



The CPLT 201: The Feasting Animal

Hours: MWF 9:00AM – 9:50AM

Location: Callaway S102

Instructor: Patrick Blanchfield

Contact: pblanch@emory.edu

Office Hours: W 10-11 / Appointment

OPUS: #2661

Drawing after an Attic red-figure kylix by Epiktetos. In: Harrison and MacColl. Greek Vase Paintings. London: T.F. Unwin, 1894.

Course Description

One thing all creatures have in common is the need for nourishment. But what separates humans as eaters from the animals and plants that we eat? In this course, we will survey philosophical and literary texts that take up the consumption of food as exemplifying truths about human nature and as dramatizing relationships among humans as well between humankind and the natural world. From the ritual meals of the Bible to the philosophical drinking parties of Classical Athens to the Bacchanals of Rome to bawdy medieval banquets, our exploration will engage topics including table manners, gluttony, hospitality, intoxication, man-eating animals, cannibalism, asceticism, connoisseurship, the Carnavalesque, and more.

Required Texts:

Apuleius. *The Golden Ass, or, Metamorphoses*. (Kenney, trans); Boccaccio, Giovanni. *The Decameron*. (McWilliam, trans); Heaney, Seamus, *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*; Abu Bakr Ahmad ibn `Ali. *Selections from the Art of Party-Crashing in Medieval Iraq*. (Selove, trans); Petronius. *The Satyricon*. (Sullivan & Morales, trans). Plato. *Plato's Symposium: A Translation by Seth Benardete*.

All Coursebooks are available at the Emory Bookstore. You may also find them listed online here: <http://amzn.to/172o3yK>. Additional readings will be made available via BlackBoard or handouts.

Important Dates:

Sep 2: Labor Day, No Class
September 27: Short Paper #1
October 14: Fall Break, No Class
October 30: Short Paper #2
November 15: Final Paper Proposal Due
November 21-27: Instructor Away, No Class
November 28-29: Thanksgiving, No Class
December 1: Optional Final Paper Draft Deadline
December 9: Last Class
December 11: Final Paper Draft Due

Readings

August 28 – 30 (2 Classes): *Introduction / Course Background*

September 4 – 6 (2 Classes): *The Hebrew Bible (Tanakh)*

- Creation, the Fall, Cain and Abel, the Drunkenness of Noah (Genesis 1-4, 6-9)
- Moses, the Plagues, the First Passover, Manna (Exodus 1-13, 16:1-36)
- Rules for Sacrifice, Unclean Animals, and Festivals, the Covenantal Agreement (Leviticus 1-7, 11, 22, 26:1-34)
- *Optional Secondary Readings:* Marcel Mauss, *On Sacrifice* (excerpt)

September 9 – 13 (3 Classes): *The New Testament*

- *Miracles:* Feeding the Multitude (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:5-15, 6:32-35); Wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11)
- *Parables:* The Great Supper (Luke 14:15-24); Birds of Heaven, Lilies of the Field (Matthew 6:24-34); The Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32)
- *The Last Supper* (Matthew 26:17-30, Mark: 14:12-26)
- *Optional Secondary Reading:* Paul on Correcting Abuses of the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:17-33)

September 16 – 20 (3 Classes): *The Greeks, Part I*

- Hesiod, *Works and Days* and *The Theogony* (excerpts). Pandora, the Theft of Fire, and the Ages of Man
- Homer, *Odyssey* (excerpts). The Lotus-Eaters and the Cyclops (Book IX), Circe (Book X), Eumaeus the Suitors (sections of Books XIV, XVII, and XVIII)
- *Optional Secondary Readings:* Marcel Mauss, *The Gift* (excerpt); Derrida, *Of Hospitality* (excerpt)

September 23 – 27 (3 Classes): *The Greeks, Part II*

- Plato, *The Symposium*
- James Davidson, *Courtesans and Fishcakes* (excerpt)

September 30 – October 4 (3 Classes): *The Romans, Part I*

- Apuleius, *The Golden Ass* (selections)
- Roman Food Poems by Martial, Ovid, and Catullus.
- Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* (selections)

October 7 – 11 (3 Classes): *The Romans, Part II*

- Petronius, *Satyricon*
- Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (excerpt)

October 16 – 18 (2 Classes): *Monks and Saints*

- Voragine, Jacobus. *The Golden Legend* (excerpts)
- Selections from the Sayings of the Desert Fathers (*Verba Seniorum*)
- *Optional Secondary Reading*: Peter Flood, *The Ascetic Self* (excerpt)

October 21 – 25 (3 Classes): *Spear-Danes, Geats, and Vikings*

- *Beowulf*. Ridding the Land of Grendel (Lines 1-2190)
- Jon Þórðarson and Magnús Thorhallson. *The Flatey Book* (excerpt). The Tale of Sarcastic Halli

October 28 – November 1 (3 Classes): *Celts, Troubadours, and Courtiers*

- *The Boyhood Deeds of Fionn* (excerpt). Fionn and the Salmon of Knowledge
- Pierre de Saint-Cloud. *Le Roman de Renart* (excerpt)
- Selected Fabliaux and Provençal Verses

November 4 – 8 (3 Classes): *Medieval Iraq and Persia*

- al-Khatib al-Baghdadi. Stories in *The Art of Party-Crashing*
- Badi' al-Zaman al-Hamadhani, *The Maqama of the Madirah*
- Omar Khayyám, Selected *Rubáiyát*

November 11 – 15 (3 Classes): *The High Middle Ages, Part I*

- Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*. The Cook's Tale, The Reeve's Tale, The Manciple's Tale, The Nun's Priest's Tale

November 18 – 22 (3 Classes): *The High Middle Ages, Part II*

- Giovanni Boccaccio. *The Decameron*. Prologue. Tales I.5, I.6, IV.1, IV.7, IV.9

December 2 – 6 (3 Classes): *The High Middle Ages, Part III*

- Giovanni Boccaccio. *The Decameron*. Opening Tales V.9, V.10, VI.2, VI.6, VII.9, VIII.6, IX.8, X.2.

December 9 (Last Class): *Farewells*

- Poem selections from the *Three Hundred Tang Poems* (唐詩三百首).

My Commitments to You

- 1.) *Assignments*. Although I reserve the right to modify this syllabus to improve our time together, I will be clear and give advance notice in doing so.
- 2.) *Correspondence*. Except on weekends and holidays, I will gladly reply to all emails sent to my @emory.edu addresses within 24 hours.
- 3.) *Feedback*. I will return turned-in materials to you in a timely fashion.
- 4.) *Meetings*. In addition to two required meetings, I will be glad to meet with you and discuss your work, your class status, the texts we are reading, or comics and literature in general.

Your Commitments to Me

- 1.) *Write*. This course fulfills a College Writing Requirement. As such, you are required to produce two Short Papers (five pages each) and one Final Paper (ten pages). These papers will involve the analysis of texts and the development of interpretative claims about them (IE, they will be what are often called “English Papers”). You will receive specific instructions for each paper at the time they are assigned.
- 2.) *Read*. Do the readings. If I start getting worried people aren’t doing the readings, I will begin giving random quizzes about plot points, and that will be just stressful and lame for everybody.
- 3.) *Participate*. Participation in class discussions is important, not just to demonstrate that you’ve done the readings, but also because I honestly want to hear what you think about them. If you loved something we’re reading, say so. If you hated it, say so. And then say why. Above all, if you have questions – ask them.
- 4.) *Don’t Plagiarize*. As students and scholars, drawing on sources plays a key role in formulating your own ideas, and citing them makes your writing more persuasive and enhances your credibility as a thinker. By the same token, using sources improperly or copying from them wholesale constitutes

plagiarism, and is unacceptable. It is your responsibility to represent in your writing all ideas or phrases which are not your own through the appropriate forms of citations. If you feel that time pressures or other issues may be overwhelming you, rather than plagiarize (which, arguably, takes up as much time as actually writing your own work), *talk to me*.