Extravagant Styles: Romanticism, Orientalism, and the Gothic  
ENG4170H, Fall 2016  
Tuesday 11:00-1:00, Room 718, Jackman Humanities Building

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Course Focus: Romantic-era readers could not get enough of two extravagant styles: the Gothic and Orientalism, both of which roamed well beyond the borders of propriety. The Gothic, as the frame narrative of Horace Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) suggests, was associated with the North and the South – Walpole pretended that his novel was a translation of a sixteenth-century Italian tale discovered in “the library of an ancient catholic family in the north of England.” But our reading list shows that the Gothic could not do without the East, just as Orientalism could not do without the Gothic. This course will study these two inextricable styles together in order to investigate Romantic extravagance. Impelled by the relationship between excessiveness, the word’s primary meaning, and wandering (*vagari*), its root, we will focus on the following subjects: temporal and geographical displacement in a period of imperial expansion and mobility; Catholicism, Islam, and Hinduism in the Romantic imaginary; generic relationships among “romance,” the “novel,” and the “tale”; race, violence, and sexual deviance; power and politics in the revolutionary age; and the sublime. Our primary sources will be supplemented by seminal (Said, Sedgwick) and recent works of criticism and theory on Orientalism and the Gothic.

Method of Evaluation: Research paper (50%, 18-20 pp.), abstract and bibliography (10%), mini-conference presentation (20%, 18-20 minutes followed by q & a), class participation (20%).

Texts: The following texts are available for purchase at the University of Toronto Bookstore (214 College Street, 416-640-7900). All primary sources not in the following texts, and all secondary sources, are available in .pdf on the course portal under “Course Materials.”


September 13

Introduction
Anna Aikin, “On the Pleasure Derived from Objects of Terror”
September 20

Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*
Appendix C.4: from Edmund Burke’s *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (321-27)

- Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, “The Structure of Gothic Conventions,” from *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions*

September 27

William Beckford, *Vathek* (45-148) and “The History of the Two Princes and Friends, Alasi and Firouz” (151-96)

- Edward Said, Introduction to *Orientalism*
- Gerard Cohen-Vrignaud, “Cruel and unusual romance: Beckford, Byron, and the abomination of violence,” from *Radical Orientalism: Rights, Reform, and Romanticism*

October 4

Matthew Lewis, *The Monk* (33-179)

- Dennis Porter, “*Orientalism* and its Problems,” from *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*

October 11: NO CLASS

October 18

Lewis, *The Monk* (179-363)
Reviews of *The Monk* (394-408)


October 25

Charlotte Dacre, *Zofloya, or The Moor*

- Kim Ian Michasiw, “Charlotte Dacre’s Postcolonial Moor,” from *Empire and the Gothic: The Politics of Genre*
November 1

Robert Southey, *The Curse of Kehama*
Francis Jeffrey, review of *Thalaba the Destroyer* in the *Edinburgh Review*

- Balachandra Rajan, “Monstrous Mythologies: Southey and *The Curse of Kehama*,” from *Under Western Eyes*

November 8: NO CLASS (NOVEMBER PAUSE)

November 15

Sydney Owenson, *The Missionary: An Indian Tale*

- Michael J. Franklin, “‘Passion’s Empire’: Sydney Owenson’s ‘Indian Venture,’ Phoenicianism, Orientalism, and Binarism”

November 22

Byron, *The Corsair*

- Nigel Leask, “‘Byron turns Turk’: Orientalism and the ‘Eastern Tales,’” from *British Romantic Writers and the East: Anxieties of Empire*

Abstract and bibliography due (except for those who will present on Maturin)

November 29

Charles Maturin, from *Melmoth the Wanderer* (267-398, 502-42)

- Laura Doyle, “At World’s Edge: Post/Coloniality, Charles Maturin, and the Gothic Wanderer”

Abstract and bibliography due for those who will present on Maturin

December 6, Mini-Conference

Sessions 1 and 2

December 7, Mini-Conference

Sessions 3 and 4

Wednesday, December 14, 12:00 p.m., Research Papers Due by Email