

DRAFT

MLCS 531 B1 – Mysticism in Literature and the Arts (Winter 2011)

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND CULTURAL STUDIES

www.mlcs.ca

Instructor	Day	Hour	Room	Class
Dr. Natalia Pylypiuk. Arts 437-e Phone: TBA Office hours: TBA	MWF	9:00-9:50	Arts 430	67442

<http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~ukraina/>
<Natalia.Pylypiuk@ualberta.ca>

Prerequisite: Consent of the Department. **Note:** All readings are available in English. However, students are expected to read authors from their respective fields in the original language.

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?
Yes **No, not needed, no such projects involved**

DESCRIPTION

This course explores—from a comparative cultural perspective—a constellation of distinctive practices, discourses, texts, and experiences whose goal is the discovery and transfiguration of the self, the preeminent mystical quest. Drawing on examples that include Arabic, German, Hispanic, Italian, Persian, Polish, Russian, Turkish and Ukrainian authors, the course focuses on mystical traditions within Jewish, Islamic, and Judeo-Christian cultures.

Among the topics considered by the instructor and guest lecturers are: erotic poetry as an expression of the unitive exchange between the categorical properties of the self and the macrocosm; mystical practices as a form of religious and political dissent; mystical flight and beatific visions; the philosophy of Narcissism; the relationship between sacral / classical languages and the emerging vernaculars in mystical writings; mysticism and justice; paradise on earth. Besides identifying the literary conventions observed by mystic writers, the course also studies other sites for contemplation, such as the calligraph, the icon, the illumination, and the musical composition.

OBJECTIVES

This winter we will explore mysticism primarily as a literary tradition. In the first part, we will study early Christian texts in comparison with those of Judaism and Islam in order to examine the similarities and differences among them. In the second and third parts we will study medieval, early-modern and modern authors from various parts of Europe and Latin America. Our goal will be to discern the cultural specificities of a fairly universal phenomenon and to investigate the interface between personal quests for the discovery of the self and the political life.

Graduate students will research in-depth a mystic of their choice to obtain a close up view of his/her texts and their contexts.

REQUIRED TEXTS

William Harmless, *Mystics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008)
ISBN 978-0-19-530039-0.

Louis Dupré & James A. Wiseman, *Light From Light: An Anthology of Christian Mysticism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Paulist Press, 2001) ISBN 0-8091-4013-6.

Selections of:

William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*
<http://www.psychwww.com/psyrelig/james/toc.htm>

Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken, 1961)
Published online by Cambridge University Press 25 Feb 2009

J. Spencer Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, University of Alberta eLibrary (pages 1-30)
<http://lib.myilibrary.com/login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/Open.aspx?id=52988&loc=&srch=undefined&src=0>

The Tawasin of Manur Al-Hallaj, translated by Aisha Abd Ar-Rahman At-Tarjumana
<http://www.leapinglaughter.org/archive/tawasin/index.htm>
Read only first four sections.

SPECIALIZED READINGS (DRAFT)

Italian Mystics online:

Alighieri, Dante. Canto 5, Inferno:
Italian: <http://www.italica.it/dante/inferno/inferno5.htm>
English: <http://pd.sparknotes.com/poetry/inferno/section6.html>

Canto 33, Paradiso:
Italian: <http://www.italica.it/dante/paradiso/paradiso33.htm>
English: <http://www.online-literature.com/dante/paradiso/33/>

*Leopardi, Giacomo. "L'infinito":
Italian: http://www.liberliber.it/biblioteca//leopardi/l_infinito/html/infinito.htm
English: <http://www.textetc.com/workshop/wt-leopardi-1.html>

Caterina da Siena:
Italian: <http://www.santacaterinadasiena.org/opere.htm>

Polish Mystics

B. Mazur, G. Gomori, editors, *Cyprian Norwid: Poet – Thinker – Craftsman*. (University of London Press, 1988)
Juliusz Słowacki, *This Fateful Power*. Edited and Translated by M. Mikoś (Lublin, 1999)
Koropecy Roman, *The Poetics of Revitalization: Adam Mickiewicz between "Forefathers' Eve part 3", and "Pan Tadeusz"* (Columbia University Press, 2001)
Weintraub Wiktor, *Literature as Prophecy: Scholarship and Martinist Poetics in Mickiewicz's Parisian Lectures* (Gravenhage-Mouton, 1959)
Słowacki Juliusz, *Krąg pism mistycznych*, oprac. Alina Kowalczykowa (Wrocław, 1982)
Symbolika mistyczna w poezji romantycznej. (Toruń: Wyd. Naukowe UMK, 2009)
Walicki Andrzej, *Między filozofią, religią i polityką. Studia o myśli polskiej epoki romantyzmu* (Warszawa 1983)
Witkowska Alina, *Towiańczycy* (Warszawa, 1989)
S. Urbański, *Zatopieni w Bogu. Mistycy polscy* (Warszawa, 1999)

Russian Mystics

Vladimir Solovyov, *The Meaning of Love*. Transl. By Jane Marshall (New York: International University Press, 1947)
Judith Deutsch Kornblatt, Editor, *Divine Sophia: The Wisdom Writngs of Vladimir Solovyov* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009)
Pavel Florenskii, *Iconostasis* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996)
Loren Graham, *Naming Infinity: a true story of religious mysticism and mathematical creativity* (Cmabridge: Belknap Press, 2009)
Daniel Andreev, *The Rose of the World*, Transl. by Jordan Roberts.

Ukrainian Mystics

Natalia Pylypiuk, "Skovoroda's Divine Narcissism." Hryhorii Skovoroda, a special issue of Journal of Ukrainian Studies 22:1-2 (1997): 13-50.

Natalia Pylypiuk, "Khrystyians'ki epikureitsi pizn'oho baroko: Endriu Marvel i Hryhorii Skovoroda" [= Christian Epicureans of the Late Baroque: Andrew Marvell and Hryhorii Skovoroda]. Etyka Ottziv u kyivs'kii bohoslovs'kii dumtsi epokhy reformy (k. XVI-XVII st.) [=Patristic Ethics and Kyivan Theological Thought in the Age of Reform (late XVI c - early XVIII c)] Eds. O.P. Dovha, N.M. Yakovenko and M.V. Jaremenko. Special issue of Kyivs'ka akademiia [= The Kyiv Academy], a juried periodical of the National University of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. Vypusk 6 (2008): 182-199.

Natalia Pylypiuk, "Vasyl' Stus, Mysticism and the Great Narcissus." A World of Slavic Literatures. Essays in Comparative Slavic Studies in Honour of Edward Mozejko, Ed. Paul Duncan Morris (Bloomington, IND: Slavica, 2002) 173-210.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

- Attendance and Participation.	15%
- Summary and critique of three articles of relevance to course topics. Articles may be drawn from various disciplinary approaches to mysticism (history, cultural studies, theology, philosophy, anthropology, psychoanalysis, literary criticism, etc.) To be submitted by e-mail to the whole class on January 28, February 28, March 28.	30%
- Bibliographic Project (an Annotated Bibliography, consisting of 20-25 entries related to the Final Project and one-page abstract of Final Project). No later than March 4.	09%
- Oral Presentation (20-25-minutes) analyzing 3 major excerpts of selected author, with attendant outline that includes a biographical sketch and bibliography. To be delivered between March 7 and March 30.	09%
- Written outline for leading one discussion of another student's presentation	05%
- Written Final Project (15-18 pp. for M.A. students; 20-25 pp. for PhD students) due on 28 April .	32%

N.B. While there is no final examination in this course, the deadline for the Final project may be deferred until 13 May 2011, if there are special circumstances preventing the student from completing it by 28 April.

Grade Scale in MLCS for Graduate Students:

Excellent:	A+ 97-100	A 93-96	A- 90-92	
Good:	B+ 87-89	B 79-86		
Satisfactory:	-----	-----	B- 74-78	C+ 68-73
Failure:	-----	C 63-67	C- 58-62	D+ 54-57
	D 50-53	F 00-49		

University of Alberta Required Notes:

"Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar." (GFC 29 SEP 2003). "The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University." (GFC 29 SEP 2003)

Plagiarism and Cheating:

All students should consult the "Truth-In-Education" handbook or Website (<http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/TIE/>) regarding the definitions of **plagiarism** and its consequences when detected.

Recording

Recording is permitted only with the prior written consent of the professor or if recording is part of an approved accommodation plan.

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular daily attendance is essential. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail.

Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections 23.4.2 and 23.4.3 of the University Calendar.

Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the "attendance and participation" component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

Policy for Late Assignments:

Students who consult in advance with an instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension. Otherwise, written article reports, bibliographic project and abstract will be penalized 5% per day of tardiness. These will not be accepted after 5 days beyond the due date.

TENTATIVE LIST OF AUTHORS / TOPICS & LECTURERS

January 10 - 26 — Natalia Pylypiuk: Introduction. Definitions. Pre-Christian Mystics. The Early Church. The Patristic Legacy. The Middle Ages (Western and Eastern Europe). Meister Eckhart; Nicholas of Kues (Cusanus). Sites of contemplation. Jakob Böhme.

Guest lecturers will analyze verbal, visual and/or musical texts, also providing the social and historical background:

January 28 — Patricia Demers: Hildegard von Bingen (Musical Drama, the art of Illumination).

In preparation, view portion of play *Ordo Virtutum* (performance by Vox Animae);

Read *Sequence for Saint Eucharius / O Euchari in Leta Via*

<http://www.poetry-chaikhana.com/H/HildegardofB/OEuchariinle.htm>

Listen to performance of O Euchari in Leta Via:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N-arV-znLwU>

Selections to be read in class: *Scivias* (transl. by Bruce Hozeski)

Book of Divine Works, edited by Matthew Fox.

January 31, February 2, 4 — Iman Mersal [3 lectures]: This unit begins with the Hellenic and Hindu sources of Islamic mysticism and considers *a range of mystical texts, experiences, and practices from the medieval Islamic world. Among works included are the ecstatic poetry of Jalal al-Din Rumi (Persian) and Umar Ibn al-Farid (Arabic); the discourse of political resistance of Mansur al-Hallaj (Arabic); the theosophical mysticism of Muhiy al-Din Ibn Arabi (Arabic); the mystical theology of Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali (Arabic); and the ecstatic poetic-musical rituals of the Mevlevi "whirling dervishes" (Turkish).* For readings: SEE REQUIRED TEXTS.

February 7, 9 — Francis Landy [2 lectures]: the Kabbalistic tradition

February 11, 14 — Catherine Caufield: the Mexican writer Angelina Muñoz-Huberman and her Kabbalistic prose (Readings: "In the Name of His Name," "The Sarcasm of God")

February 16, 18 — NP: Late Medieval and Early Modern Spain: Teresa de Ávila. Juan de la Cruz. Ignacio de Loyola. Luis de Góngora y Argote. Ramon Lull. The Americas: Juana Inés de la Cruz (The Divine Narcissus. Conflict between Spanish and indigenous cultures: the moral ambiguity of evangelization. The struggle for equality; Self portraiture).

February 28 — William Anselmi: Dante

March 2 — Michael Frishkopf: Music and the Sufi tradition

Reading: Tarab in the Mystic Sufi Chant of Egypt. In: Colors of Enchantment: Visual and

- Performing Arts of the Middle East, edited by Sherifa Zuhur. American University in Cairo Press, 2001. Available online:
www.arts.ualberta.ca/~michael/f/pdf/Tarab%20in%20the%20Mystic%20Sufi%20Chant%20of%20Egypt.pdf
- March 4 — William Anselmi: Giacomo Leopardi.
- March 7, 9, 11 — Waclaw Osadnik: (Polish Romanticism and Modernism) selections from Adam Mickiewicz; Andrzej Towiański; Juliusz Słowacki; Zygmunt Krasiński; Czesław Miłosz; Wisława Szymborska.
- March 14, 16, 18 — Jelena Pogosjan: Russian mysticism (Vladimir Solovyov, Pavel Florenski, Daniel Andreev)
- March 21, 23 — NP: Late Medieval and Early Modern Spain (cont.)
- March 25, 28, 30, April 1 — NP : Early Modern Poland (Klemens Janicki. The metaphysics of Mikołaj Sep-Szarzyński) and Ukraine. Hryhorij Skovoroda (Divine Narcissism; Christian Epicureanism; Iconography of Wisdom).
- April 4 — NP: Modernism and dissent in the Ukrainian SSR: Volodymyr Svidzinskyj. Vasył' Stus (Goethe, Reiner Maria Rilke/ Narcissism / Frankfurt School)
- April 6, 8, 11, 13 — Concluding discussion addresses contemporary developments rooted in medieval and early-modern mysticism (possible topics: Flower Children; Manwoman; Orhan Pamuk).

RECOMMENDED BIBLIOGRAPHY (DRAFT)

- Agehananda Bharati, *The Light at the Center: Context and Pretext of Modern Mysticism* (Santa Barbara: Ross-Erikson, 1976)
- Coleman Barks, trans., *The Essential Rumi*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2004)
- Carmen Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow* (Boston: Unwin, 1989, c1986)
- John Blofeld, *The Tantric Mysticism of Tibet* (New York: Arkana, 1992, c1970)
- Richard Maurice Bucke, *Cosmic Consciousness* (New York : E.P. Dutton, 1956, c1923)
- Cuthbert Butler, *Western Mysticism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966)
- Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics* (Berkeley: Shambhala, 1975)
- Carlos Castaneda, *The Teachings of Don Juan* (Berkeley, U. of California, 1968)
- Lawrence Cunningham, ed., *Thomas Merton: Spiritual Master; The Essential Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1992)
- S. N. Dasgupta, *Hindu Mysticism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987, c1927)
- Arthur Deikman, *The Observing Self: Mysticism and Psychotherapy* (Boston: Beacon, 1982)
- Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism* (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1964)
- Aldous Huxley, *The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell* (New York: Harper and Row, 1954)
- Aldous Huxley, *Time Must Have a Stop* PR 6015 U96 T51 1998
- William Johnston, *The Still Point: Reflections on Zen and Christian Mysticism* (New York: Fordham U. Press,
- Livia Kohn, *Early Chinese Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton, 1992)
- I.M. Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion* (Great Britain: Penguin, 1971)
- Isabelle Robinet, *Taoist Meditation: The Mao-shan Tradition of Great Purity* (Albany: Suny Press, 1993)
- Harold D. Roth, *Original Dao* (New York: Columbia, 1999)
- Huston Smith, *Cleansing the Doors of Perception* (New York: Tarcher/Putnam, 2000)
- W.T. Stace, *Mysticism and Philosophy* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1960)
- Evelyn Underhill, *Practical Mysticism* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1943)
- Norman Waddell and Masao Abe, eds., *The Heart of Dogen's Shobogenzo* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2002)
- R.C. Zaehner, *Mysticism: Sacred and Profane* (New York: Oxford, 1957)

Online Bibliography in English

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/myst/myst/myst24.htm>

Criteria for Evaluating Graduate Student Essays

EXCELLENT (A+ [97-100])

(10%) The **introduction is comprehensive, covering all important points** of the essay and the manner in which its arguments will develop. There is thorough awareness concerning the literature on the topic and of the key arguments that pertain to it, as well as the history of their development.

(30%) **Content is relevant throughout the essay. The essay's arguments are appropriate and the analysis is not only thorough and persuasive, but also innovative.** There is clear understanding of the problem at hand and the most relevant literature has been integrated. The exemplification is extensive, insightful, and answers the question. Alternately, it reformulates the question.

(30%) The **underlying literary/cultural/philosophical (etc.) theory has been thoroughly grasped and integrated systematically with dexterity and insight. The essay demonstrates innovative thinking.**

(10%) The concluding comments are **critical and innovative. There is detailed analysis of most relevant aspects of argument.** Conclusion/s is/are consistent with the content of the essay. The student has assumed a clear stance and marshaled compelling arguments for its validation.

(10%) **The composition is clear. The language is technically sophisticated, efficient and powerful. There are no errors,** be they in punctuation, spelling, semantic choice, grammar or syntax. Formatting is meticulous.

(10%) **Supporting literature is abundant and always relevant, as well as efficient.** Referencing is accurate and there are no bibliographical errors.

EXCELLENT (A [93-96]; A [90-92])

(10%) The **introduction is comprehensive, covering most important points of the** essay and the manner in which its arguments will develop. There is ample awareness concerning the literature on the topic.

(30%) **Content is relevant throughout the essay. Its arguments are appropriate and the analysis is thorough and persuasive.** There is a clear understanding of the problem at hand and most relevant literature has been integrated. The exemplification is extensive and insightful.

(30%) The **underlying literary/cultural/philosophical (etc.) theory has been thoroughly grasped. Its integration is systematic but not mechanistic.** The student is capable of assessing how theoretical insights support the essay's narrative argument.

(10%) The comments are mainly **critical, rather than simply descriptive.** Conclusions are consistent with the content of the essay. The student has assumed a clear stance and marshaled compelling arguments.

(10%) **The composition is clear and sophisticated, making the arguments come across as compelling but balanced.** Errors, be they in punctuation, spelling, semantic, grammar or syntax are rare. Formatting is meticulous.

(10%) **Supporting literature is abundant and always relevant.** Referencing is accurate and there are no bibliographical errors.

GOOD (B+ [87-89]; B [79-86])

(10%) The **introduction is comprehensive and covers most important points of the** essay and the development of its arguments. There is brief indication of awareness concerning the literature on the topic.

(30%) **Content is relevant and supports the main thesis. The essay's arguments are sound.** There is clear understanding of the problem at hand, and most relevant literature has been integrated with much persuasive exemplification.

(30%) There is evidence that the student has grasped the **underlying literary/cultural/philosophical (etc.) theory.** Moreover, the student has integrated this understanding of theory throughout the essay to support the essay's narrative.

(10%) There is **some critical evaluation.** Conclusions are consistent with the content of the essay, but the student has not assumed a clear stance on the topic.

(10%) **The composition is clear and helps with the flow of the argument.** There are almost no grammatical/ syntactical/ spelling errors. Formatting is meticulous.

(10%) **Supporting literature is relevant and significant in scope, albeit not always used effectively.** Referencing is accurate and bibliographical errors, if any, are insignificant.

SATISFACTORY (B- [74-78])

(10%) The **introduction is too broad and lacks detail** concerning the essay's content. Some explanation concerning the scope of the essay's arguments and their development is given but without mention of the relevant literature.

(30%) **Content is relevant, for the most part, and tends to support the main thesis. But the essay's arguments are undeveloped or not always logical.** Most relevant literature is integrated with supportive exemplification.

(30%) There is evidence that **underlying** literary/cultural/philosophical (etc.) **theory** has been grasped. But there is no clear evidence how theoretical insights support the essay's narrative. There might be a tendency toward the mechanistic application of theoretical models.

(10%) There is **no critical evaluation**. However, conclusion/s is/are consistent with the content of the essay.

(10%) **The composition is clear** but somewhat puerile. Some grammatical/ syntactical errors. Formatting is meticulous.

(10%) **Supporting literature is relevant but limited.** Referencing is not always accurate and there are a few bibliographical errors.

SATISFACTORY (C+ [68-73])

(10%) The **introduction is weak** and offers an incomplete or unclear explanation of the essay's content, the development of its arguments, and the literature on the topic.

(30%) **Content is primarily descriptive.** There are some literary/cultural (etc.) arguments, but they remain undeveloped. Analysis is limited and there is no indication as to the significance of the question/s posed. Some relevant literature is integrated and some exemplification presented.

(30%) References to **underlying** literary/cultural/philosophical (etc.) **theory** are few. They do not demonstrate an understanding how the theoretical models inform the essay's content.

(10%) **Conclusions are too broad** and generalizing, as well as unsubstantiated by the essay's contents. There is **no critical evaluation**.

(10%) Arguments are undermined by **unclear composition**. Many grammatical/ syntactical errors, and spelling errors. The formatting is sloppy.

(10%) **Paucity of relevant supporting literature.** Many referencing errors. Many bibliographical errors.

FAILURE (C, C-, D+, D, F) 63 and less

(10%) The **introduction is weak** and does not introduce essay contents and manner in which its arguments will develop. There is no awareness of the literature on the topic.

(30%) **Content is undeveloped.** There is no analysis or reflection on the relevance of the question/s posed. No relevant literature is integrated.

(30%) **No** appropriate reference is made to **underlying** literary/cultural/philosophical (etc.) **theory**.

(10%) Failure to make critical evaluation/s and relevant conclusions.

(10%) **Poor writing**, unclear composition, extensive grammatical/syntactical errors, and sloppy formatting.

(10%) **Supporting literature is insufficient** and/or irrelevant. Incorrect and/or unsystematic referencing. Absence of bibliography.