NEW COURSE IN ENGLISH AND HISTORY

En 180 Special Topics in English – H 161 sec 3 Selected Topics in History

Cervantes, Truth or Dare: Don Quixote in an Age of Empire

9 units (3-0-6); spring 2010-2011; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:00-10:30 AM

We read Cervantes's literary masterpiece, Don Quixote, with a view to some of the great upheavals that shaped the early modern world: Renaissance Europe's discovery of America; feudalism's demise and the rise of mass poverty; Reformation and Counter-Reformation; persecution of heretics and war against infidels; and the decline of the Hapsburg dynasty. The hapless protagonist of Don Quixote calls into question the boundaries between sanity and madness, truth and falsehood, history and fiction, objectivity and individual experience. What might be modern, perhaps even revolutionary, in Cervantes's dramatization of the moral and material dilemmas of his time?

Class discussion and reading materials in English.
Instructor: Wey-Gomez (nwey@caltech.edu).