

Outline of course

Introduction to the course

Lecture 1 – Charlotte Lennox in the literary landscape of the 1750s

Readings :

'The Trifler', *Lady's Museum* (1760) – 2 extracts

Guiding questions:

- Number 1:

How does Lennox give a new meaning to 'coquetry', or 'the desire to please'? For what purpose?

How does she characterize herself through the Trifler? What similitudes or differences with the character of Arabella?

What does it tell us on the Trifler's relation to fiction?

Comment upon her family relationships in relation to reading. How does fiction encapsulate a radical difference between mother and daughter? In what way, on the contrary, does it bind her to her brother?

- **Number 2:** *how does the Trifler explain 'the low state of female power at present'? Does it give us clues on Arabella's behaviour in the FQ?*

Other readings:

- Lennox's Letters 3, 4, 5, 7 & 10

Reflect upon:

- *Lennox using the literary patronage of Johnson and Richardson*

- *Her defence of her novel*

- *Johnson's and Richardson's remarks and advice on plot and characterization*

- *The reservations of the publisher (Millar and esp. Gray)*

- *What does letter 10 reveal??*

Lecture 2 – The emergence of 'familiar' fiction

Locating The Female Quixote within the development of the English novel. Rapid description of the main theories on the 'rise of the novel', and the place ascribed to female novels. Reception of the F.Q. by male authors. The genres of novel and romance, how Lennox plays with them and unsettles the definitions of Fielding and Richardson.

1. Lennox reviewed by Fielding and Johnson: the novel defined in the mid-18th c.

2. Theories on the rise of the novel

3. Fiction in *The Female Quixote*

Chapter analysis on ideas of 'romance' and 'familiar Histories' (Johnson):

Book 1, chapter 1
Book 1, chapter 11
Book 2, chapter 3
Book 2, chapter 5
Book 3, chapter 5

Guiding questions:

- * Various discourses on both forms: who speaks? What perspective? Implied narrator?
- * Romance in relation to truth? Novel in relation to truth? What is 'Life in its true state'?
- * Effects of reading on mind? (who judges?) How Arabella's characterization is constructed through various perspectives?
- * The act of narrating in itself? How is it commented by characters?
- * Arabella as object of representation: what language to tell her history?

Other readings:

- Fielding's and Johnson's reviews
 - Laurie Langbauer, 'Romance Revised: Charlotte Lennox's 'The Female Quixote'', *A Forum on Fiction*, 1984
 - Mary Patricia Martin, 'High and Noble Adventures': Reading the Novel in 'The Female Quixote'', *A Forum on Fiction*, 1997
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Lecture 3 – Quixotic figures in Eighteenth-Century British Culture

Defining 'quixotism' and how British culture and fiction used Cervantes's character to create a literary concept of its own. Understand the importance of Don Quichotte for the emergence and development of the novel in Britain, and its use in female novels. Compare Don Quichotte and Arabella. Discuss the singular nature of Arabella's quixotism.

- 1. Cervantes's *Don Quixote* - Defining the romantic, picaresque and quixotic**
- 2. Quixotism in the English novel**
- 3. Quixotism in Female Novels**
- 4. Arabella as quixotic figure**

Chapter analysis on delusion, imagination and madness

- Book 4, chapter 4: The Hunting Party
- Book 4, chapter 6: Arabella's reflections
- Book 4, chapter 9 : 'My Will has no Part in the Miseries'
- Book 7, chapter 8: Scandals and romances
- Book 8, chapter 4: A's Empire of Love
- Book 8, chapter 7: Conversation with the Countess

Guiding questions on chapters:

- Who judges /describes / comments upon Arabella's delusion? What reaction? The narrator's perspective?

- Is her delusion entirely senseless?
- How does she justify it?
- How does it impact the plot?
- Who do we laugh at? Why does laughter generate a more complex treatment of Arabella's character, delusion and love of romance?
- What is the role of Glanville's character?

Readings :

- First chapter of Don Quichotte – Think about the characterization of Arabella in contradistinction to that of Don Quichotte: what similitudes? What difference? Narrator's position
 - Marianne Camus, 'Don Quichotte au féminin : Charlotte Lennox, The Female Quixote'. *Filiations picaresques en Espagne et en Europe (XVIe-XXe siècle)*, Centre Interlangues, non paginé, 2011
 - Wendy Motooka, 'Coming to a Bad End: Sentimentalism, Hermeneutics, and The Female Quixote', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, Volume 8, no. 2, January 1996, pp. 251-270.
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Lecture 4 – Romances and Female Agency

The 17th c. romances of Mme de Scudéry. Scudéry's romances in relation to romanced history, and female agency / empowerment. Scudéry's map of tenderness and heroic values. Scudéry and La Calprenède in FQ. Arabella as Scuderial heroine? The extent of female agency or empowerment in FQ.

- 1. Mme de Scudéry's romances and conversations**
 - 2. Scuderial heroic values : the Map of Tenderness**
 - 3. Lennox's Appropriation of Scuderial Romances: reading and story-telling**
 - 4. Arabella: an empowered heroine?**
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Lecture 5 – Characters and Characterisation in the *Female Quixote*

Drawing on Deirdre Lynch's work on The Economy of Character, we will think about the way characters in the Female Quixote are delineated to situate Lennox's novel within theories and debates on characterisation in novelistic discourse.

- 1. The meaning of 'character' in the eighteenth century**
 - 2. Types of characters in mid eighteenth-century novels**
 - 3. Characters in the FQ**
 - 5. Characterisation by characters**
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Lecture 6 – Masquerading

Disguise; cross-dressing; female characters developing masculine features; otherness and exoticism; generic transgression and embeddedness.

- 1. Veils and disguises**

2. Costumes and theatricality

3. The Vauxhall scene

4. Carnavalesque transgression

Lecture 7 – The Politics of Ridicule in the F.Q

How and why the concept was of crucial importance in 18th c. debates, how it could possibly rule polite conversation; the use of raillery and ridicule in the FQ; theorization of the ridicule in the novel.

1. The importance of conversation in 18th c. culture

2. Raillery, ridicule and satire in 18th c. philosophical debates

3. Who do we laugh at? Lennox's strategy of laughter