

MEDIEVAL PERSIAN LOVE POETRY
ENGLISH 2160
Spring 2014
TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS 12:30-1:45

Dr. CLAUDIA YAGHOOBI
OFFICE: A&S 3-08
OFFICE HOURS: W 1:00-3:00 and F 12:00-2:00 or by appt.
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will examine the binaries of sacred and profane love, transgression and the law, self and the other, human diversity and inclusiveness in Medieval Persian Poetry both in Romance and Sufi poetry. We will explore the intersections of class, gender, sexuality, religion, etc. in the works of Fakhraddin Gorgani (11th century), Nizami Ganjavi (1141-1209), Farid al-Din 'Attar (1145-1221), Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207-1273), Hafiz Shirazi (1325-1390), and Nur al-Din Abd al-Rahman Jami (1414-1492). Since no text is divorced from the historical, cultural, social, religious, political and economic context in which it is created, we will explore the literary texts inside those contexts. In order to familiarize ourselves with these aspects of medieval Persian poetry and in order to approach these writings in a more effective, useful and nuanced manner, we will be reading various secondary materials as well. In addition, we will be screening videos that will add complexity to our understanding of and offer new perspectives about Persian culture and literature. From a historical point of view, these works not only represent Persian culture, but also they illustrate that inclusiveness and human diversity was *thinkable* in medieval Persia. All readings for this course are in English.

REQUIRED BOOKS

- Gorgani, Fakhraddin. *Vis and Ramin*. Trans. Dick Davis. Penguin Classics, 2009. ISBN 978-0-14-310562-6
- ‘Attar, Farid ud din. *The Conference of the Birds*. Trans. Afkham Darbandi and Dick Davis. Penguin Classics, 1984. ISBN 978-0-140-44434-6
- Jami, Nuru-d-din Abdu-r-Rahman. *Yusuf and Zulaikha*. Trans. Griffith, Ralph T. H. London: Trubner and CO., Ludgate Hill, 1882. ISBN 978-0-415-85334-7
- Nizami. *Layla and Majnun*. Trans. Paul Smith. Australia: New Humanity Books, 2012. ISBN 978-1475248142
- Rumi. *The Masnavi: Book One*. Trans. Jawid Mojaddedi. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. ISBN 978-0-19-280438-9
- Hafiz. *Divan of Hafiz*. Trans. Paul Smith. Australia: New Humanity Book, 2012. ISBN 9781468079364

CLASS REQUIREMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- **Class Participation and attendance (100 points):** class discussions and activities will give you the opportunity to discuss the material. Bring your books and any additional assignment to each class. Keep up with the readings and be ready to discuss the material. Class participation means more than physical attendance.
- **Discussion Leading – (100 points):** during the semester, each student will be assigned twice to lead the discussion of the day. Bring a few questions and your responses.
- **Two Close-reading papers due on March 13th and May 1st– (200 points):** during the semester, each student will close-read a passage/quote which they find interesting, inspiring, shocking, etc. from the readings of the course. Type the passage on top of your paper and your close reading of it in 600 words; upload it online on GeorgiaVIEW D2L at the end of the day.
- **Group Presentations (100 points):** You will be provided with a worksheet for this assignment; with your group members, you will choose one of the books, pick a role, and meet with your group and with me. You may have power point presentation, show video clips, or etc. Upload your presentation online on GeorgiaVIEW D2L at the end of the day you present it.
- **Participation in GeorgiaVIEW D2L forums: 6 commentaries + 6 responses (300 points)**
For each of the five regions in the Middle East, you should post the following to the GeorgiaVIEW D2L forum by the Sunday following the end of that book:
 - 1) A 200-word commentary about each book. Your posts do not need to be masterpieces, but you should try to offer some original observations rather than simply restating something mentioned in lecture or discussion. Think of this as an opportunity to begin working out ideas for your papers.
 - 2) A 150-word response to one of your classmates’ comments. Do not simply say you agree or disagree: explain yourself and elaborate.

- February 9, 2014: Gorgani
 - February 23, 2014: Nizami
 - March 16, 2014: ‘Attar
 - April 6, 2014: Rumi
 - April 20, 2014: Hafiz
 - May 4, 2014: Jami
- Midterm paper, 1800-1850 word – due on February 20 – (100 points)
 - Final paper –1800-1850 word-- due on April 24, 2014 – (100 points)

CLASS POLICIES

- Attendance is mandatory, as is punctuality. More than three absences will lower your total grade by half a grade; excused absence allowed in case of serious medical condition if verified by note from physician. More than six absences will result in a failing grade for the semester.
- Late papers or e-mailed assignments will not be accepted. However, let me know in advance if you have an extenuating circumstance that prevents you from completing an assignment.
- If you wish to discuss your grades, please meet with me during my office hours. Grades will not be discussed in class or through e-mail. Feel free to utilize my office hours to discuss papers.
- Respect others, do not talk when someone else is talking, do not offend others by your language (be mindful that others may be of a different class, gender, religion, race, or ability set than you).
- Homework assignments should be typed, 12 point, Times New Roman font; 1-inch margins; double-spaced; no late assignments.
- You may use e-Books but for your papers I need you to cite according to a paper copy.
- Please turn your cellphones off.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES

Week One

Tuesday, January 14, 2014: Introduction to Persian Literature and Culture

Thursday, January 16, 2014: all of the articles are on GeorgiaVIEW D2L

- Yarshater, E. “The Theme of Wine Drinking and the Concept of the Beloved in Early Persian Poetry.” *Studie Islamica* 13 (1960): 43-53.

- Hanaway, Jr. William L. "The Concept of the Hunt in Persian Literature." *Boston Museum Bulletin* 69.355/356, Persian Carpet Symposium (1971): 21-69.
- Seyed-Ghorab, A. A. "Magic in Classical Persian Amatory Literature." *Iranian Studies* 32.1 (1999): 71-9.
- Milani, Farzaneh. "The Mediatory Guile of the Nanny in Persian Romance." *Iranian Studies* 32. 2, The Uses of Guile: Literary and Historical Moments (Spring, 1999): 181-201.

Week Two

Tuesday, January 21, 2014:

- Foucault, Michele. "Preface to Transgression." *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*. Ed. Donald F. Bouchard. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977, pp. 57-71.

Thursday, January 23, 2014:

- Gorgani, Fakhraddin. *Vis and Ramin* (Introduction and pp. 1-122)

Week Three

Tuesday, January 28, 2014:

- Gorgani, Fakhraddin. *Vis and Ramin* (123-319)

Thursday, January 30, 2014

- Gorgani, Fakhraddin. *Vis and Ramin* (319-499)

Week Four

Tuesday, February 4, 2014:

- **Group Presentation:** Gorgani, Fakhraddin. *Vis and Ramin*

Thursday, February 6, 2014:

- Nizami, *Layla and Majnun* (7-62)

Week Five

Tuesday, February 11, 2014:

- Nizami, *Layla and Majnun* (67-215)

Thursday, February 13, 2014:

- *Layla and Majnun*, other translations and excerpts from 'Attar
- Dols, Michael W. "The Romantic Fool." *Majnun: The Madman in Medieval Islamic Society*. Ed. Diana E. Immisch. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992, pp. 313-339.

Week Six

Tuesday, February 18, 2014:

- **Group Presentation:** Nizami, *Layla and Majnun*

Thursday, February 20, 2014: NO CLASS

Week Seven

Tuesday, February 25, 2014:

- Introductory lecture on Islamic/Persian Sufism

Thursday, February 27, 2014:

- Farid al-Din 'Attar, *Conference of the Birds* (Introduction, pp. 3-38)

Week Eight

Tuesday, March 4, 2014:

- Farid al-Din 'Attar, *Conference of the Birds*, (39-113)
- Keshavarz, Fatemeh. "Flight of the Birds: The Poetic Animating the Spiritual in 'Attar's *Mantiq al-tayr*." *'Attar and the Persian Sufi Tradition: The Art of Spiritual Flight*. Ed. Leonard Lewisohn and Christopher Shackle. London, NY: I.B.Tauris Publishers, 2006, pp. 112-134.

Thursday, March 6, 2014:

- Farid al-Din 'Attar, *Conference of the Birds* (113-186)
- Lewisohn, Leonard. "Sufi Symbolism in the Persian Hermeneutic Tradition: Reconstructing the Pagoda of 'Attar's Esoteric Poetics." *'Attar and the Persian Sufi Tradition: The Art of Spiritual Flight*. Ed. Leonard Lewisohn and Christopher Shackle. London, NY: I.B.Tauris Publishers, 2006, pp. 241-254.

Week Nine

Tuesday, March 11, 2014:

- Farid al-Din 'Attar, *Conference of the Birds*, (186-262)

Thursday, March 13, 2014:

- **Group Presentation:** Farid al-Din 'Attar, *Conference of the Birds*

Week Ten

Tuesday, March 18: Spring Break

Thursday, March 20: Spring Break

Week Eleven

Tuesday, March 25, 2014:

- Rumi, selected poems
- Chittick, William C. "The Spiritual Path of Love in Ibn al-‘Arabi and Rumi." *Mystics Quarterly* 19.1 (March 1993): 4-16.

Thursday, March 27, 2014:

- Rumi, selected poems
- Schimmel, Annemarie. "Mystical Poetry in Islam: The Case of Maulana Jalaladdin Rumi." *Religion and Literature* 20. 1, *The Literature of Islam* (Spring, 1988): 67-80.

Week Twelve

Tuesday, April 1, 2014:

- Rumi, selected poems

Thursday, April 3, 2014:

- **Group Presentation: Rumi**

Week Thirteen

Tuesday, April 8, 2014:

- Hafiz, selected poems

Thursday, April 10, 2014

- Hafiz, selected poems
- Meisami, Julie Scott. "Allegorical Gardens in the Persian Poetic Tradition: Nezami, Rumi, Hafez." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 17. 2 (May, 1985): 229-260.

Week Fourteen

Tuesday, April 15, 2014:

- Hafiz, selected poems

Thursday, April 17, 2014:

- **Group Presentation: Hafiz**

Week Fifteen

Tuesday, April 22, 2014:

- Jami, "Yusuf and Zulaikha", (3-103)
- Jones, Alan. Trans. *The Qur'an*. Great Britain: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2007, Sura 12, pp. 220-232.

Thursday, April 24, 2014:

- Jami, “Yusuf and Zulaikha”, (104-202)
- Bouhdiba, Abdelwahab. *Sexuality in Islam*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. London: Saki Books, 2004, pp. 19-29.

Week Sixteen**Tuesday, April 29, 2014:**

- Jami, “Yusuf and Zulaikha”, (203-296)
- Merguerian, Gayane Karen and Afsaneh Najmabadi. “Zulaykha and Yusuf: Whose “Best Story”?” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29.4 (Nov., 1997): 485-508.

Thursday, May 1, 2014:

- **Group Presentation:** Jami

Week Seventeen – Final Exams**UNIVERSITY POLICIES****➤ Religious Observance Policy**

Students are permitted to miss class in observance of religious holidays and other activities observed by a religious group of which the student is a member without academic penalty. Exercising of one's rights under this policy is subject to the GC Honor Code. Students who miss class in observance of a religious holiday or event are required to make up the coursework missed as a result from the absence. The nature of the make-up assignments and the deadline for completion of such assignments are at the sole discretion of the instructor. Failure to follow the prescribed procedures voids all student rights under this policy.

➤ Assistance for Student Needs Related to Disability

If you have a disability as described by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, you may be eligible to receive accommodations to assist in programmatic and physical accessibility. Disability Services, a unit of GCSU Office of Institutional Equality and Diversity, can assist you in formulating a reasonable accommodation plan and in providing support in developing appropriate accommodations to ensure equal access to all GCSU programs and facilities. Course requirements will not be waived, but accommodations may assist you in meeting the requirements. For documentation requirements and for additional information, we recommend that you contact Disability Services located in Maxwell Student Union at 478-445-5931 or 478-455-4233.

➤ Student Opinion Survey Statement

Given the technological sophistication of Georgia College students, the student opinion survey is being delivered through an online process. Your constructive feedback plays an indispensable role in shaping quality education at Georgia College. All responses are completely confidential and your name is not stored with your responses in any way. In

addition, instructors will not see any results of the opinion survey until after final grades are submitted to the university. An invitation to complete the online opinion survey is distributed to students near the end of the semester. Your participation in this very important process is greatly appreciated.

➤ **Academic Honesty**

The integrity of students and their written and oral work is a critical component of the academic process. The submission of another's work as one's own is plagiarism and will be dealt with using the procedures outlined in the GC Catalog.

<http://catalog.gcsu.edu/ugrad/student-academic-dishonesty.htm>

Remember that allowing another student to copy one's own work violates the standards of academic integrity.

<http://catalog.gcsu.edu/grad/student-academic-dishonesty.htm>

Also see the student Honor Code at the website below:

<http://www.gcsu.edu/studentlife/handbook/code.htm>

➤ **Fire Drills**

Fire drills will be conducted annually. In the event of a fire alarm, students will exit the building quickly in a quick and orderly manner through the nearest hallway exit. Learn the floor plan and exits of the building. Do not use elevators. If you encounter heavy smoke, crawl on the floor so as to gain fresh air. Assist disabled persons and others if possible without endangering your own life. Assemble for a head count on the front lawn of main campus or other designated assembly area. For more information on other emergencies, please visit: <http://www.gcsu.edu/emergency/actionplanmain.htm>