

18th Century Literature Syllabus

September 2020-2021

Instructor: Erfan Rajabi

Course objective:

The course aims to give a broad introduction to the literature of British eighteenth-century. We will read a selection of plays, novels, and poems. Class time will deal with central texts.

Tentative Schedule

Week 1: An Introduction to 18th century culture and literature

Section I: Restoration Period

Week 2: Restoration Drama

☑ William Congreve, *The Way of the World*

John Dryden, *Essay on Dramatic Poesy*

Week 2: Restoration Poetry

John Dryden: “MacFlecknoe,” “Absalom and Achitophel,”
“Alexander’s Feast,” “Ode to St. Cecilia,” “To the Memory of
Anne Killigrew,” “To Mr. Oldham,” “Annus Mirabilis”

Restoration Novel: Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko*

Section II: Augustan Period

Augustan Prose

Week 3: Selections from Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, *The Spectator* and *The Tatler*

Augustan Novel

Week 4: Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe

Augustan Poetry

Weeks 5-6: Alexander Pope: “Essay on Criticism,” “Essay on Man,” “Rape of the Lock”, “Epistle to Arbuthnot”

Jonathan Swift: “Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift,” “Description of a City Shower,” “The Lady’s Dressing Room”

Augustan Drama/Mid-Century Drama:

Richard Steele, The Conscious Lovers

George Lillo, The London Merchant

Section III: Mid-Century

Mid-Century Prose

Week 7: Samuel Johnson: The Preface to the Dictionary; The Preface to Shakespeare; Selections from Lives of the Poets (Milton, Pope, Gray)

Mid-Century Novel

Week 8: Samuel Richardson, Pamela

Henry Fielding, Shamela

Mid-Century Poetry

Week 9: James Thomson: “The Seasons: Winter,” “Rule Britannia” Thomas Gray: “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard,”

Section IV: Revolutions or Late- Century

Age of Revolutions: Drama and Poetry

Week 10: Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The School for Scandal*

Robert Burns: “A Red, Red Rose,” “To a Mouse,” “To a Louse,”
“Tam O’Shanter,” “Auld Lang Syne,” “The Cotter’s Saturday
Night”

Age of Revolutions: Novel

Week 11: Laurence Sterne, Tristram Shandy

Age of Revolutions: Prose

Weeks 12-13 : Selections from **Edmund Burke**, Reflections on
The Revolution in France; Selections from Mary Wollstonecraft,
Vindication of the Rights of Woman