



Poetic Sounds

צלילים פואטיים

Course Type: Seminar

Course No.: 0626424801

Academic Year: 2019-20

Semester: A (Fall Semester)

Number of Hours: 4

Degree: MA

Class Meetings: Mondays/Thursday 14-16, Webb 401

Lecturer: Dr. Roi Tartakovsky

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Office Hour: Mondays 9-10, Webb 511

Description: Sound comprises an entire stratum of language, but it is a stratum that we often ignore: we may hear what someone is saying, but by *hear* we normally mean that we comprehend *what* is being said, maybe even *how* it is being said, but not the sounds in which it is being said. In poetry, if you listen closely, something of that unacknowledged but subliminally perceived sound stratum may enter your consciousness. Does the sound of poetry communicate to us? Do the sounds express what the poem is 'saying'? Are they completely independent of sense? How can the sound of the poem provide pleasure? We will address these questions, and in particular hone close-listening skills, through listening and reading poems of different periods. We will be paying particular attention to the poems' sonic devices and spend time on theoretical work that explicitly addresses the issue of sound in verbal art.

Readings: The poems and theoretical readings are available on the course website. Participants should have all the material with them for all classes, and to come prepared to discuss the assigned readings.

Class Requirements and Grade Breakdown: Attendance is mandatory and absence of more than three class meetings, for whatever reason, may jeopardize the status of a student in the class. In this context attendance also means punctual arrival prepared with the appropriate readings. The final grade for the course is the grade for the referat/seminar paper provided that other components are satisfied. For other components, in addition to attendance and participation you are asked to submit a one-page response paper to 8 out of the 12 theoretical reading and to 2 poems (a total of 10 responses). The response papers are due in class, on the day the theoretical reading appears on the schedule or by email before class of that day. And, each seminar participant will present in



class on one of the theoretical readings or group of poems we will be working on, as well as on her/his project proposal.

Presentations: 10-15 minutes of class time. Please sign up well in advance.

Papers: The due date for the seminar/referat paper is April 26, 2020. Please submit on the course website.

Class Schedule and Dates:

1. October 28: Introduction
2. October 31: Poems
3. November 4: Jakobson, "What is Poetry?"
4. November 7: Poems
5. November 11: Nancy, from *Listening*
6. November 14: Poems
7. November 18: Chion, "Three Listening Modes"; Huang, "Chinese Whispers"
8. November 21: Poems
9. November 25: Freud, "Recommendations to Physicians"; Reik, "Free-Floating Attention"
10. November 28: Poems
11. December 2: Saussure, from *Course*; Jakobson, "Why 'Mama' and 'Papa'?"
12. December 5: Poems
13. December 9: Wimsatt, "One Relation of Rhyme to Reason"
14. December 12: Poems
15. December 16: Tsur, "How Do Sound Patterns?"
16. December 19: Poems
17. December 23: Kristeva, "From One Identity to Another"
18. December 26: Poems
19. December 30: Poems
20. January 2: Project Presentations
21. January 6: Project Presentations
22. January 9: Individual Meetings
23. January 13: Individual Meetings
24. January 16: Lacey, "The Public Sphere as Auditorium"
25. January 20: Poems
26. January 23: Summary



Bibliography (in order of discussion)

- Jakobson, Roman. "What is Poetry?" *Language in Literature*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1987. 368-78.
- Nancy, Jean-Luc. *Listening*. Fordham UP, 2007.
- Chion, Michel. "The Three Listening Modes." *The Sound Studies Reader*. Ed. Jonathan Sterne. Routledge, 2012. 48-53.
- Huang, Yunte. "Chinese Whispers." *The Sound of Poetry/The Poetry of Sound*. Ed. Marjorie Perloff and Craig Dworkin. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2009. 53-59.
- Freud, "Recommendations to Physicians Practicing Psycho-Analysis" (1912). *Standard Edition*. Vol. XII. 109-20.
- Reik, Theodor. "Free-Floating Attention." *Listening with the Third Ear*. New York: Farrar, 1948. 157-72.
- Saussure, Ferdinand de. *Course in General Linguistics*. Trans. Wade Baskin. Ed. Perry Meisel and Haun Saussy. New York: Columbia UP, 2011. 65-70, 111-15, 122-34.
- Jakobson, Roman. "Why 'Mama' and 'Papa'?" *On Language*. Ed. Waugh and Monville-Burston. Harvard UP, 1990. 305-11.
- Wimsatt, William K., Jr. "One Relation of Rhyme to Reason." *The Verbal Icon*. Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1967. 153-66.
- Reuven Tsur, "How Do Sound Patterns Know?" *What Makes Sound Patterns Expressive? The Poetic Mode of Speech Perception*. Durham: Duke UP, 1992. 1-35.
- Kristeva, Julia. "From One Identity to Another." *Desire in Language*. Columbia UP, 1980. 124-47.
- Lacey, Kate. "The Public Sphere as Auditorium." *Listening Publics: The Politics and Experience of Listening in the Media Age*. Polity, 2013. 159-81.