

English 764

Jonathan Burton, ENGL 764, Fall 2001, Renaissance Seminar

English 764: Seminar in Renaissance Studies

The Performance of Faith: Religion and Difference on the Early Modern Stage

In the twenty-five year period between 1533 and 1558 England's state religion shifted three times, first from Catholicism to Anglicanism, then back to Catholicism, before returning again to Anglicanism. With each change the English were required to abandon their current practice in state-mandated rites of apostasy.

At the same time, English sailors in the Mediterranean were converting to Islam in unprecedented numbers. The threat of apostasy combined with the instability of English Christianity made virtually every public occasion for the next 80 years an opportunity to perform the proper faith. In this class we will look at how the public performance of faith both borrowed from and contributed to contemporary theatrical practices. We'll begin by examining Michel de Certeau's *The Possession at Loudun* (2000) and John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments of the Christian Church* (1563) to develop an understanding of the interanimation of Reformation politics and Renaissance theatricality. Then, over the course of the semester, we'll refine our models by testing them against a dozen or so plays and civic pageants featuring representations of Protestantism, Catholicism, Puritanism, Judaism and Islam, as well as a range of archival materials concerning apostasy and religious difference.

Students will prepare: (1) 10-minute presentations of archival materials; (2) talking points for discussion based upon critical readings; and (3) 25-page seminar papers.

In the 14th week of the semester we will workshop 12-15 page drafts of seminar paper works-in progress.

Texts in University Book Store

Michel de Certeau, *The Possession at Loudun*

Christopher Marlowe, *The Complete Plays*

Daniel Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays*

Elizabeth Cary, *The Tragedy of Mariam*

Ben Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*

John Ford, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*

Peter Corbin, *Three Jacobean Witch Plays*

The rest of the readings will be distributed by the professor or available on reserve at Colson Hall.

8/30: Michel de Certeau, **The Possession at Loudun**

Peter Lake, "Religious Identities in Shakespeare's England"

Jean Howard, "'Sathans Synagogue': The Theater as Constructed by its Enemies"

9/6: John Foxe, **Book of Martyrs**

(4.450-1, 4.706-7, 5.537-50, 7.28-33, 7.77-86, 7.406-53, 7.517-52, 7.585-94, 8.497-503)

Patrick Collinson, "Truth, lies, and fiction in sixteenth-century Protestant hagiography"

Paul Voss, "The Catholic Presence in English Renaissance Literature"

9/13: Christopher Marlowe **Doctor Faustus, The Jew of Malta**

Emily Bartels, *Spectacles of Strangeness*, Chapter 4

Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy*, Chapter 6

9/20: Robert Wilson, **Three Ladies of London**

Robert Daborne, **A Christian Turn'd Turke**

Thomas Middleton, **The Triumphs of Truth, The Triumphs of Honor and Virtue**

Gauri Viswanathan, *Outside the Fold* (3-43)

9/27: Thomas Heywood, **Fair Maid of the West, Part I**

Jean Howard, "An English Lass Among the Moors"

Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (1-32)

Thomas Sanders, "The voyage made to Tripolis in Barbary in the year 1583"

10/4: Philip Massinger, **The Renegado**

John Fletcher, **The Island Princess**

Michael Neill, "'Material Flames': Romance, Empire, and Mercantile Fantasy in Fletcher's IP"

Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain*, Chapters 1 and 2

10/11: Fulke Greville, **Mustapha**

Elizabeth Cary, **The Tragedy of Mariam**

Dympna Callaghan, "Re-reading Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedie of Mariam, Fair Queen of Jewry*"

10/18: William Shakespeare, **Measure for Measure**

Laura Lunger Knoppers, "(En)gendering Shame: *M for M* and the Spectacles of Power"

Eamon Duffy, "The Godly and the Multitude in Stuart England"

10/25: Ben Jonson, **Bartholomew Fair**

Rebecca Ann Bach, "Ben Jonson's Civil Savages"

11/1: William Shakespeare, **Hamlet**

Stephen Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory*, Chapter 5 ("Remember Me")

11/8: John Ford, **'Tis Pity She's a Whore**

Laurel Amtower, "'This Idol Thou Ador'st': *The Iconography of 'Tis Pity She's a Whore*"

11/15: Thomas Middleton, **The Witch**

Thomas Dekker, **The Witch of Edmonton**

Anthony Dawson "Witchcraft/Bigamy: Cultural Conflict in *The Witch of Edmonton*"

11/29: Paper Workshop

12/6: Conclusions

Useful web-sites to explore

<http://www.folger.edu> The Folger Shakespeare Library's main page

<http://www.shakespeare.folger.edu> Hamnet, the online catalog of the Folger Library

<http://tudor.simplenet.com> A general reference with many useful links to other sites dealing with early modern studies

<http://www.luminarium.org/lumina.htm> Another wide-ranging general reference for the period

<http://www.library.upenn.edu/etext/collections/furness/index.html> The Schoenbug Center for Electronic Text and Image