "Weaving and Writing in *Othello*: Shakespeare and Sexuality. *Shakespeare Survey 46* - AVAILABLE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, E-BOOKS,
CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS

Callaghan, Dymphna. 'Othello was a white man': properties of race on Shakespeare's stage' in
Alternative Shakespeares, vol. 2. Routledge, 1996

Greene, Gayle. "'This that you call love": Sexual and Social Tragedy in *Othello*' in
Shakespeare An Anthology of Criticism and Theory 1945-2000. Ed. Russ McDonald.
Oxford: Blackwell, 2004

Newman, Karen. "And Wash the Ethiop White": Femininity and the Monstrous in *Othello*.
Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology. Ed. Jean Elizabeth
Howard, Marion F. O'Connor. Routledge, 2005rf

Session 6 – *Macbeth*: Power and Instability

In this session we will look at the depiction of power in *Macbeth*. We will consider Shakespeare's depiction of Macbeth's rise to power particularly in relation to the historical sources, Renaissance attitudes to kingship and the reign of James I.

Core Reading:

Macbeth

Extract from Holinshed's Chronicles

Sinfield, Alan 'Macbeth: History, Ideology and Intellectuals' in Alan Sinfield. *Faultlines: Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissident Reading*. Oxford University Press, 1992.

Further reading:

Bradley, A. C. *Shakespearean Tragedy: Lectures On Hamlet, Othello, King Lear And Macbeth* – AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD AT <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/16966>

Hawkes, Terence. *Twentieth century interpretations of Macbeth: a collection of critical essays*. Prentice-Hall, 1977

Kinney, Arthur F. *Lies like truth: Shakespeare, Macbeth, and the cultural moment*. Wayne State University Press, 2001

Moschovakis, Nicholas Rand. *Macbeth New Critical Essays*. Routledge, 2008

Wain, John. *Macbeth: A Casebook*. Macmillan, 1968

Power and Instability

Goldberg, Jonathan, 'Specualtions: Macbeth and Source' in *Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology*. Ed. Jean Elizabeth Howard, Marion F. O'Connor. Routledge, 2005

McLuskie, Kathleen, 'Humane Statute and the Gentle Weal: Historical Reading and Historical Allegory. *Shakespeare Survey 57* - AVAILABLE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, E-BOOKS, CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS

Tennenhouse, Leonard, *Power on Display*. Routledge, 2005

Worden, Blair. 'Shakespeare and Politics'. *Shakespeare Survey 44* - AVAILABLE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, E-BOOKS, CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS

Session 7 - *Antony and Cleopatra*: Egypt, Eroticism and the Body

In this session we will look at the depiction of gender in *Antony and Cleopatra*. We will look particularly at the eroticisation of the female body and orientalising of the East in Shakespeare's depiction of Cleopatra and the distinctions drawn between Egypt and Rome, female and male, sex and politics.

Core Reading:

Antony and Cleopatra

Belsey, Catherine. 'Cleopatra's Seduction' in *Alternative Shakespeares* vol. 2. Routledge 1996

Further Reading:

Brown, John Russell. *Antony and Cleopatra, A Casebook*. London: Macmillan, 1968

Drakakis, John. *Antony and Cleopatra Critical Essays*. London: Macmillan, 1994

Duisinberre, 'Squeaking Cleopatras: Gender and Performance in *Antony and Cleopatra* in *Shakespeare, Theory and Performance*. Ed. James C. Bulman. Routledge, 1996

Elam, Keir, 'In what chapter of his bosom?': reading Shakespeare's bodies in *Alternative Shakespeares* vol. 2

Fitz, L. T. 'Egyptian Queens and Male Reviewers in *Antony and Cleopatra* Criticism in Jankowski, Theodora A. "'As I am Egypt's Queen": Cleopatra, Elizabeth I and the Female Body Politic' in *Assays: Critical Approaches to Medieval and Renaissance Texts* 5. 1999

Khan, C. *Roman Shakespeare: Warriors, Wounds and Women*. London: Routledge, 1997

Khan C. 'Shakespeare's Classical Tragedies in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Tragedy*. Ed. Claire McEachern - AVAILABLE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, E-BOOKS, CAMBRIDGE COMPANIONS

Loomba, Ania. 'Spatial Politics' in Ania Loomba. *Gender, Race, Renaissance Drama*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992.

MacDonald, Joyce Green, 'Sex, Race and Empire in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*'. *Literature and History*, 5:1. 1996.

Session 8 - *The Tempest*: Post-Colonial theory

In this session we will consider *The Tempest* in relation to post-colonial discourses. We will consider the impact of Jacobean travel literature on Shakespeare's depiction of the island and its natives and look particularly at the depiction of the relationship between Prospero and Caliban in criticism and performance.

Core Reading:

The Tempest

Skura, Meredith Anne, 'Discourse and the Individual: The Case of Colonialism in *The Tempest*' in *Shakespeare An Anthology of Criticism and Theory 1945-2000*. Ed. Russ McDonald. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004

Further Reading:

- Barber, Frances and Hulme, Peter. 'Nymphs and Reapers heavily vanish: the discursive contexts of *The Tempest*' in *Shakespeare An Anthology of Criticism and Theory 1945-2000*. Ed. Russ McDonald. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004
- Belhassen, S. 'Aime Cesaire's *A Tempest*' in *Radical Perspectives in the Arts*. Ed. L. Baxendale. Penguin, 1972.
- Brotton, J. "'This Tunis, sir, was Carthage": contesting colonialism in *The Tempest*' in *Postcolonial Shakespeares*. Ed. Ania Loomba and M. Orkin. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Brown, P. "'This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine": *The Tempest* and the discourse of colonialism' in *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism*. Ed. J. Dollimore and A. Sinfield. Manchester University Press, 1985
- Dymkowski, C. ed. *The Tempest: Shakespeare in Production*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Gurr, Andrew. 'Industrious Ariel and Idle Caliban' in *Travel and Drama in Shakespeare's Time*. Ed. J-P Maquerlot and M. Willems. Cambridge University Press, 1996
- Nixon, Rob. 'African and Caribbean Appropriations of *The Tempest*. *Critical Enquiry* 13. Spring 1987
- Palmer, D. J. ed. *The Tempest: A Casebook*. London: Macmillan, 1991.