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Fall 2007, Th: 1.30-3.20

**Course Description**

This course examines oral literature from various European traditions. Specific focus will be placed on Greek material, but a comparative study of sources from other countries (German, French, English, and south Slavic) will be taken in consideration too. Among the large variety of oral genres we will concentrate on folktales, myths, and legends (oral prose) and folksongs, ballads, and epic (oral poetry). We will discuss the following issues: the concept of the genre, the academic definitions and classifications of genres; problems of tradition, history and continuity; gender-related distinctions; performance and audience; nationalist appropriations of oral forms; orality versus literacy. Texts will be available in English though students are encouraged to read available material in the original language.

All primary and secondary sources are in a reading packet available at the Hellenic Studies Program.

**Grade Distribution**

- Attendance and participation: 15%
- Oral presentation: 15%
- Two response papers (2 pages each): 20%
- Mid term paper (4-6 pages): 20%
- Final paper (10-12 pages): 30%

**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1: Introduction. Classification of Oral Genres**


Further recommended reading  

**Week 2: Folktale I. What is a Folktale?**

**Primary Sources**


**Secondary Sources**

Max Lüthi, *The European Folktale*: 4-80.
Week 3: Folktale II. Oral Folktales or Literary Fairy Tales?
Primary Sources

Secondary Sources

Further recommended reading

Week 4: Folktale III. Folktale and Gender
Primary Sources

Secondary Sources

Further recommended reading
Jack Zipes, Don't Bet on the Prince, pp. 1-36.

First response paper due

Week 5: Myth I. Myth and History
Primary Sources

Secondary Sources

Further recommended reading
Marcel Detienne, The Creation of Mythology, pp. 103-123.
Jaan Puhvel, Comparative Mythology, pp. 1-42, 126-143.

Week 6: Myth II. Personal Myths: The Hero
Primary Sources

Secondary Sources
Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces (selections).
Further recommended reading

Week 7: Legends: True or not?
Primary Sources
Lucy Garnett, “Historical Folk-Legends”, pp. 413-436.

Secondary Sources

Further recommended reading
Linda Dégh, “Is There a Definition for the Legend?”, (In Legend and Belief), pp. 23-97.

Mid term paper due

Week 8: Folksong
Primary Sources

Secondary Sources

Further recommended reading

Week 9: Ballad: Nationalist Appropriations
Primary Sources

Secondary Sources

Further recommended reading

Week 10: Oral Epic: Composition and Performance
Primary Sources
Secondary Sources
Albert Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, pp. 3-29.

Further recommended reading

Second response paper due

Week 11: “Rembetiko” (Greek Blues) as a Genre
Lecture by Professor Gail Holst-Warhaft on urban Greek music Rembetiko.

Secondary Sources

Week 12: The “Dialogue” between Oral and Written Literature
Primary Sources
Selected texts with folktales, myths, legends, folksongs, and ballads.

Secondary Sources

Further recommended reading

Week 13: Questions of Genre

Final paper due

Readings
Primary Sources
The full references to the books from which these texts have been extracted are given below for those who wish to read further:


**Secondary Sources**

Recommended purchases are marked with an asterisk:


