**ENG 461: The Queer and the Oriental**

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The queer and the oriental are two figures on the wrong sides of Western philosophies of world history. Imagined as perverted deviations from, or inverted reflections of, a progress from despotic ancestral pasts to free reproductive futures, the queer and oriental are two species of wrong that resist being “raised up” or “sublated” into higher generalities of rightness and/or whiteness. Too wrong for history, these two wrongs also cannot be rectified or reduced into each other—but not for lack of trying. Over the course of the long twentieth century, a seemingly endless pile-up of cultural productions has positioned Orientals as queers or featured queers Orientalizing themselves and others. The mind-gagging accumulation of such productions illustrates how thoroughly such maneuvers never really work; or rather, how they work, like desires often do, by never being fulfilled.

The seminar opens with the ongoing tension between two different departures from Hegel’s philosophy of world history-- economic materialist approaches exemplified by Marx and genealogical approaches exemplified by Nietzsche. We will explore how ongoing tensions between these approaches—variously described through binaries such as “materialist/idealist,” “total/fragmentary,” and “restricted/general”—have been a recurrent feature of work in queer theory, postcolonial theory, and critical race studies. In a twist on Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s statement that “any understanding of virtually aspect of modern Western culture must be, not merely incomplete, but damaged in its central substance to the degree that it does not incorporate an analysis of modern homo/heterosexual definition,” the aim of this seminar is to pursue the corollaries to the putative axiomaticity of “modern Western culture.” Our mantra will be: any understanding of virtually any aspect of homo/hetero definition must be, not merely incomplete, but damaged in its central substance to the degree that it does not incorporate an analysis of non/modern non/Western division.

We will combine our theoretical explorations with the pragmatic task of “coverage.” Accordingly, we will read texts defined as “canonical” by virtue of having been placed on departmental qualifying exam lists, a series of placements that happily accords with the texts having been touchstones for critics over the last four decades. Such texts include works by Christina Rosetti, Herman Melville, Oscar Wilde, Rudyard Kipling, Ezra Pound, Jean Toomer, and Maxine Hong Kingston. We will also read works by Malinda Lo and Yoné Noguchi.

As this is a fall quarter seminar, I will not require the production of a full-length end-of-term research paper; the default final assignment will be a conference paper with annotated bibliography. (The option to write a full-length paper will remain open to those who need or wish to pursue it). In addition, the seminar will place more emphasis on foundational skills of graduate-level knowledge production: close reading and reading for argumentative structure; construction and analysis of field bibliographies or “lists”; and oral presentation, prepared and extemporaneous.

**Required Books**

*The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Oscar Wilde (Dover Thrift Edition)

*Kim*, Rudyard Kipling (Puffin Classics)

*Goblin Market*, Christina Rossetti (Dover Thrift Edition)

*Billy Budd*, Herman Melville (Penguin Classics)

*China Men*, Maxine Hong Kingston (Vintage International)

*Cane*, Jean Toomer (Norton Critical Edition)

*Adaptation,* Malinda Lo

*Orientalism,* Edward Said (Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Edition)

**COURSE SCHEDULE** (subject to deviation)

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|  | **Readings** (Texts in **bold** should be purchased;all other texts will be in the course reader or sent via Canvas) |
| **Week One**  **09/21**  **Introductions** | HEGEL, G.W.F. “The Oriental World” in *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History* (1837)  MARX, Karl. “Introduction” to *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right* (1843) and “Preface” to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859)  NIETZSCHE, Friedrich. “Preface” to *On the Genealogy of Morality* (1887) |
| **Week Two**  **09/28**  **Genealogy and General Economy** | **WILDE, Oscar. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890)**  BATAILLE, Georges. “Preface” and “Part I: Theoretical Introduction” to *The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy* (1967, trans. 1989)  FOUCAULT, Michel. “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” in *Truth and Method* (1977)  SEDGWICK, Eve Kosofsky. “Introduction: Axiomatic,” and “Some Binarisms (II)” in *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990)  **Statement of Interest Due** |
| **Week Three**  **10/05**  **Orientalism** | KIPLING, Rudyard. “The White Man’s Burden: The United States and the Philippine Islands” (1899)  **KIPLING, Rudyard. *Kim* (1900)**  **SAID, Edward. *Orientalism* (1978)**  AHMED, Sara. “Introduction” and “The Orient and Other Others” in *Queer Phenomenology* (2006)  **Proposal Due** |
| **Week Four**  **10/12**  **Wither the Fruits of Freud** | **ROSETTI, Christina. *Goblin Market* (1862)**  **LO, Malinda. *Adaptation* (2012)**  BUTLER, Judith. “The Lesbian Phallus and the Morphological Imaginary” in *Bodies That Matter* (1993)  JAMESON, Fredric. “Preface” and “On Interpretation” in *The Political Unconscious* (1981)  **Bibliography Due** |
| **Week Five**  **10/19**  **Queer Deconstruction** | **MELVILLE, Herman. *Billy Budd* (1924)**  DERRIDA, Jacques. “From Restricted to General Economy: A Hegelianism without Reserve” in *Writing and Difference* (1967, trans. 1978)  SEDGWICK, Eve. “Some Binarisms (I) Billy Budd: *After the Homosexual*” in *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990)  (Canvas): CREECH, James. “Afterword” to *Closet Writing/Gay Reading: The Case of Melville’s Pierre* (1994) |
| **Week Six**  **10/26**  **Coolies** | **KINGSTON, Maxine Hong. *China Men* (1980)**  MARX, Karl. Chapters 1-4, *Capital Vol. 1* (1867, trans. 1976)  ARRIGHI, Giovanni. “Introduction” to *The Long Twentieth Century* (2010)  DAY, Iyko. “Sex, Time, and the Transcontinental Railroad” in *Alien Capital* (2016)  **Annotated Bibliography Due** |
| **Week Seven**  **11/2**  **Cane** | **TOOMER, Jean. *Cane* (1923)**  JONES, Robert B. “Introduction,” “The Aesthetics of Orientalism and the Emergence of Racial Consciousness,” and “*Cane:* Hermeneutics of Form and Consciousness” in *Jean Toomer and the Prison-House of Thought* (1993)  O’MALLEY, Michael. “Introduction” and “The New Black Flesh Coin” in *Face Value: The Entwined Histories of Money and Race in America* (2012)  SOMMERVILLE, Siobhan. “Queer to Myself as I am to You” in *Queering the Color Line* (2000)  **Paper Abstract Due** |
| **Week Eight**  **11/9** | Readings TBD in consultation with H. Yapp; Mel Chen? Jasbir Puar?  **FRIDAY 11/10 – Lunchtime workshop with Pf. Hentyle Yapp, NYU.** |
| **Week Nine**  **11/16**  **Queerer, Usurer** | (Canvas) POUND, Ezra. “In a Station of the Metro” (1913), “A Retrospect” (1918), Canto XIII (1925) and Canto XLV  (Canvas) NOGUCHI, Yoné. “Noguchi’s Song Unto Brother Americans” (1897), “Chicago” (1900), and “A Proposal to American Poets” (1904)  MARSH, Alec. “The Virtues of Distribution” and “Fertility Rites/Financial Rites” in *Money and Modernity: Pound, Williams, and the Spirit of Jefferson* (1998)  FISHER, Will. “Queer Money” (1999)  PARK, Josephine Nock-Hee. “Introduction” and “Cathay to Confucius” in *Apparitions of Asia: Modernist Form and Asian American Poetics* (2008) |
| **11/23** | **Thanksgiving – NO CLASS** |
| **Week Ten**  **11/30** | **Final Presentations 11/30, Final Paper Due 12/6** |

**Grade Breakdown:**

Weekly Canvas Posts = 20%, Oral Presentations = 20%, Final Presentation = 20%, Paper Preparation Assignments = 20%, Final Paper = 20%