

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

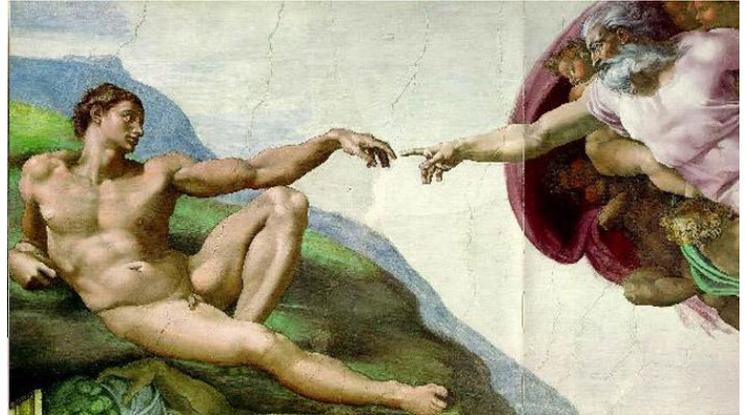
The Bible and Literature CL 9617B (Winter Term)

Instructor: Vlad Tumanov (vtumanov@uwo.ca) Office: UC 3308

Class Time/Location: Mon 9:30-12:30 in UC3325

Course Content and Aims

This course is intended to introduce the student to the way certain parts of the Old and New Testament have been retold and re-interpreted through literary fiction. We will analyze texts where authors have sought to preserve the sacred dimension of their biblical sources, undermine it or both. We will consider what is lost and gained during this transfer as antiquity meets modernity. We will attempt to determine if the two ages speak to each other or past each other. Questions of politics, pertaining to both the biblical texts and their modern counterparts, will be of paramount importance. We will see to what extent the cultural environment and background of each modern author in question influenced the transformation of the biblical material. The background theoretical basis for this course will be G. Genette's *Palimpsests* where the modalities of textual retellings are explored in a taxonomic framework. Additionally, the psychology of religious belief as outlined in P. Boyer's *Religion Explained* is helpful in connection to the literary corpus of the course and other findings from sociobiology.



Course Requirements

Oral presentation (30 minutes)	30%
1st essay (3-5 thousand words) due: 1st class in March.....	30%
2nd essay (3-5 thousand words) due: last class.....	35% ¹
Attendance/Participation.....	5%

Primary Texts

[Genesis](#) (Old Testament: New Revised Standard Version)

Heym, Stefan. [The King David Report](#) (Northwestern 978-0810115378) **or** Milton, J. [Paradise Lost](#)

Mann, T. [Joseph and his Brothers V. 1: Tales of Jacob](#) (Random House 978-1400040018)

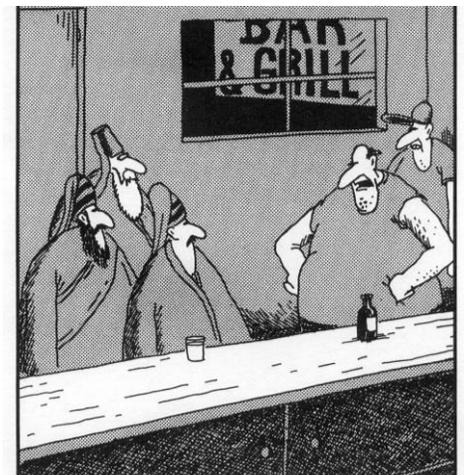
[Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John](#) (New Testament: New Revised Standard Version)

Bulgakov, M. [The Master and Margarita](#) (Vintage: 0679760806) **NB:** Use this edition only!²

Tournier, M. [The Four Wise Men](#) (John's Hopkins: 0801857333)

Secondary Texts (online at Weldon & Huron Library):

Genette, G. [Palimpsests](#) & Boyer, P. [Religion Explained](#)



"Oh yeah? More like the three wise guys, I'd say."

¹ Submit both essays electronically on OWL in **Word** format.

² Do not use the Ginsburg translation: based on a censored original, it is incomplete.