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ENG 2950-001: Transatlantic Literary History Culture Literacies and Technologies I

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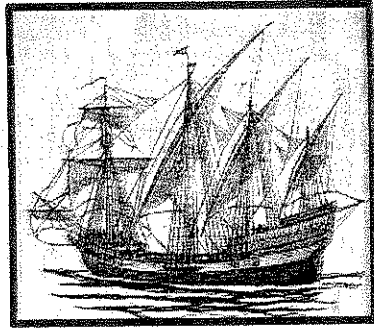
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ENG 2950-001: Transatlantic Literary History
Fall 2022



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Office hours TTH 11:00am-2:00pm,
W 11:00am-12:00pm; and by appointment.

TTH 9:30-10:45am
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Textbooks

M.H. Abrams and Stephen Greenblatt, eds. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 7th ed. Vol. 1. (NAEL)
Sarah Lawall et al. *The Norton Anthology of Western Literature*, 8th ed. Vol. 1 (NAWL)
Nina Baym, et al., eds. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 8th ed. Vol. A. (NAAL)
William Shakespeare. *Twelfth Night, Tempest*

Course Focus

Essentially, ENG 2950 is meant to give you a sense of how literary culture, including print history, developed on both sides of the Atlantic—a tall order. This is a broad, interesting mandate and could be undertaken in a variety of ways. This semester, we will work chronologically, albeit with large unavoidable gaps in time, to build something of that picture for you. But, before we dive in, it is imperative to address the perils and pitfalls of constructing a course such as this one:

First—it is necessary to address the key problem with the course mandate: This is the pre-1800 section of ENG2950. How do we chart a reasonable comparative course across this long stretch of history in places with vastly different cultures? If you look closely at the timelines in your anthologies, you will see that the text on “Western Literature,” begins in the ancient world with numerous texts that take you from Gilgamesh—a myth from Mesopotamia ca. 2500-2500 B.C.E.—to St. Augustine, 354-430 C.E., an important theologian of the early Christian church: in between, it hits the most influential highlights from ancient Greece and Rome. This section of the table of contents fills up *several pages*—and we are not yet to the Medieval section. Your anthology of “English Literature” *begins* in the Middle Ages—with the Venerable Bede ca. 673-735 C.E. and, again, the table of contents fills several pages before you get to the section, “The Sixteenth Century.” The “American Literature” text begins with a few Native American creation myths—whose dates are not substantiated and that were recorded at different times by different European figures—and you are simply told that Indigenous peoples in the Americas “orally perform and transmit a variety of ‘literary’ genres that include ... speeches, songs, and stories.” The editors then swiftly vault to 1492—the year that “Columbus sailed the ocean blue”—so, essentially to the front edge of the sixteenth century. **The questions are where and when to begin?**

Second—it is necessary to question the notion of texts and genres to consider: Since the majority of texts in the American anthology comprise letters, historical accounts, biography/autobiography, and sermons and other religious writings, with a smattering of myth and poetry—and the majority of texts in the anthologies of Western and English literature comprise more traditional genres of literature—epics, plays, stories, and poetry, with a smattering of historical and religious writings—**how does one work comparatively?**

Third—periodization is a problem. The notions of periods in literary history differ as developments, to use a broad space/time generalization, made their way from East to West. For example, the **Renaissance** period in Italy typically covers the mid-1300s through the 1500s, *depending on* the texts in question. Sometimes the critically important 14th-century Italian texts of Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch are classified as *either* Medieval or Renaissance, depending on, well, who is making the call. The more discerning scholar will say that the works of these figures are *bridges* between the Medieval and Renaissance periods. In England, the **Medieval** period is roughly considered to be from the 600s to 1485, with the rise of Henry VII. So, England is still in its late Medieval period during the High Renaissance in Italy—when artists such as Michelangelo, Raphael, and Da Vinci were active. The works of late Medieval English author Chaucer, however, *were influenced* by Boccaccio and Petrarch. He wrote his *Canterbury Tales* in the style of Boccaccio, often cribbing stories from him (“The Knight’s Tale” borrows from Boccaccio’s epic poem *Il Teseida*, *The Theseus*; and six other tales have been traced to Boccaccio’s *Decameron*—see Harvard University’s *Geoffrey Chaucer Website*). In the prologue to “The Clerk’s Tale,” Chaucer writes that the Clerk met “Fraunceys Petrak, the lauriat poete” at Padua (lines 27 and 31). Then, the Renaissance period in English literature is traditionally considered to end in 1616, with the death of Shakespeare, even though texts with “Renaissance” characteristics are produced after that date. In the Americas—the concepts of Medieval and Renaissance are difficult to apply to literary history, except in terms of years of production and how texts produced by Europeans correspond to European traditions—which, of course, is not the case for texts produced in Native American culture.

So: How to Proceed?

To chart a path of study for this course, we will begin in our **first unit** with consideration of works produced during the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries—on the continent and in England, that gesture to oral tradition and participate in manuscript circulation before being published in print, and we will briefly consider entertainment in the oral tradition in North America. In our **second unit**, we will first consider key developments in 15th-century Western printing history—Gutenberg’s press in Germany and the Aldine Press in Venice. While the technology is “new” the most famous content that these presses printed and disseminated was “old”—and helped the spread of the Renaissance and the Reformation: specifically, the Gutenberg Press is most famous for producing its copy of the Latin Vulgate Bible as the earliest book printed using movable type, and the Aldine Press is renowned for publishing editions of the Latin and Greek classical texts that were being rediscovered and edited for wide distribution in Italy and beyond; additionally, the Aldine Press made the first small format books that were portable. We will read excerpts from two vernacular works published by the Aldine Press and consider their far-reaching implications regarding religious sentiment and poetry. For the poetry, we will move into the 16th-century for English work and later for the American examples. Also in this unit, we will look at letters from the 15th century that illuminate the hopes and realities of transatlantic exploration and colonialization. In the **third unit**, we will end in the 17th century, juxtaposing historical accounts of English explorers and religious pilgrims with illustrations of colonialism, slavery, and religious controversy in two of Shakespeare’s plays.

Note: because this course is transnational in nature, we have **three anthologies**, as well as a single edition of *Tempest*. The “**Read**” section for each day will let you know which book or books to bring to class, as will the **reminder** of what we may be **finishing** up on any given day in class. In other words—just be sure to pay attention to where we are in class discussion and reading assignments so that you won’t have to carry three books!

Learning Goals

- To read and analyze a variety of texts that represent important moments of intersection between literature and relevant historical cultural events, from the oral tradition to early modern print.
- To demonstrate an understanding of the primary characteristics of transatlantic literary periods and relationships between them.
- To demonstrate an understanding of the impact of key moments in the history of print, literacy, and information technology.
- To advance research and writing skills through the exploration of literary history as it pertains to the discipline of English studies.

Policies

- The English Department statement on plagiarism stipulates that any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—“The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one’s original work” (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the assigned essay and for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.
- Hand papers in on time. *Late papers will be reduced a letter grade without a university approved excuse. Any in-class writing and in-class group work cannot be made up. If you miss an exam, and you have a university-approved excuse, you may make up that exam. You will have a one week to do so, and the make-up exam may be different from the one given during class.*
- If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Student Well-Being Services at EIU

[https://www.eiu.edu/fdic/Student%20 Well-Being_26-July-2022.pdf](https://www.eiu.edu/fdic/Student%20Well-Being_26-July-2022.pdf)

Dropping and Adding Classes

- Aug. 26: Last day to add a class
- Sept. 2: Last day to drop a course with no grade
- Sept. 2: Last day to withdraw from all classes with full tuition and fees refund
- Sept. 19: Last day to withdraw from all classes with 50% tuition and fees refund
- Nov. 4: Last day to withdraw from a class

Grading: Some assignments may be graded with a **check mark system**, which will be weighted as follows: $\checkmark+$ = A, \checkmark = B, $\checkmark-$ = C. Anything lower will be an F.

Any **letter grades** will be assessed numerically as follows: A+ = 98, A = 95, A- = 92, B+ = 88, B = 85, B- = 82, C+ = 78, C = 75, C- = 72, and so on.

Requirements

- Three exams 30% (10% each of final grade)
- One 7-10-page research paper 25%
- Preliminary research report with

annotated bibliography	10%
--Two response projects	20% (10% each of final grade)
--Final presentation	15%
Total:	100%

The **three exams** will cover the three units of study.

The **paper** topic will be chosen from the assigned readings and issues related to them. The paper will be 7-10 pages long. You will use at least 3-5 secondary sources to support your arguments, and they should consist of scholarly books and journal articles. Websites of good scholarly repute may be added to this number of sources. You will use MLA Parenthetical Style, with a Works Cited page, for documentation. **For MLA Style, see the Writing Center’s web site, specifically, under Resources for Writers, <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>.**

Around mid-term, you will have a **preliminary research report with an annotated bibliography** due to show the progress that you have made regarding your research project. Do not worry if we haven’t yet covered the topic that interests you in class by the time you start your research—this portion of our study is meant to be an independent exploration of a topic that may be completely new to you. The goal is that your independent study will augment what is covered in class and will broaden the scope of the course for you. You, in turn, will share with the class what you have learned in your research near the end of the semester. The **preliminary research report and annotated bibliography** will cover the **initial research** that you do for your research paper and presentation. It will essentially be your paper proposal. The report will address the topic, why you chose the topic, and the avenues of research that you chose to explore. The annotated bibliography will consist of MLA Style bibliographic citations of at least five sources with your notes on each work that describe the document, summarize why it may be useful to your project, and possibly include quotations that you might use in the paper.

The **final presentation** will be a 5-7 minute oral report based on information from your research project, due near the end of the semester. After conducting your research and writing your paper, you will present to the class what you have learned. The goal is to provide, via your and your fellow students’ reports, both a “big picture” look at the subjects we have covered over the course of the semester, as well as introduce specialized information that you have focused on during your own independent study.

The **two response projects** will have either creative or research focuses, depending on the given assignment. Three response projects will be offered. You will choose two.

The Writing Center

Consider making use of EIU’s Writing Center, located at 3110 Coleman Hall, this semester. The consultants there can help you with brainstorming, organizing, developing support for, and documenting your papers. One caveat: the Writing Center is not a proofreading or editing service. It is a place where you can learn how to become a more thoughtful, independent, and rhetorically effective writer. To schedule an appointment, drop by (3110 Coleman Hall) or call 581-5929.

Tentative Schedule

Unit 1: Storytelling and Oral Tradition: Tales from Medieval Europe to America

T. Aug. 23—Introduction to course. From oral tradition into manuscript and print.
Read: *NAWL*, pp. 1316-1325. Marie de France, “Lanval” and “Laustic.”

Th. Aug. 25—Marie de France, “Lanval” and “Laustic.”

Read: *NAWL*, pp. 1598-1627, 1631-1641. Boccaccio, *Decameron*, “Prologue,” “First Day,” “First Story of the First Day,” “Ninth Story of Fourth Day,” “Sixth Story of the Ninth Day,” Tenth Story of the Tenth Day.”

T. Aug. 30—Finish “Lanval” and “Laustic.” Begin Boccaccio, *Decameron*.

Th. Sept. 1—*Decameron*.

Read: *NAEL*, pp. 210-235, 253-281. Chaucer, “Prologue,” and “The Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale.”

T. Sept. 6—Finish *Decameron*. Begin Chaucer. “Prologue,” and “The Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale.”

Read: *NAWL*, 1862-1868. Christine de Pizan, “Letter from the God of Love.”

Th. Sept. 8—Chaucer, “Prologue” and “The Wife of Bath....” Also discuss Christine de Pizan.

T. Sept. 13—Finish Chaucer, “Prologue” and “The Wife of Bath....” Finish Christine de Pizan.

Read: *NAEL*, pp. 140-141, Marie de France, “Fables,” *NAAL*, 114-120, Navajo, “Coyote, Skunk, and the Prairie Dogs,” pp. 111-114, Sioux, “Ikto Conquers Iya, the Eater.”

Th. Sept. 15—Marie de France, “Fables,” Navajo, “Coyote, Skunk, and the Prairie Dogs,” Sioux, “Ikto Conquers Iya, the Eater.”

T. Sept. 20—Catch-up Day. Review for Exam 1. Discuss Response Project 1.

Th. Sept. 22—Exam 1.

Read: *NAEL*, pp. 469-496, “The Sixteenth-Century.” *NAAL*, pp. 34-38 Columbus, “Letter to Luis de Santangel Regarding the First Voyage” and “Letter to Ferdinand and Isabella Regarding the Fourth Voyage,” pp. 38-42. De Las Casas, “From the Very Brief Relation of the Devastation of the Indies.”

Unit 2: 15th- and 16th-Century Print History: Impacts on Renaissance and Reformation—and News of the World

T. Sept. 27—Discuss Gutenberg and Aldine Presses; discuss the 16th century, Renaissance and Reformation. Consider the letters of the explorers.

Read: *NAWL*, pp. 1456-1468, 1522-1525, Canto XIX of Dante’s 8th Circle of the *Inferno*; pp. 1894-1897, 1903-1908, Petrarch’s Sonnets.

Th. Sept. 29—Library Day: Read the excerpts from Dante and Petrarch. Work on Response Project for this unit, if you are doing that option.

T. Oct. 4—Petrarch, the *Petrarchino*, and the spread of Petrarchism. Sonnet Handouts.

Read: *NAEL*, pp. 569-571, Henry Howard; pp. 909-911, 917-918, Sir Philip Sidney; pp. 1422-1423, 1428-1429, Lady Mary Wroth; p. 1408, Ben Jonson; pp. 1026-1041, Shakespeare.

Th. Oct. 6—**Response Project for previous unit is due in Dropbox, if you did it.** English Petrarchists
Read: *NAAL*, pp. 207-234, Anne Bradstreet; pp. 238-241, Michael Wigglesworth; pp. 289-307, Edward Taylor; pp. 723-725, Jane Colman Turell; pp. 727-729, Sarah Wentworth Morton; pp. 762-773, Phillis Wheatley.

T. Oct. 11—Early American Poets: Note the leap forward in literary history to get to Anne Bradstreet the “first” American poet, and her elegiac poems for Queen Elizabeth I, who died in 1603. Here, we will divagate into the 17th and 18th centuries in order to read some early American poetry.
Read: *NAEL*, pp. 503-510—Sir Thomas More; pp. 547-550—Anne Askew

Th. Oct. 13—To preface our discussion of Queen Elizabeth, we will consider what is happening in early Renaissance England under her father’s rule when Henri VIII becomes head of the church in England, specifically the repercussions for Catholics and Protestants during his reign. We will look briefly at an excerpt from More’s *Utopia* and the “First Examination” of Anne Askew, thus considering the Catholic martyr Sir Thomas More and the Protestant martyr, Anne Askew.
Read: *NAEL*, pp. 593-597—Queen Elizabeth

T. Oct. 18—Queen Elizabeth—literary endeavors and religious upheaval at home and abroad. The European Wars of Religion began after the Protestant Reformation commenced in earnest in 1517 with Martin Luther’s Ninety-five Theses, nailed to the door of Schlosskirche in Wittenberg. They were, therefore, raging on the continent during the reigns of Henry VIII 1509-1547; Edward VI; Mary 1552-1558; and Elizabeth 1558-1603. Here, we will consider especially what was happening during Elizabeth’s reign—and how it affected her personally.
Read: *NAEL*, pp. 614-616, 622-772, Edmund Spenser, *Fairie Queene*, Book I.

Th. Oct. 20—*Faerie Queene*
Read:

T. Oct. 25—*Faerie Queene*. **Discuss Major Papers. Assign Preliminary Research Report and Annotated Bibliography. Also, discuss Response Project for this unit.**

Th. Oct. 27—Library Day: Work on Preliminary Research Report and Annotated Bibliography; work on Response Project for this unit, if you are doing it.

T. Nov. 1—Catch up Day. Review for Exam 2. **Preliminary Research Report and Annotated Bibliography is due in Dropbox.**

Th. Nov. 3—Exam 2.

Read: *NAAL*, pp. 64-67, Robert Juet, on Henry Hudson. pp. 81-92, John Smith; pp. 121-122, 131-138, William Bradford; pp. 186-192, *The Bay Psalm Book* (1640).

Unit 3—History and Storytelling: 17th-Century Travellers’ Accounts and Reflections on Religious and Colonial Controversies in Shakespeare.

T. Nov. 8—**Response Project for previous unit is due in Dropbox, if you did it.** This overview gives us a flavor the historical accounts that were being published about travel to North America. We will discuss accounts of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century explorers to the “New World” for material gain and religious freedom: with Henry Hudson (c. 1565-c. 1611), an explorer for hire by the great companies of English and Dutch merchants who were looking for new trade routes; with the life of

Smith (1580-1631), we get a concise overview of the perils of an English soldier, sailor, explorer and colonial governor of Jamestown, Virginia—with Virginia being named in honor of the Virgin queen—Elizabeth I, and Jamestown named for King James I of England, VI of Scotland. With Bradford—we hear the account of the first “Pilgrims” or Puritans who sailed on the Mayflower. We see a sample of the Bay Psalm Book—the first book published in the English colonies. We will also consider handouts on “first” Africans in the “New World” and the true story of Pocahontus.

Read: *NAEL*, pp. 1043-1105, Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*.

Th. Nov. 10—*Twelfth Night*

T. Nov. 15—*Twelfth Night*

Read: Shakespeare’s *Tempest*.

Th. Nov. 17—*Tempest*. **Sign up for presentations.**

Note: You should be drafting your research paper. Now is the time to begin scheduling conferences.

T. Nov. 22—**Thanksgiving Break**

Th. Nov. 24—**Thanksgiving Break**

T. Nov. 29—*Tempest*. Catch-up Day. Review for Exam 3.

Th. Dec. 1—Oral Presentations.

T. Dec. 6—Oral Presentations. **Response Project for this unit is due in Dropbox, if you are doing it.**

Th. Dec. 8—Oral Presentations. **Presentation Outlines are due in Dropbox. Research Papers are due in Dropbox.**

Exam 3: Final, Wed. Dec. 14, 8:00am-10:00am.

