

Department: Modern and Classical Languages (French)

Course No: 1177 [196]

Credits: 3

Title: Magicians, Witches, Wizards: Parallel Beliefs & Popular

Contact: Roger Travis

Content Area: CA1-Arts and Humanities

Diversity: CA4 International

Catalog Copy: FREN 196 Magicians, Witches, Wizards: Parallel Beliefs & Popular Culture in France Either semester. Three credits. No Prerequisites.

The search for traces of a counter culture which grew out of pagan beliefs and remained latent despite the domination of Christianity from the Middle Ages to modern times. Tales of magic and witchcraft, as presented by texts and films. The evolution of exemplary figures like Merlin or Nostradamus.

Course Information: A. Description. The course favors a multimedia approach, using socio-historical and literary texts as well as films.

Students read a variety of short texts addressing the topic of witchcraft as counter-culture, from the point of view of those who lived in this culture, and from the point of view of those who try to interpret past events in the light of recent theoretical developments. They also watch selected films and documentaries concerning this topic, and are introduced to the discrepancy between period approaches to the problem and modern, romantic readings of it.

B Course requirements : Selected readings in English; multiple-choices quizzes every two weeks; one film report; one term paper; one mid-term and one final exam.

C. Major themes, issues, topics, etc., to be covered. Bouchard de Worms - Etienne de Bourbon ; Merlin - Roman de Perceforest (first sabbath scene in French lit.)

Nostradamus; Jean Bodin, Dimonomanie des Sorciers - De Lancre, De l'inconstance des mauvais anges et des demons - Montaigne, De la force de l'imagination, Des bonteux Gaufridi in Aix-en-Provence - Grandier in Louviers L'Affaire des Poisons, The Count of Saint-Germain - Cagliostro George Sand, La Petite Fadette Michelet, La Sorciere - Edgar Quinet, Merlin Colin de Plancy, Dictionnaire infernal (1863) - Almanachs diaboliques

Yourcenar, Les songes et les sorts - Maryse Condi, Moi, Tituba, sorciere

de Salem Jeanne Favret-Sabda, Les mots, la mort, les sorts - Claude Seignolle, Les Evangiles du diable

Films : The Monk and the Witch ; The Devils ; Les Sorcieres de Salem (The Crucible) ; Joan of Arc

Meets Goals of Gen Ed: a. Become articulate Significant emphasis is placed on oral and written expression in the course, by means of extended discussions and written reports graded for their logic

and effectiveness.

c. Acquire critical judgment: The course examines cultural products from multiple perspectives rather than from a Manichean viewpoint, so that much of the material of the course involves complex comparative criticism. The students are exposed to unfamiliar traditions and are encouraged to develop an original train of thought when confronted to unexpected perspectives.

d. Acquire moral sensitivity: The students learn to discern analogies as well as to appreciate differences ; they are made conscious of the dangers inherent to reductive judgments and the fear of what is different. They are encouraged toward more openness and tolerance.

g. Acquire a working knowledge of the processes by which they can continue to acquire and to use knowledge: The students make use of a variety of sources for information in the class, and learn to evaluate and to respect the particular function of each. They are also expected to be responsible for the ways in which these

sources are utilized. Finally, the students are taught how to apply what they learn in their everyday life and to make connections between the world of Academe and the real world.

CA1 Criteria: This course deals primarily with literature and the arts, cultural productions that are defined by this rubric. Students will emerge with a greater sensitivity to the specificity of literary discourse, but also to its ambivalent connections with the dominant powers in a cultural system and to its subversive dimension.

CA4 Criteria: The course gives students access to areas of French culture that are not systematically covered by existing courses, which tend to focus on traditional and mainstream cultural productions; studying parallel cultures is also a means of exploring aspects of popular culture from a different point of view than that used in existing courses taught in French.

Role of Grad Students: Graduate teaching assistants would grade papers and hold office hours and/or discussion groups. They would be prepared in a week-long workshop at the start of the year, and would meet weekly with the professor to discuss techniques, etc. The professor will supervise all their work