

THE BIBLE & FOLKLORE (FLR350 / 16311; FLR605 /12464)

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Office: PLC 458, 346-1496

TTh 10:00-11:20, 117 Fenton
Off.Hrs.: T 12:30-3:30 & by appt.

This course brings together readings of the Bible in the Judeo-Christian tradition with apt mythological, folkloristic, and traditional contexts, concepts, theories, and meanings. We will read sections of the Bible that have continuing presence in Western culture and literature, exploring how these are shaped by orality and performance practices, and carry ongoing symbolic and narrative meaning. In addition to reading narrative, lyrical, prophetic, and epistolary sections of the King James English Bible, we will take a folkloristic approach in studying these accounts as a complex tradition of mythic and narrative patterns, heroic images, poetic and legendary modes and conventions, and ethical and legal prescriptions that have, from the beginning persisted as orally transmitted materials and continue to permeate our cultural and ethical practices, beliefs, and traditions.

BOOKS: *The Bible: Authorized King James Version* (Oxford UP, 1997—REQUIRED TRANSLATION); Alan Dundes, *Holy Writ as Oral Lit: The Bible As Folklore* (Rowman & Littlefield, 1999); M.H. Abrams, *Glossary of Literary Terms* (11th ed.).

WORK: UGrads—Exam (25%); Reading Journal (25%); Presentation & Paper (25%); Final Project (25%)
 Grads—Midterm Exam (20%); Reading Journal (20%); Presentation & Paper (20%); Project (40%).

Outcomes: close reading and analysis; oral presentation in collaboration; a range of writing skills—summarizing; exploratory journaling; defining, exemplifying, and analysis; and research, organization, and rhetorical skills in an essay.

WK 1 (9/26): The Judeo-Christian Bible & a Folkloristic Study of Mythology, Belief, Expressive Art, & Cultural Practice

T: Introduction: The Books; the Course; the Bible, the 1611 K. James translation, & the Study of Folklore

Th: Bible as Book & Tradition(s): Dundes, 1-21; *Bible*, “Intro.” xi-xxix; “Genesis,” 1-4 & **notes to “OT” & “Genesis” (321ff.)**

Terms: *Abrams:* Periods of English Literature—Jacobean Age; Renaissance; book; folklore; myth; *Dundes:* folklore; myth; legend; oral folklore; written folklore *****During the term read the “Notes” for ALL the biblical books that we study.*****

WK 2 (10/3): Mythology, Variation, & Oral/Written Strands in Biblical Stories: the Flood & the Creation

T: Mythic Stories & Variation in Number—Origins & the Flood myth: *Bible*, “Genesis,” 5-22; Dundes, 21-24;

Th: Mythic Origins & Variation in Number—Creation & Fall myths: Dundes, 24-26; *Bible*, “Genesis,” 23-50

Terms: *Abrams:* myth; narrative; setting; character; plot; *Dundes:* multiple existence; variation

WK 3 (10/10): Legends, Variation, & Oral/Written Jesus Stories: Death & Resurrection; His Life & Work

T: Legendary Stories & Variation in Number—Crucifixion Accounts: *Bible*, Matthew, 26-28; Mark, 14-16; Luke, 22-24; John, 13-20; Dundes, 26-37. **Notes to “N.T.” (398-412).** R. Aslan, “Where Is Your Fleet &c.” (CANVAS).

Th: Legendary Stories & Sayings—Jesus as Teacher & Healer: *Bible*, Matthew, 3-8 & 21; Mark, 1, 4, & 11-12; Luke, 6, 11, & 20; John, 11-12. R. Aslan, “Follow Me &c.” (CANVAS).

Terms: *Abrams:* narratology; author; plot—protagonist/antagonist; allusion; paradox; symbol; legend; variant; allegory/parable

WK 4 (10/17): Legends, Variation, & Patterned Narratives: Historical Memory in Oral & Written Modes

T: Paul of Tarsus & the Beginnings of “Christianity”: Dundes, 37-63; *Bible*, “Acts of the Apostles,” 1-10 & 19-22.
 J. Robinson, “Judas of the New Testament” (CANVAS) **(Notes, 413-14)**

Th: Thinking about Jesus: *Bible:* Paul’s Epistles—“Romans,” 1-5, 10-11, & 16; “I Corinthians,” 1, 12-13, & 16; “I Timothy,” 1-6. **(Notes, 415-420 & 426-28).**

Terms: *Abrams*: narratology; folktale; convention; narrative pt. of view; interpretation: typological & allegorical; didactic literature; essay; *Dundes*: variation in name & sequence; type-set with variants; polygenesis/monogenesis

WK 5 (10/24): Lyric Expression, Oral Poetry, & Formulaic Language: Psalms & Songs

T: ***EXAM***

Th: *Bible*, “Psalms,” 14 & 53; 70, 40, & 90; 18 & “Samuel II,” 22. *Dundes*, 63-65; (Notes, 351-358)

Terms: *Abrams*: verse; oral poetry; lyric; antithesis/parallelism; fig.lang.; anaphora; repetition; apostrophe; rhetorical question

WK 6 (10/31): Lyric Expression, Poetry, & Formulaic Language: Songs, Prophecies, Proverbs, & Wisdom

T: *Bible*: “Psalms” 2, 8, 9, 13, 22, 23, 42, 98, 150; “Song of Solomon,” 1-8; A. DeConick, “Orality in Biblical Traditions” (CANVAS)

Th: *Bible*: “Isaiah,” 1-2 & 11; “Jeremiah,” 1-2, 23-24; “Proverbs,” 1-4 & 10; “Ecclesiastes,” 3; “*Dundes*: 80-90 (Notes, 359-64)

Terms: figurative lang.—metaphor/simile; allegory; parable; allegorical interpretation; jeremiad; satire; proverb; didactic literature; concrete language; imagery

WK 7 (11/7): Heroic Narrative Patterns (I) : David & Goliath / David & Jonathan / David & Saul,

T: *Dundes*: 65-70; *Bible*: “I Samuel,” 1-20 (Notes, 340-42); A.Olrik, “Patterns of the Hero” (CANVAS)

Th: *Bible*: “I Samuel,” 24-31; “II Samuel,” 1

Terms: *Abrams*: narrative; narratology; plot—protagonist (hero/ine) /antagonist (villain); motif & theme; dirge

WK 8 (11/14): Heroic Narrative Patterns (II) & (III): Jael & Sisera, Judith & Holofernes; and Moses

T: *Dundes*: 65-66; *Bible*: “Judges,” 4-5; *Apocrypha*, “Judith,” 1-5 & 8-16. (Notes, 337-39, 384-86, 389-90)

Th: *Dundes*: 70-73; *Bible*: “Exodus,” 1-20 (Notes, 330-332)

Terms: *Abrams*: protagonist/antagonist; motif & theme—topos; stock situation; symbol; convention/invention

WK 9 (11/21): Heroic Narrative Patterns (III) : Moses & the Promised Land as Narrative & as (proto)Type

T: *Dundes*: 96-107 and 114-118; *Bible*: “Exodus,” Ch. 25-27, 31-36, 40; “Deuteronomy,” 31-34; John, 5-7; (Notes, 334-336)

Th: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Terms: *Abrams*: motif & theme—topos; archetypal criticism; interpretation, typological & allegorical

WK 10 (11/28): Prophecy, Utopian/Dystopian Visions, & Apocalyptic Beliefs & Expectations

T: *Bible*: “Revelations,” Ch.1-2, 12, 19-22; Adam Gopnik, “The Big Reveal” (CANVAS) (Notes, 438-441).

Th: *Bible*: “I Thessalonians, Ch.1 & 5 Notes (425-426) *****FINAL PROJECT DUE*****

Terms: *Abrams*: interpretation, allegorical; jeremiad; utopias and dystopias