

## Module Guide

### Oral Thought SCH5459 2023/24

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## MA/PGDip/PGCert Poetics of Imagination

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Module Leader: **Dr Martin Shaw**

Other Module Staff: Dr Valentin Gerlier, Alice Oswald, Emma Bush, Dr Bram Thomas Arnold, Dr Tracey Warr



Bison Woman, Pech Merle Cave, France, 29,000-16,000 BC

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## Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the Oral Thought (SCH5459) module. Exploring Western and non-Western creation myths and cosmologies, this module explores orality and offers a glimpse of how to think in myth.

Storytellers have suggested that words were once like magic. We began in an animistic universe where thought took place in speech rather than on paper. Focusing on stories of creation, place, and nomadism, attention is paid to the roles of memory, mischief and desire in the making of culture and understanding of region.

The relationship between stories and material culture (such as Easter Island moai) are also explored. Workshops will focus on cave art and other pertinent, early visual and material culture and their resonances in the work of recent artists such as Werner Herzog. Creative workshops will enable you to reflect on your critical engagement with ancient stories through creative practice.

## Teaching and Assessment Team



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Module Tutor

## Module Aims

- a) To critically engage with a number of creation stories and explore their role in the development of meaning and understanding in a diversity of cultures.
- b) To examine the crucial role of story in forming human imagination and how it develops our relationship to nature, animals, relationship, death.
- c) To develop research, critical reading and writing and creative practice skills.
- d) To develop fieldwork and documenting skills.

## Module Assessed Learning Outcomes

### ASSESSED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

(Numbers relate to Learning Outcomes detailed in the Programme Specification in the Handbook.)

At the end of the module the learner will be expected to be able to:

Assessed Module Learning Outcomes
1. Critically reflect on a range of Western and non-Western myths and stories, specifically creation, trickster and fairy tales.
2. Articulate a comprehensive understanding of relationship between place, nature, spirit and human world in at least one tradition.
3. Compare and contrast relationships between belief systems, and how they interact through themes such as desire, betrayal and the supernatural.
4. Demonstrate desk research and critical writing skills.
5. Utilise creative practice skills.
6. Engage with peers in information exchange, critical evaluation of materials studied and giving and receiving constructive feedback.

See the Module Records in the Programme Handbook for further details.

## Teaching and Learning Strategy

<b>SUMMARY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING [Use HESA KIS definitions]</b>		
<b>Scheduled Activities</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Comments/Additional Information</b>
Lectures	16	Online and onsite lectures delivering the module introduction and critical presentations on the module topic and materials
Demonstrations	8	Library induction, creative practice workshops
Practical classes and workshops	6	Essay writing skills, online journal workshop
Seminars	12	6 online and onsite discussion groups
Fieldwork	12	Two fieldwork trips/exercises
Tutorials	1	Online tutorials on essays and supplementary task
Guided independent study	245	Students will be expected to spend significant time during the module, and in the completion of their projects studying independently.
<b>Total</b>	300	<b>(NB: 1 credit = 10 hours of learning; 10 credits = 100 hours, etc)</b>

Students are expected to take full responsibility for their learning, **attend all** scheduled sessions, read appropriate indicated readings, and work on set exercises (formative and summative assessment).

Based on previous experience; students who failed to attend sessions are likely to be unsuccessful or show poor performance. Please ensure that you are engaging with the content and learning activities relating to this module.

Note that there may be amendments to teaching delivery in this academic year due to the coronavirus crisis.

Students are responsible for ensuring that you have the necessary computer equipment, software and wifi signal to participate fully online.

## Scheme of Work

This module begins with two weeks teaching delivery onsite 18–29 September 2023 and continues for four weeks online with 2 x 2 hour zoom sessions per week.

Whilst we will always do our best to avoid any timetable changes, the schedule may be subject to change due to unforeseen events such as staff illness.

The Programme Handbook is available at: <https://campus.dartington.org/resources/>

A copy of this Module Handbook is available online on the Oral Thought DLE site.

Online teaching is delivered via the University of Plymouth DLE.

University of Plymouth Library: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/library>

The Module Assessment Feedback Form is on the Oral Thought DLE site.

This module will be assessed by:

Element of Assessment	Module Weighting	Component	Link to Assessed Learning Outcomes
Coursework	100%	Portfolio comprising 3,000-word essay (on one of the set question options) with documentation and critical reflection on creative work pursued and shared onsite during the module	All

### Essay

Choose **one** of the following and write a 3,000 word essay with references and bibliography.

1. Write about the roles of both desire and trickery in the act of creation. Use examples from the stories covered, amongst others.
2. What changed when we moved our place of worship from caves to temples?
3. Write a commentary on any of the stories covered in module one (excluding Red Bead Woman and The Listener).

4. Discuss the various interpretations of cave art. Consider what might be problematic about each of those interpretations and what evidence they are drawing on.
5. What images, tropes and techniques recur in cave art? What explanations might there be for such recurrences?
6. Write a commentary on any of the examples of visual and material culture covered in module one.
7. How do we, as modern people, create a cosmology around us? Use examples from the stories covered, amongst others, and/or the examples of visual and material culture discussed in the module.
8. What does thinking about oral cultures reveal about contemporary relationship to place, nature and story and their relationship?
9. Discuss the theme of memory in relation to oral culture and some of the materials studied in this module.
10. 'Repetition is not Repetition' (Pina Bausch). Discuss.

### **Creative Work**

You will also upload a short (1 page) critical reflection on your creative work to the DLE.

**Assignment Deadline is 12 noon, Friday 3 November 2023.**

Marks (provisional until confirmed by a Subject Assessment Panel in June) and feedback are available to you on Friday 1 December 2023 on the DLE.

Your assignment should be uploaded to the DLE.

### **Marking Rubric for SCH5459 – Oral Thought**

LO1: Critically reflect on a range of Western and non-Western myths and stories, specifically creation, trickster and fairy tales.			
LO2: Articulate a comprehensive understanding of relationship between place, nature, spirit and human world in at least one tradition.			
LO3: Compare and contrast relationships between belief systems, and how they interact through themes such as desire, betrayal and the supernatural.			
LO4: Demonstrate desk research and critical writing skills.			
LO5: Utilise creative practice skills.			
LO6: Engage with peers in information exchange, critical evaluation of materials studied and giving and receiving constructive feedback.			
Fail: 0 – 49%	Pass: 50 – 59%	Merit: 60 – 69%	Distinction: 70 – 100%



Does not demonstrate sufficient understanding.	Demonstrates partial understanding. and engagement with the areas of the learning outcomes.	Demonstrates a sound understanding and engagement with the areas of the learning outcomes.	Demonstrates excellent critical understanding and engagement, drawing from relevant discourses.
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## Late Work/Extenuating Circumstances

If your participation in an examination or assessment has been affected by an extenuating circumstance, then you can ask the University to take this into consideration. You can submit a claim for extenuating circumstances to cover late submission of work, non-submission of work or non-attendance at a time specific assessment, such as an examination, test presentation or performance, or field class.

Information regarding the Extenuating Circumstances policy and how and where to submit Extenuating Circumstance Claims are available here: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/exams/exam-rules-and-regulations/extenuating-circumstances>

Where there are no valid extenuating circumstances, the following regulations will automatically apply:

- Work submitted after the deadline date/time but within 24 hours of it, will be capped at the pass mark 50%.
- Work submitted 24 hours after the deadline will receive a mark of zero.

Please notify the programme & module leader of any extenuating circumstances as soon as possible.

## Sources of Guidance and Support

You will be assigned and meet your personal tutor in Welcome Week and towards the end of Term 1. Please do contact them in the first instance if you have any concerns and worries both of an academic or personal nature and they will be able to assist you with academic concerns and direct you to support for other issues.

The Student Support Officer is Antonia Edwards and the Academic Support Officer (including DSA applications) is Cheryl Davies. They can both be contacted on [studentsupport@dartington.org](mailto:studentsupport@dartington.org)

The Learning Technologist is Naomi Robertson and she can help with any technical issues. [Naomi.Robertson@dartington.org](mailto:Naomi.Robertson@dartington.org)

Please notify the programme and module leader of any modified assessment provision required as soon as possible.

## Referencing Protocols and Academic Offences

Dartington Arts School uses the Harvard referencing system. See Cite Them Right for guidance on referencing and Harvard formatting:

<https://www-citethemrightonline-com.plymouth.idm.oclc.org/Home>

When writing a report or an essay you are expected to fully reference the materials you have used. The report or essay should be your own work, in your own words.

Plagiarism is an offence under the University regulations on examination and assessment offences. It is important that you familiarise yourself with what constitutes plagiarism, and academic offences. Further information can be found:

<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/regulations/plagiarism>

And <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/exams/exam-rules-and-regulations/examination-offences>

## Reading List; Recommended Texts/Support Materials

Please read the following key texts:

Felski, R. (2015) *The Limits of Critique*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hyde, L. (2017) *Trickster makes this world: How disruptive imagination creates culture*. Edinburgh: Canongate Books.

Illich, I. & Sanders, B. (1989). *ABC: The Alphabetisation of the Popular Mind*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Kane, S. (1994) *Wisdom of the Mythtellers*. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview.

Lewis-Williams, D. & Pearce, D. (2005) *Inside the Neolithic Mind*. London: Thames & Hudson.

Ong, W. *Orality and Literacy*. (2002) London: Routledge

Rothenberg, J. (2017) *Technicians of the Sacred: A Range of Poetries from Africa, America, Asia, Europe, and Oceania*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. San Diego: University of California Press.

Shaw, M. (2016) *Scatterlings: Getting claimed in the age of amnesia*. Ashburton: Cista Mystica Press. [www.cistamystica.com](http://www.cistamystica.com)

Shaw, M. (2020) *All Those Barbarians*. Ashburton: Cista Mystica Press.

### Study Skills/Essays/Referencing

Burns, T. and Sinfield, S. (2016) *Essential Study Skills*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Greetham, B. (2018) *How to Write Better Essays*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

You will be given other suggestions for further reading as we progress through the module.

## Module Feedback

We value what our students say; you share your feedback, we act upon it. Part of the feedback process includes Module Evaluation. The Module Evaluation Form is on the DLE.