Program in Structured Liberal Education

Syllabus

Winter 1985

Department 999
Course Number: 092
Units: 09
SLE FACULTY

Mark Mancall
Director of SLE, Faculty Resident Florence Moore Hall, Professor of History, Director of Overseas Studies. Interests in Chinese History, Jewish History, Third-World History, Marxism, and Structuralism. 497-3555 (office); 327-1275 (home)

John Goheen
Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, University Ombudsman. Interests in the pre-Socratic philosophers, Plato, Aquinas, Alfred Whitehead. 497-3682

Jon Reider
Lecturer and Program Coordinator of SLE. Ph.D. in Social Theory. Interests in the History of Social Science and Philosophy, Mass Movements and Revolutions, Anti-Semitism. 497-4205 (office) 326-3465 (home)

Amy Sims
Lecturer in SLE, Assistant to the Director of Overseas Studies. Ph.D. in Modern European History. Interests in the Third Reich, Modern German cultural and political history, historiography. 497-3555

George Cattermole
Lecturer in SLE. Ph.D. in Philosophy. Interests in Marxism and alienation, political philosophy and the philosophy of education. 726-9590

Leigh Sealy
Lecturer in SLE. Ph.D. in Drama. Interests in dramatic literature and criticism, theater history, and play analysis. Strong interest in directing and acting. 493-2189

Larry Ryan
Professor of English. Interests in Renaissance English literature, Shakespeare, Italian literature and culture. 497-3433

Colin Baxter
Teaching Fellow in SLE. M.A. in Philosophy. Interest in moral philosophy. 854-7065

David Phillips
Teaching Fellow in SLE. Graduate student in Comparative Literature. Interests in modern philosophy, literature, and critical theory. 326-1467
REQUIRED TEXTS

Augustine

Confessions

Pax onga

axanda

Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy

Oxf

Boccaccio

The Decameron

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Bu

Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy

Mod Libr ry

Calvino

Book of the Courtier

An ho Do da

Cervantes

Don Quixote

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Inferno

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Descartes

Meditations

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Discoveries and Opinions

An ho Do ay

Gay

Weob Modern Europe to 1815

Harp Row

Hobbes

Leviathan: Parts I-II

Boobs-Me

Martin Luther

cd Di he ge An ho Don ay

Machiavelli

The Prince and the Discourses

Mod hr ry

More

Utopia

AHM

Père de la Mist and la Oration on the Dignity of Man

Regnery

New English Bible

xford

Rousseau

Social Contract and Second Discourse on Inequality

Washing

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King Lear

Ame

The Tempest

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Writing Assignments

Paper #1 Due Monday, January 28 (Week 4) at 5 p.m.

Does Dante have a consistent view of sin? The sinners in Dante's Inferno appear to occupy specific positions in a carefully structured pattern of increasing sinfulness the farther down in hell that Dante travels. Yet many of these sinners exhibit positive human characteristics despite their crimes. On the other hand, some of the sinners have no redeeming traits at all. Citing specific examples, what is the purpose of Dante's differential treatment of sinners?

Paper #2 Due Tuesday, February 19 (Week 7) at noon. (Monday is a holiday)

Like art in general, Renaissance art was not simply decoration or entertainment. It also expressed ideas. In a sense, it played an interpretive function similar to that of literature in helping its audience to understand the world around them. How does the work reflect this world, criticize it, or attempt to educate the people of the time? You should feel free to refer to other works read this quarter to illuminate your analysis.

Paper #3 Due Monday, March 11 (Week 10) at 5 p.m.

King Lear and The Tempest, like Machiavelli's Prince, discuss the rise and fall of princes and the craft of politics. How would Machiavelli analyze Shakespeare's view of political power, the fall from power of Lear and Prospero and their attempts to regain their authority? What do the examples of Lear and Prospero teach us that Machiavelli does not?

A take-home examination will be given out at the last class on Thursday, March 14 and will be due on Monday, March 18 at 10 a.m. You will be free to work on it for the entire time period if you wish, and a page limit will apply.
WEEK 1 (Jan. 7-11)

**Theme: Christianity**

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<td>8 Tue</td>
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<td>Plenary: Christianity (Prof. Robert McAfee Brown, Graduate Theological Union)</td>
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<td>Plenary: The Roman Empire (Prof. Susan Treggiari, Classics)</td>
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<td>Plenary: St. Augustine (Prof. Hester Gelber, Religious Studies)</td>
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<td>Film: The Gospel According to St. Matthew</td>
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**Reading**

- New English Bible (60–A.D.—110), Gospels of St. Mark, St. John; Letter to the Romans, First Letter to the Corinthians.
- St. Augustine (397), Confessions, Books I-IV, VII, VIII, X.

**Study Questions**

1. Compare the two gospels. Do they describe the same Jesus? The same events? How do they differ? Does each book have a distinct tone, emphasis, or style?


3. Do you find the theology of Paul consistent with the teachings of Jesus in the gospels?

4. Does it make sense to talk of a “Judaeo-Christian” heritage? In what ways is the New Testament continuous with the Hebrew Bible? In what ways is it discontinuous?

5. In what ways and to what extent are Christianity and Platonism compatible? What changes did St. Augustine have to make in Platonism in order to make the two compatible? Is it possible to be both a rationalist and a believer?
6. Is Christianity an "other-worldly" religion? How can this emphasis be reconciled with the "real world" needs of political and social life?

7. Is Christianity more naturally a religion for an empire, a monarchy, or some other form of government? Is there any form of government with which it is totally at odds in principle?

8. Why is Augustine writing his confessions? To whom, besides God, is he addressing them?

9. What is his analysis of sin? Why are the senses so important in sinning? What role does the pear tree episode play in his life?

10. Why does Augustine convert? Why does it take him so long?

11. How do Augustine's Confessions reflect the decay and disintegration of the Roman Empire?
WEEK 2 (Jan. 14-18)

Theme: The Middle Ages

Jan. 15 Tue 3:15 Plenary: St. Thomas Aquinas (Prof. John Goheen)
7:00 Plenary: Dante (Prof. John Freccero, French and Italian)

Jan. 16 Wed 3:15 Discussion Sections
6:30 Lecture: The Medieval World View (Prof. Stephen Ferruolo, History)

Jan. 17 Thu 3:15 Discussion Sections
7:00 Film: The Seventh Seal directed by Ingmar Bergman

Reading
Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1270), Summa Theologica (copied selections)
Dante Alighieri (ca.1310), The Inferno

Study Questions
1. Following Aristotle, Aquinas distinguishes between intellectual and moral virtue. Do you find any difference between Aquinas' account as distinct from Aristotle's?
2. Could Aristotle be a Christian on the basis of his ethical theory alone? Why not?
3. What is the significance of the format of the scholastic questions that Aquinas uses?
4. Why does Aquinas need to prove the union of body and soul? Although he cites Augustine to support his position, how does his view differ from Augustine's?
6. Is the medieval world-view as systematic and all-encompassing as that of Plato and Aristotle? How does it differ?
7. What is Aquinas' distinction between intellectual and moral virtues? Between Cardinal and theological virtues? Why do these distinctions matter? How do they help you understand the system of sin in the Inferno?
8. Generally, souls are positioned in Dante's hell according to the nature of their failure of moral virtue. How, then, does one explain the presence in Canto 4 of such virtuous persons as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Homer, Virgil, etc.?

9. Why should the first sinners to whom Dante speaks in the Inferno be the lovers Paolo and Francesca? Why is it appropriate for Dante to respond as he does to Francesca's story? What does his reaction signify about the nature of their love affair?

10. Why should sins of violence and malice (or fraud) be punished more severely in Dante's hell than sins resulting from sensual appetites? What might Plato have said about Dante's ordering of the different kinds of sins? How would you rank sins in order? Why order them at all?

11. How does Dante's account of the fate of Ulysses (Odysseus) differ from that in the Odyssey? What is Dante's apparent attitude toward Ulysses and why does he place him in the Eighth Circle of the Inferno?

12. Although Dante said that his poem represents "the state of souls after death," what evidence do you find that in it he is deeply concerned with mankind's personal and political life here and now?

13. Dante is both the author of the Inferno and a character within it. What is the purpose of his journey? Why is Virgil his companion? What is the significance of Dante the Pilgrim's reaction to various people he encounters?
WEEK 3 (Jan. 21-25)

Theme: The Renaissance: The Rise of Capitalism and Material Culture

Jan. 22 Tue 3:15 Plenary: Pre-Industrial Capitalism (Mancall)
        4:15 Plenary: Burckhardt and the Idea of the Renaissance (Reider)
        7:00 Plenary: Gothic Architecture (Katie Solomonson, Art)

Jan. 23 Wed 3:15 Discussion Sections
        7:00 Plenary: Social Change as seen through Art (Mancall)

Jan. 24 Thu 3:15 Discussion Sections
        7:00 Plenary: Islam (Prof. Joel Beinin, History)

Reading
Burckhardt, Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, Parts 1 & 5
Petrarch, (1336) : "The Ascent of Mont Ventoux" (copied selections)
Renaissance Readings I: "The City of Man" (copied selections) —
excerpts on: Florence, Habsburgs, Antwerp, Dearness, Vienna, French poor, Turks, country house
Gay and Webb, pp. 49-69, 84-109, 201-214

Study Questions
1. What are the fundamental defining characteristics of the Renaissance? Why is it impossible to clearly demarcate the Renaissance from the medieval period? What aspects of the medieval period continue into the Renaissance?

2. What is Burckhardt's interpretation of the Renaissance? In what ways does he consider it the beginning of the modern world? What does he mean by calling the State "a work of Art?" Why is political legitimacy a severe problem? What can be used to overcome it?

3. How do republics differ from despotisms? To what extent was Rome a conscious model for them? In what ways were they new kinds of republics?

4. How does the daily social life of Renaissance Italy reflect the general characteristics of the Renaissance that Burckhardt saw operating in the political realm?
5. How does Petrarch's climb illustrate the transition between the medieval and the Renaissance eras? How is his description a kind of confession? How does it differ from St. Augustine's?

6. How do the descriptions of material life in the selections from "The City of Man" reflect new values? What would St. Augustine think of this world? How could it be reconciled with a continuing belief in Christianity?

7. What is the importance of the market in the new society, e.g., Antwerp?
WEEK 4 (Jan. 28-Feb. 1)

Theme: Renaissance Ideas, Ideals, and Society

28 Mon 5:00 FIRST PAPER DUE (on Dante)
29 Tue 3:15 Plenary: Renaissance Humanism (Prof. Larry Ryan)

7:00 Plenary: Florentine Social Structure (Prof. Morris Zelditch, Sociology)

30 Wed 3:15 Discussion Sections
31 Thu 3:15 Discussion Sections

7:00 Film: The Return of Martin Guerre

Reading

Boccaccio, Decameron (1350): Introduction; Day 1, #1,2,3,6; Day 2, #9,10; Day 3, #1,3,8,9,10; Day 5, #1,9,10; Day 6, #7; Day 7, #9; Day 8, #6; Day 9, #3,5,6; Day 10, #5,10; Epilogue.


Burckhardt, Part 2.

Study Questions

1. What is Boccaccio's attitude toward the various sins for which people were punished in Dante's Hell? Does he, in fact, approve of "immoral" behavior? How would he consider himself a good Christian nevertheless?

2. What is Boccaccio's attitude toward religion, the Church, priests, etc? Why does he show them being hypocrites so frequently?

3. What insights into daily life, customs, and social structure does Boccaccio provide? What is his attitude toward women?

4. What are Boccaccio's positive values that emerge underneath the humor? How do his characters compare with Burckhardt's portrait of Renaissance individualism? Is Boccaccio a humanist? In what sense?

5. What are the social and intellectual conditions that make it possible to write a book about an ideal courtier? Could such a book be written today?
6. What is sprezzatura, and why is it so important for the courtier? How does it infuse all his activities, both serious and playful?

7. Why is noble birth important for a courtier? What does Castiglione think of social mobility?

8. What is the role of women at the ideal court? Are they more than pleasing companions? What special virtues do they possess? How does this compare to Boccaccio's treatment of women?

9. Is the courtier a superficial human type, all manners but no real human substance? How does Castiglione's idea of personality compare to our modern sense?

10. How does Castiglione use and adapt Platonic ideas? What would Plato think of his ideal court?
WEEK 5 (Feb. 4-8)

Theme: The High Culture of the Renaissance

Feb. 5 Tue 3:15 Plenary: Renaissance Neo-Platonism (Goheen)

7:00 Plenary: Renaissance Art I (Solomonson)

Feb. 6 Wed 3:15 Discussion Sections

Plenary: Renaissance Art II (Solomonson)

Feb. 7 Thu 3:15 Discussion Sections

Plenary: Women and Sexuality in the Renaissance (Prof. Judith Brown, History)

Reading:

Baxandall, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy

Pico della Mirandola (1486), Oration on the Dignity of Man


Renaissance Readings II: (copied selections) excerpts from Ficino, Rabelais, Alberti, da Vinci, Cellini.

Gay & Webb, pp. 70-81.

Study Questions:

1. How do painting and sculpture during the Renaissance express and reflect Renaissance ideas, specifically humanistic ones?

2. How does Renaissance art use classical models? How does it contrive to be both Christian and secular at the same time?

3. How do da Vinci and Cellini illustrate the growing self-consciousness and personality of the artist at this time?

4. What are some of the stylistic principles of Renaissance art: color composition, perspective, etc.?

5. What is the relationship of Renaissance art to its concrete social context?

6. What is Pico's idea of human nature? How does it compare to Castiglione's, Alberti's, and Rabelais'?
7. Is Pico's reconciliation of texts from widely differing sources a legitimate intellectual exercise? Why is it important to him to try to do it?

8. Does Pico's glorification of man border on heresy? Can man truly become like the angels? Does man have any limits? What happens to original sin in this case?
WEEK 6 (Feb. 11-15)

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<td>Feb. 12</td>
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<td>Plenary: Machiavelli (Barry Katz, VTSS)</td>
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<td>Plenary: Hobbes (Reider)</td>
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Reading

Machiavelli, *The Prince* (1513)
*The Discourses* (1515-17) Book I: Introduction, Ch. 1-6, 9-21;
Book III: Ch. 1-4.

Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651) Ch. 1-2, 5-6, 11, 12 (to p. 97), 13-15, 17-21, 26
(to p. 217), 29-30.

Gay & Webb, pp. 109-121, 262-282

Study Questions:

1. Is it possible to study politics scientifically? How would you go about it? What are some of the ways to minimize personal bias?

2. Is politics an amoral or immoral activity? Is it possible to be an effective politician and a morally good person at the same time? Does politics contribute to the general welfare, or is it just a struggle for power?

3. What is the role of violence in politics? Is it always bad? Can evil means be used to achieve good ends? Do governments have a right to use violence when citizens do not?

4. Is there any difference between politics within a state and politics between states? Are the rules for survival the same?

5. Has Machiavelli broken with the political thought of Dante? What would he think of Thrasymachus' arguments in the *Republic*, Book I? Of Thucydides?

6. Does Machiavelli have any idea of justice? How does he decide what is right and wrong? Is success or failure all that matters to him?
7. How is Machiavelli a Renaissance man? Why is he more influenced by Roman history than by Greek philosophy? Does he derive his classification of the types of states from Aristotle?

8. What is Hobbes' view of human nature? Does he start from the same premises as Machiavelli? If so, how does he reach different conclusions?

9. Hobbes has been identified as the forefather of both modern totalitarianism and modern liberal individualism. To which of these do you think he has the closer affinities?

10. What is the basis of "natural rights" in Hobbes' thought? How does this differ from the tradition of "natural law" that the Renaissance inherited from the classical era?

11. Both Machiavelli and Hobbes lived in periods of severe political disorder and revolution. How did this experience shape their sense of what was ideal and what was possible in politics?

12. What is the role of the "state of nature" for Hobbes? Did it ever exist? If not, why is it still a useful concept? Why did it become a common idea at this time?

13. Hobbes translated Thucydides. Why would he have found Thucydides interesting?
Theme: The Crisis of Faith: Catholic Humanism and the Reformation

Feb. 19 Tue Noon SECOND PAPER DUE (on Art) [Note: Monday is Washington's Birthday, a University Holiday]

3:15 Plenary: Thomas More (Ryan)

Plenary: The Reformation (Prof. Van Harvey, Religious Studies)

Feb. 20 Wed 3:15 Discussion Sections

7:00 Film: Luther (based on a play by John Osborne)

Feb. 21 Thu 3:15 Discussion Sections

7:00 Plenary: The Counter-Reformation (Amy Sims)

Reading:

More, Utopia (1516)

Luther, Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans (1522) pp. 19-25.


Secular Authority (1523) pp. 363-402.

Burckhardt, Part 6.


Study Questions:

1. In what ways is Thomas More a "Renaissance" thinker? What aspects of his thought are more medieval in emphasis?

2. Why would a close advisor of the King of England write a book that was by implication so critical of the society of his own day?

3. What is the purpose of creating a Utopia that, by definition, may never be realized? What does he borrow, and not borrow, from Plato?

4. What arguments does More make for the elimination of private property? What potential does More see for the individual without the burden of private property? Do you agree? Is More a forerunner of modern socialism, as Engels argued?

5. Why does More, a devout Catholic, create a utopia without Christianity?
6. It has been said that the Renaissance humanists laid the egg that Luther hatched. What do you think is the relationship between the Renaissance and the Reformation?

7. While the Catholic Church insists that it loves all its saints, there nevertheless often has been an ambivalent feeling toward St. Augustine who is seen as lying at the root of most heresies. What was the Augustinian influence on Martin Luther?

8. In response to the medieval theology of such thinkers as St. Thomas Aquinas, Luther once snarled that "Aristotle was a pagan pig". How does the theology of Luther differ from that of Aquinas' Aristotelian inheritance?

9. Despite its doctrinal uncertainty at the time of the Reformation, the church was generally receptive to what Luther called the semi-Pelagian argument that men can achieve salvation partly through good works. Why does Luther believe that good works cannot be considered in the attainment of salvation?

10. How does Luther conceive of the relationship of Church and State? What traits must the good prince have? Does this solve the problem of Machiavelli's Prince who must do evil? How does it compare to Castiglione?
WEEK 8 (Feb. 25-Mar. 1)

Theme: The New World, Skepticism, and Shakespeare

Feb. 26 Tue 3:15 Plenary: Exploration and the New World (Mancall)
7:00 Plenary: Shakespeare's World and The Tempest (Ryan)

Feb. 27 Wed 3:15 Discussion Sections
7:00 King Lear (Prof. Ron Rebholz, English)

Feb. 28 Thu 3:15 Discussion Sections
7:00 Film: King Lear (Directed by Peter Brook)

Reading
Shakespeare (1564-1616), King Lear (1605) and The Tempest (1611)
Montaigne, "Of Cannibals" (1587) "Of Coaches" (1585) (copied selections)
Las Casas, In Defense of the Indians (1550) (copied selections)
Cervantes, Don Quixote (1604-1614) Part 1, Prologue & Ch. 1-25, 46-52; Part 2, Ch. 1-10, 22-26, 60-74. (Begin reading now; to be discussed next week.)

Study Questions
1. What aspects of Aristotle's conception of tragedy are applicable to King Lear? Can both Oedipus and Lear be included under the rubric of tragedy? How would we have to alter Aristotle's definition to do so?
2. How does Shakespeare reflect the disintegration of the harmonious worldview of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance?
3. Is there a Greek sense of fate in King Lear? Are there also Christian elements? Why is it set in non-Christian society?
4. How would Shakespeare have us respond to the suffering and weakness of mankind?
5. What is the contribution of the sub-plot involving Gloucester, Edmund, and Edgar to the total effect of Lear?
6. How are conditions in the world, in the state, and in the individual related to one another in the course of King Lear? How is Lear a microcosm of society and the world at large?
7. What evidence is there that action in the play violates Shakespeare's understanding of natural law? Consider the relations of people to each other, to the state, and to the gods. What is the role of the fool in this presentation of the upsetting of order?

8. Could Machiavelli have used any of the content of Lear in his assumptions concerning human nature and political power? Do you suppose that the general effects of the Copernican revolution would attach or defend the vision in Lear? Why?

9. In Act I, Sc. I of The Tempest, how are the relationships among the characters defined? Who professes power? Who is in visible control? Which authority appears to be more "rational"?

What is Caliban's attitude toward nourishment, work, and sexual promiscuity? What is Ariel's attitude? How do they describe pleasure and freedom? How would their utopian dreams differ from that of Gonzalo?

In his actions and in his advice, how does Gonzalo display considerate behavior in act I, Sc. I; and Act II, Sc. I? Is this behavior political, too?

What relative value does Prospero attach to his learning at the beginning of the play? How does he feel at the end? What has effected the change?

Why was the existence of the American Indians a problem for the Spanish? Why was Aristotle even relevant to its solutions?

10. How would you apply other philosophers we have read: e.g., Plato, St. Augustine, Pico, to this issue? Could you use Aristotle differently than Las Casas did?

11. What is the hypothetical problem in our own era which is equivalent to the Indian problem for the Spanish, and how should we as a civilization confront it? What authors would you use to understand it?

12. Do you think Las Casas has a good argument? How would you support his reasoning but on other grounds?

13. How does Montaigne reflect a new skepticism about the values of Renaissance Europe? How does he use the idea of the New World to develop this theme? How does this compare to Las Casas' and Shakespeare's attitudes toward "savages"?
WEEK 9 (Mar. 4-8)

Theme: The Scientific Revolution and New Forms of Literature

Mar. 5 Tue 3:15 Plenary: The Scientific Revolution and the Idea of Progress in Science (Prof. Wilbur Knorr, History of Science)

7:00 Plenary: Descartes (Goheen)

Mar. 6 Wed 3:15 Discussion Sections

7:00 Plenary: Cervantes (Prof. Alban Forcione, Spanish & Portuguese)

Mar. 7 Thu 3:15 Discussion Sections

7:00 Film: Galileo (based on a play by Bertolt Brecht)

Reading


Descartes, Meditations (1641).

Copernicus, "Revolutions of the Celestial Spheres" (1543) (copied selections)

Finish reading Don Quixote.

Gay & Webb, pp. 230-244

Study Questions

1. Is there a necessary conflict between science and religion?

2. What traditional views were at stake in the controversy over the position of the earth in the solar system? Why is Galileo so hostile to Aristotle?

3. Does the lay public have any role to play in science? What is the relation of science to other institutions of society?

4. What is Galileo's debt to Plato and Renaissance Neo-Platonism?

5. What is the importance of Galileo's distinction between objective and subjective qualities?

6. What is the significance of the Church's warning that it is permissible to teach the Copernican system as a convenient computational device but not as fact?
7. What did Galileo mean by "interrogating nature"?

8. Would "I doubt, therefore I am" be as indubitable as "I think, therefore I am"? Why is the latter question so crucial to Descartes?

9. Why does Descartes find it difficult to know that physical objects exist?

10. How does Descartes know that the mind and the body are two distinct "substances"?

Suppose you are asleep; does the "I" no longer exist?

Why does Descartes find the "geometrical method" so attractive?

Is Descartes' doctrine of innate ideas the same as Plato's "theory of ideas"?

What causes Don Quixote to leave his home and embark upon his quest?

What is it about his material life—the way he lives—that causes him to leave?

What clues does Quixote's physical appearance provide about his character?

16. Why is it important that Don Quixote receive the knighthood from somebody else? Why does he need social recognition of his knightly status?

17. What roles do the various secondary players play? In what ways do they encourage Don Quixote in his quest? In what ways do they try to stop him?

18. In chapters 11-14, Cervantes presents the pastoral world. What characterizes it? What makes it a pessimistic view? Is it a rejection of the pastoral world?

19. What is Cervantes' attitude toward Books of Chivalry? What forms the basis for his opinion? Is it possible to view Don Quixote as just another Book of Chivalry?

20. In what way is Don Quixote's life for Dulcinea similar to his quest for the knightly ideal?

What is the meaning of the adventure with the galley slaves?

22. How does the adventure in cave of Montesinos reflect the influence of Dante?

Does Don Quixote really renounce the Chivalric Code on his deathbed?

It has been said that what separates a work of art from other works is its ability to "live" and continue to grow long after its creation. Is Don Quixote a work of art? Does it live for you today?
WEEK 10 (Mar. 11-15)

Theme: **The New Synthesis: Liberalism and the Enlightenment**

Mar. 11 Mon  5:00  THIRD PAPER DUE (on Machiavelli & Shakespeare)

Mar. 12 Tue  3:15  Plenary: English and French Liberalism (Reider)

Plenary: The Declaration of Independence (Prof. Jay Fliegelman, English)

Mar. 13 Wed  3:15  Discussion Sections

Mar. 14 Thu  3:15  Discussion Sections

Reading

Rousseau *Social Contract* (1762) Books I-III
Discourse on the Origin of Inequality (1755)

Declaration of Independence (hand-out)


Study Questions

1. How does Rousseau's method of investigating nature differ from Hobbes'? Which is more scientific or objective?

2. How do Hobbes and Rousseau differ in their description of the state of nature? What are the political implications of these differences?

3. What is the origin of inequality according to Rousseau? Why does Rousseau disagree with Hobbes about the origin of inequality?

4. Is private property legitimate or illegitimate? Contrast the answers of Hobbes and Rousseau? What is your own opinion?

5. Hobbes' position has been called a defense of "possessive individualism", since it focuses on the individual as a naturally competitive and self-interested being. How does Rousseau look at the individual? Do you think Rousseau is correct in his assessment of the individual's "inherent" nature?

6. What are Rousseau's stages in the history of inequality?

7. How does Rousseau's doctrine of the "general will" provide a foundation of democracy? Does he sacrifice too much individual autonomy? Are liberty and equality compatible?

8. Both Machiavelli and Rousseau make use of examples from classical history. What different uses do they make of these sources?