

WESTERN UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

**The Bible and Literature** CL 9617A - Fall 2014 (Th. 10<sup>30</sup>-1<sup>30</sup>)

Instructor: Vlad Tumanov ([vtumanov@uwo.ca](mailto:vtumanov@uwo.ca))

### Course Content and Aims

This course is intended to introduce the student to the way certain parts of the Old and New Testament have been retold and re-interpreted through literary fiction. We will analyze texts where authors have sought to preserve the sacred dimension of their biblical sources, undermine it or both. We will consider what is lost and gained during this transfer as antiquity meets modernity. We will attempt to



determine if the two ages speak to each other or past each other. Questions of politics, pertaining to both the biblical texts and their modern counterparts, will be of paramount importance. We will see to what extent the cultural environment and background of each modern author in question influenced the transformation of the biblical material. The main theoretical basis for this course will be G. Genette's *Palimpsests* where the modalities of textual retellings are explored in a taxonomic framework. Additionally, the psychology of religious belief as outlined in P. Boyer's *Religion Explained* will be considered in connection to the literary corpus of the course and other findings from sociobiology.

### Course Requirements

Oral presentation (30 minutes).....	30%
1st essay (3-5 thousand words) due: 1st class in November.....	30%
2nd essay (3-5 thousand words) due: last class.....	35% <sup>1</sup>
Attendance/Participation.....	5%

### Primary Texts

[Genesis](#) (Old Testament: New Revised Standard Version)

Milton, J. [Paradise Lost](#)

Mann, T. [Joseph and his Brothers](#) V. 1: *Tales of Jacob* (Random House: 978-1400040018)

[Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John](#) (New Testament: New Revised Standard Version)

Bulgakov, M. [The Master and Margarita](#) (Vintage: 0679760806) **NB**: Use this edition only!<sup>2</sup>

Tournier, M. [The Four Wise Men](#) (John's Hopkins: 0801857333)

### Secondary Texts (on reserve at Weldon Library):

Genette, G. [Palimpsests](#) & Boyer, P. [Religion Explained](#)

<sup>1</sup> Submit both essays electronically on OWL/SAKAI in Word format.

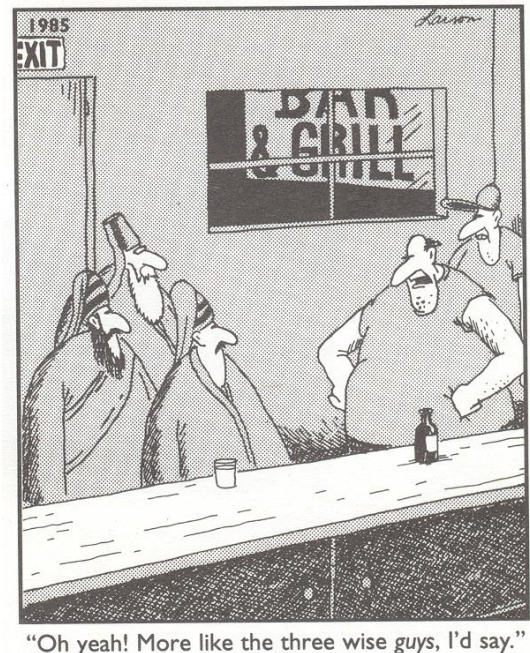
<sup>2</sup> Do not use the Ginsburg translation: based on a censored original, it is incomplete.



## Course Schedule (Each class = 150 minutes [3 hours minus three 10-minute breaks])<sup>3</sup>

<b>Hypertextuality, Psychology of Religion &amp; Old Testament</b>	Sept. 4, 11
<b>John Milton.</b> <i>Paradise Lost</i>	Sept. 18, 25
<b>Thomas Mann.</b> <i>Stories of Jacob</i>	Oct. 2, 9
<b>Presentation 1:</b> Milton: <i>Paradise Regained</i>	Oct. 9
<b>New Testament.</b>	Oct. 16
<b>Mikhail Bulgakov.</b> <i>The Master and Margarita</i>	Oct. 23, Nov. 6
<b>Film: Incident in Judea</b>	Nov. 13
<b>Presentation 2:</b> Heym: <i>The King David Report</i>	Nov. 13
<b>Michel Tournier</b> <i>The Four Wise Men</i>	Nov. 20, Nov. 27
<b>Presentation 3:</b> Saramago: <i>Gospel According to Jesus Christ</i>	Nov. 27
<b>Presentation 4:</b> Kazantzakis: <i>Last Temptation of Christ</i>	Nov. 27
<b>Film: Last Temptation of Christ – last 60 min.</b>	Nov. 27

**N.B.** The reading list schedule is approximate.  
**The presentation schedule is firm.**



<sup>3</sup> Last day of first term classes: Dec. 3, 2014

### Plagiarism

(see: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_grad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf)).

Plagiarism — a major academic offense — is the inclusion of someone else's verbatim or paraphrased text in one's own written work without immediate reference. Verbatim text must be surrounded by quotation marks or indented if it is longer than four lines. A reference must follow right after borrowed material (usually the author's name and page number). Without immediate reference to borrowed material, a list of sources at the end of a written assignment does not protect a writer against a possible charge of plagiarism. This also applies to work facilitated or written for students by third parties. **Please submit your essays to Turnitin.com.**

### Absenteeism

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments must apply to the Academic Counseling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

- Accommodation for Medical Illness:

[https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical\\_accommodations\\_link\\_for\\_OOR.pdf](https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical_accommodations_link_for_OOR.pdf)

- Downloadable Medical Certificate: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medicalform.pdf>

