

En 116: Milton
Spring 2006
George Pigman

Description

Epic poetry is a competitive and self-referential genre. Virgil imitates and revises Homer, Dante makes Virgil his guide through hell and most of purgatory before leaving him behind, and Milton transforms the entire epic tradition. Since Milton's engagement with and criticism of the epic are essential elements of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, we will focus on his dialogue with Homer, Virgil, and Dante and their differing conceptions of heroism.

Requirements and Procedures

By the morning of each class you must send me by email (gwp@hss.caltech.edu) a question on the reading. I will choose one of the questions for a short quiz, which will take place at the beginning of class.

You must write two papers, each 2,000 words long, on topics of your choosing. You must send me a short paragraph stating your thesis or at least describing your topic a week before the paper is due. The first paper is due May 10 by the beginning of class; the second, which must be on *Paradise Lost* and/or *Paradise Regained*, is due June 9 at 5 pm. Please send the papers to me as email attachments, preferably in OpenOffice.org or Microsoft Word format; name the files with your surname and the number of the paper (e.g. smith1.doc).

Two-thirds of your grade will be based on the papers, and the other third on the quizzes and class participation.

The easiest way to communicate with me is by email, but I am happy to speak to you in person or on the phone. My office is 208 Dabney, and my extension, 3601.

Required Texts

Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, trans. Allen Mandelbaum (Everyman, 1995).

Homer, *The Iliad*, trans. Robert Fagles (Penguin, 1998).

John Milton, *The Major Works*, ed. Stephen Orgel and Jonathan Goldberg (Oxford University Press, 2003).

Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. Stanley Lombardo (Hackett, 2005).

Recommended Texts

The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri: Volume 1: Inferno, trans. Robert M. Durling (Oxford University Press, 1997).

The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri: Volume 2: Purgatorio, trans. Robert M. Durling (Oxford University Press, 2004).

Joseph Gallagher, *A Modern Reader's Guide to Dante's the Divine Comedy* (Liguori, 2000).

Schedule

March 29	Introduction.
March 31	Homer, <i>Iliad</i> 1–8
April 5	Homer, <i>Iliad</i> 9–16
April 7	Homer, <i>Iliad</i> 17–24
April 12	Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i> 1–3
April 14	Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i> 4–6
April 19	Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i> 7–9
April 21	Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i> 10–12
April 26	Dante, <i>Inferno</i> 1–17
April 28	Dante, <i>Inferno</i> 18–34
May 3	Dante, <i>Purgatorio</i> 1–17
May 5	Dante, <i>Purgatorio</i> 18–33
May 10	Dante, <i>Paradiso</i> 1–17
May 12	Dante, <i>Paradiso</i> 18–33
May 17	Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> 1–2
May 19	Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> 3–5
May 24	Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> 6–8
May 26	Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> 9–10
May 31	Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> 11–12
June 2	Milton, <i>Paradise Regained</i>