

CAVAFY, FORSTER, AND DURRELL: ALEXANDRIA AND ITS LITERARY PROGENY

George Syrimis
301 Luce Hall
Tel. 432-9342
george.syrimis@yale.edu

Class time: W 1:30- 3:30
Office hours: W 3:30-5:00

Course Description:

The course examines the influence of Alexandria and its poet C. P. Cavafy on two English-speaking writers, E. M. Forster and Lawrence Durrell by concentrating on questions of nationalism and imperialism, sexuality and aesthetics, biography and art, as well as the topography of modernity. By focusing on Alexandria, the course investigates the authors' fascination with the European south and the Asian east in the early to mid-twentieth century as alternative loci for modern Greek and English identities. Critical approaches include aesthetics, post-colonialism, gay and lesbian criticism, reader-audience response, as well as philosophical texts. The course will be devoted to the entire corpus of Cavafy and to the major works of the two novelists.

Grade Distribution

Attendance and participation	20%
Oral presentation	15%
Mid term paper (8 pages)	20%
Two response papers (2-3 pages each)	15%
Final paper (10-15 pages)	30%

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week One: Introduction: Alexandria, its history and literary tradition

Alexander Kitroeff, "The Alexandria We Have Lost"

John P. Anton, "The Alexandrian Environment" in *The Poetry and Poetics of Constantine Cavafy*

Recommended:

Robert Liddell, *Cavafy* (biography, excerpts)

Week Two: Cavafy and Aesthetics

Cavafy: Selections, "Ars Poetica"

Gregory Jusdanis, *The Poetics of Cavafy*, pp. 3-37, 64-113

Recommended:

Charalambidou-Solomi, Despina, "Artificial flowers: The Protean Motif that Signposts Cavafy's Aesthetic Development" *JMGS*

Weeks Three: Cavafy and Hellenism

Cavafy: Selections

Bowra, C.M., "Constantine Cavafy and the Greek Past," *The Creative Experiment*,
Clay, Diskin, "The Silence of Hermippos: Greece in the Poetry of Cavafy." *The Mind and Art of C. P. Cavafy: Essays on his Life and Work*

Week Four: Cavafy and Sexuality

Cavafy: Selections

Plato, *Phaedrus*

First response paper due

Week Five: Discovering the East: Forster in Alexandria

E. M. Forster, *Alexandria: A History and a Guide* (selections)

Cavafy: Selections

Recommended:

Peter Jeffreys, "Hellenism and Orientalism in the Work of E. M. Forster and Constantine Cavafy: A Parallel Reading"

Week Six: Discovering the East: Durrell on Corfu

Lawrence Durrell, *Prospero's Cell*

Cavafy: Selections

Recommended:

Ian S. MacNiven, "Lawrence Durrell Discovers Greece"

Midterm Paper due

Week Seven: Being English: Empire and Literature

E. M. Forster, *Passage to India* (Part I)

Cavafy: Selection

Week Eight: Being English: Empire and Literature

E. M. Forster, *Passage to India* (Part II)

Quentin Bailey, "Heroes and Homosexuals: Education and Empire in E. M. Forster"

Week Nine: Hellenism and Desire

E. M. Forster, *Maurice*

Cavafy: Selections

Plato, *The Symposium*

Recommended:

Dowling, Linda, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford*. Cornell University Press: Ithaca, 1994. (Selections)

Foucault, Michel, *The History of Sexuality: Volume One*

Matthew Curr, "Recuperating E. M. Forster's *Maurice*"

Second response paper due

Week Ten: Alexandria, Cavafy and Desire

Lawrence Durrell, *The Alexandrian Quartet: Justine*

Michel W. Pharand, "Eros Agonistes: The Decay of Loving in The Alexandria Quartet"

Week Eleven: Alexandria, Cavafy and Desire

Lawrence Durrell, *The Alexandrian Quartet: Balthazar*

Robin Visel & Yorgos Papatheodorou, "The Alexandria Quartet and Drifting Cities: Modernism and Politics in Wartime Egypt"

Final paper abstract due

Week Twelve: Love in and out of the City and Other Utopias

E.M. Forster, *Room with a View*

Alexandra Peats, "Modern Pilgrimage and the Authority of Space in Forster's A Room with a View and Woolf's The Voyage Out"

Week Thirteen: Presentation of final papers by students and course wrap up

COURSE MATERIALS

Cavafy's poems, translated by either Rae Dalven or Theocharis Theocharis

Plato, *Phaedrus*

Plato, *The Symposium*

Lawrence Durrell, *Prospero's Cell*

Lawrence Durrell, *Justine*

Lawrence Durrell, *Balthazar*

E. M. Forster, *Alexandria: A History and a Guide*

E.M. Forster, *Room with a View*

E. M. Forster, *Passage to India*

E. M. Forster, *Maurice*

Articles will be distributed in class.

Selected bibliography on E. M. Forster

- B.J. Kirkpatrick, *A Bibliography of E.M. Forster*
Alfred Borrello, *E.M. Forster: An Annotated Bibliography of Secondary Materials*
Philip N. Furbank, *E. M. Forster: A Life*
Philip N. Furbank and Mary Lago, *Selected Letters of E. M. Forster*
Rose Macaulay, *The Writings of E.M. Forster*
Lionel Trilling, *E.M. Forster: A Study*
J.B. Beer, *The Achievement of E.M. Forster*
Wilfred Stone, *The Cave and the Mountain*
G.K. Das, *E.M. Forster's India*
Das and John Beer (eds.), *E.M. Forster: A Human Exploration*
Quentin Bailey, "Heroes and Homosexuals: Education and Empire in E. M. Forster."
Twentieth Century Literature: A Scholarly and Critical Journal 48, no. 3 (2002 Fall):
p. 324-47
Evelyn Haller, "Alexandria as Envision by Virginia Woolf and E. M. Forster: An Essay
in gendered History," *Woolf Studies Annual*, 9, p.167-92, 2003
Alexandra Peats, "Modern Pilgrimage and the Authority of Space in Forster's A Room
with a View and Woolf's The Voyage Out," *Mosaic: A Journal for the
Interdisciplinary Study of Literature* 36, no. 4 (2003 Dec): p. 139-53
Paul Armstrong, "Reading India: E. M. Forster and the Politics of Interpretation,"
Twentieth Century Literature: A Scholarly and Critical Journal 38, no. 4 (1992
Winter): p. 365-85
Philip Dodd, *England, Englishness, and the Other in E. M. Forster*
Alan Wilde, *Critical Essays on E. M. Forster*

Selected bibliography on Lawrence Durrell

- Harry T. Moore (ed.), *The World of Lawrence Durrell*
Alan W. Friedman, *Lawrence Durrell and The Alexandria*
G.S. Fraser, *Lawrence Durrell*
John A. Weigel, *Lawrence Durrell*
Gordon Bowker, *Through the Dark Labyrinth: A Biography of Lawrence Durrell*
Robin Visel & Yorgos Papatheodorou, "The Alexandria Quartet and Drifting Cities:
Modernism and Politics in Wartime Egypt," *DL:LDJ* 8, (2001-2002): p. 95-101
Edmund Keeley, "Miller, Durrell, and Their Greek Friend," *DL:LDJ* 6, (1998): p. 133-57
Rosalind Gwynne, "Islam and Muslims in The Alexandria Quartet," *DL:LDJ* 5, (1997):
p. 90-102
John M. Rose, "Durrell and Plotinus: Mapping the City, Mapping Life," *DL:LDJ* 5,
(1997): p. 75-89
David Roessel, "Rodis Roufos on Bitter Lemons: A Suppressed Section of The Age of
Bronze," *DL:LDJ* 3, (1994): p. 129-38
Dianne L. Vipond, "Lawrence Durrell's Alexandria Quartet: The Missing Link to
Postmodernism," *DL:LDJ* 2, (1993): p. 54-68
Michel W. Pharand, "Eros Agonistes: The Decay of Loving in The Alexandria Quartet,"
DL:LDJ 1, (1992): p. 61-71

- Ian S. MacNiven, "Lawrence Durrell Discovers Greece," *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 24, no. 1 (1991 Spring): p. 83-99
- Gregory Dickson, "Lawrence Durrell and the Tradition of Travel Literature," *Deus Loci: The Lawrence Durrell Quarterly* 7, no. 5 (1984): p. 43-50
- Peter G. Christensen, "Greece, Egypt, and the Quartet: Response," *Deus Loci: The Lawrence Durrell Quarterly* 7, no. 5 (1984): p. 79-88
- W. L. Godshalk, "Durrell: Death, Love, and Art," *Deus Loci: The Lawrence Durrell Quarterly* 7, no. 5 (1984): p. 105-107
- Douglas, Jr. Robillard, "In the Capital of Memory: The Alexandria of Durrell and Cavafy," *Deus Loci: The Lawrence Durrell Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (1981 Fall): p. 78-87

DL:LDJ= Deus Loci: The Lawrence Durrell Journal

Selected bibliography on C. P. Cavafy

- Cavafy, Constantine, □□□□□□ [Collected Works]. Ypsilon Books, Athens, 1990
- Cavafy, Constantine, *Before Time Could Change Them : The Complete Poems of Constantine P. Cavafy* ; translated with an introduction and notes by Theoharis Constantine Theoharis. New York : Harcourt, c2001.
- Cavafy, Constantine, *Collected Poems*, transl. by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard; edited by George Savidis. Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, [1975].
- Cavafy, Constantine, *Complete Poems of Cavafy* [i.e. K. P. Kavaph̄es] / translated by Rae Dalven ; with an introd. By W. H. Auden. New York : Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976.
- Cavafy, Constantine, *Greek Poems of C. P. Cavafy* translated by Memas Kolaitis. New Rochelle, N. Y. : A.D. Caratzas, 1989.
- Cavafy, Constantine, *Poems*, translated into English with a few notes by John Mavrogordato. With an introd. By Rex Warner. New York : Grove Press, 1952.
- Liddel, Robert, *Cavafy*
- Jusdanis, Gregory, *The Poetics of Cavafy: Textuality, Eroticism and History*. Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1987.
- Charalambidou-Solomi, Despina, "Artificial flowers: The Protean Motif that Signposts Cavafy's Aesthetic Development." *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook*. 12/13: 267-278, 1995.
- Nehamas, Alexander, "Memory, Pleasure and Poetry: The Grammar of the Self in the Writing of Cavafy." *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 1:2:295-319, 1983.
- Alexiou, Margaret, "C. P. Cavafy's "Dangerous" Drugs: Poetry, Eros, and the Dissemination of Images." *The Text and Its Margins*, eds. Alexiou and Lambropoulos, pp. 157-196. Pella Publishing Company: New York, 1985.
- Ekdawi, Sarah, "Days of 1895, '96, and '97: The Parallel Prisons of C. P. Cavafy and Oscar Wilde." *Modern Greek Yearbook*, 9: 297-305, 1993.
- Bowra, C.M., "Constantine Cavafy and the Greek Past," *The Creative Experiment*, London MacMillan & Co. Ltd. Pp. 29-60, 1949.

- Clay, Diskin, "The Silence of Hermippos: Greece in the Poetry of Cavafy." *The Mind and Art of C. P. Cavafy: Essays on his Life and Work*, pp. 157-181. Denise Harvey & Co: Athens, 1983.
- Beaton, Roderick, "The History Man," *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*. 10:1&2: 23-44. Spring-Summer, 1983.
- Beaton, Roderick, "C.P. Cavafy: Irony and Hellenism," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, vol. 59, no. 4, pp. 516-528, 1981.
- Bien, Peter, "Cavafy's Homosexuality and His Reputation Outside Greece." *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*. 8: 2: 197-211, 1990.
- Pinchin, Jane Lagoudis, *Alexandria Still: Forster, Durrel, and Cavafy*. Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1977.
- Seferis, George, "C. P. Cavafy, T. S. Eliot: Parallel Lives," *On the Greek Style: Selected Essays in Poetry and Hellenism*. Trans. R. Warner and T. Frangopoulos. Bodley Head: London, 1966.
- W.H. Auden, "Introduction" in *Complete Poems of Cavafy*, translated by Rae Dalven, New York : Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976.
- Lawrence Durrell, "Three Poems of Cavafy," Edinburgh: Tragara Press, 1980. (In Beineke Library)
- James Merrill, "In Broad Daylight," *Grand Street*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 99-107 and "Days of 1964."
- Joseph Brodsky, "Near Alexandria" (1982) and "The Bust of Tiberius" (1981). In *To Urania*, New York : Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1988.
- Joseph Brodsky, "Penedlum's Fate" *Less Than One*, New York : Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1986.