SYLLABUS
for
PROGRAM IN STRUCTURED LIBERAL EDUCATION

Winter 1991
Department 999
Course Number: 092
Units: 09
SLE FACULTY

George Cattermole
Lecturer in SLE, Ph.D. in Philosophy. Research interests in Marxism and alienation, political philosophy and the philosophy of education. 726-9590 (home)

John Goheen
Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, Director of SLE II. Research interests in the pre-Socratic philosophers, Plato, Aquinas, Alfred Whitehead. 322-5215 (home)

Suzanne Greenberg
Coordinator of SLE, Ph.D. in History of Education. Research interests in modern Jewish history and history of Victorian England. 725-0102 (office); 326-5548 (home)

Mark Mancall
Professor of History, Director of SLE. Interests in Jewish history, Chinese history, Marxism and socialism. 723-5630 (office); 327-1275 (home)

Jonathan Reider
Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions. Intellectual interests in the French Revolution, the history of political and social thought, anti-semitism, the history of Stanford, and baseball. 723-2091 (office); 326-3456 (home)

Mollie Schwartz Rosenhan
Lecturer in SLE, Ph.D. in History. Research interests in Judaism and feminism, utopias, and gender issues in the Holocaust. 326-1313 (home)

Leigh Sealy
Lecturer in SLE, Ph.D. in Drama. Research interests in dramatic literature and criticism, theater history, and play analysis. Strong interest in directing and acting. 731-6181 (home)

Amy Sims
Lecturer in SLE, Ph.D. in Modern European History. Research interests in the Third Reich, modern German cultural and political history, and historiography. 327-4364 (home)
REQUIRED TEXTS


St. Augustine, Confessions (Penguin)

Boccaccio, The Decameron (Penguin)

Dante, Inferno, trans. Mandelbaum (Bantam)

Defoe, Robinson Crusoe (Bantam)

de Pizan, Christine, Book of the City of Ladies, trans. Richards (Persea Books)

Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy, trans. Rubin (Arete)

Gay and Webb, Modern Europe to 1815 (Harper)

Goethe, The Sorrows of Young Werther (Random House)

The Koran Interpreted, trans. Arberry (Macmillan)

Machiavelli, The Prince (Harlan Davidson)

More, Utopia (Harlan Davidson)

New Oxford Annotated Bible (with the Apocrypha)

Rousseau Basic Political Writing, trans. Gay (Hackett)

Shakespeare, The Tempest (New American Library)

Swift, Gulliver's Travels (Oxford)
In what ways is it possible to speak of Abrahamic religion? Of the three examples -- Judaism, Christianity, and Islam -- you have studied, how do these traditions differ; how are they similar? For example, you might choose to compare and contrast the function of prophecy or an important theme central to each.

Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli, and Thomas More are all social scientists. Defend or attack this statement.

In what ways are The Tempest and Gulliver’s Travels to be understood as works of social analysis and social criticism? How do these authors use stylistic devices to make their points?
Because of the overwhelming success of *Lysistrata* in the Fall, SLE will undertake the second of its three productions planned for this year. As in the Fall, the scope of this production will depend entirely upon student interest and enthusiasm. We have not chosen a play for this quarter and instead will rely on interested students to select the work which will best display their talents as well as illuminate some facet of this quarter. If you would like to be a part of this production in any way, whether on stage or behind the scenes, contact Suzanne Greenberg as soon as possible. The organizational meeting for this quarter's production will be held soon after the beginning of the quarter. We encourage ALL students to participate. The performance date is set for Thursday, February 28th, 1991.
WEEK 1
Intro to Christianity & Christian History

Tuesday, January 8th
3:15pm Plenary: Christianity
Prof. Ted Good, Religious Studies
6:00pm Lecture: St. Augustine
Prof. Lee Yearly, Religious Studies

Wednesday, January 9th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Lecture: Images of the Virgin
Prof. Hester Gelber

Thursday, January 10th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Film: The Life of Brian Monty Python,
Prof. Michael Tratner, English

Reading:
St. Augustine, Confessions (ca. 397-398): Bks. 1-4, 7,8,10
Gay and Webb, Modern Europe to 1815, pp.14-29

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 "Judaean-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. How can Christian "other-worldly" 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 does Augustine's Confessions reflect the decay and disintegration of the Roman Empire?
WEEK 2
Islam and Islamic Civilization

Tuesday, January 15th
3:15pm Plenary: The Qur'an as a Book
Prof. Michael Chamberlain, History
6:00pm Discussion Sections

Wednesday, January 16th
3:15pm Plenary: Islam as Religion and Culture
Prof. William Brinner, UC Berkeley
6:30pm FREE

Thursday, January 17th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Film: The Prophet, Mark Mancall, SLE

Reading:
The Koran Interpreted:

- Early piety: 1; 24/34-47; 99; 100; 101; 103; 104; 106; 107; 109; 113; 114;
- Other religions: 2/1-141; 2/211-214; 12; 21
- Other prophets: 57/25-30; 71; 28/29-43; 2/37-59; 2/77-82; 2/30-62;
  42/34-51; 50/15-34; 54; 55
- Muhammad as prophet: 74/1-7; 52/29-48; 53/1-17; 48/28-29; 81;93
- The Qur'an: 26/192-227; 28/42-60
- Women: 4/1-50; 2/221-242; 65; 24/30-33

* Note: Numbers refer to chapter (sura) and verse (ayya). 23/34-37 means sura 24, ayyas 34-37.

Study Questions

1. What is the nature of revelation?
2. How is the relationship between God and people mediated by prophets?
3. How is Muhammad's relationship to other prophets conceived in the Qur'an?
4. What are the social roles of the prophets?
WEEK 3
East to West

Tuesday, January 22nd
3:15pm Plenary: The Arab Transmission of Greek Culture to the West
Prof. Michael Chamberlain, History
6:30pm Lecture: Boccacio, the Bridge to the Renaissance
Prof. Lawrence Ryan, English

Wednesday, January 23rd
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:30pm Lecture: Maimonides
Prof. Arnold Eisen, Religious Studies

Thursday, January 24th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Film: The Name of the Rose,
George Catermole, SLE

Reading:
Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1266-1272) (copied selection)
Giovanni Boccaccio, The Decameron (ca. 1350):
  DAY I: Introduction, pp. 49-68; Tales 2, 3, pp. 82-89;
  DAY II: Tale 9, pp. 207-220; DAY III: Tale 1, pp. 234-241; Tale 10, pp. 314-319
  DAY V: Tale 2, pp. 417-423; DAY VI: Tale 10, pp. 505-514
  DAY X: Tale 5, pp. 757-761; Tale 9, pp. 794-812
al-Ghazali, The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazali
Moses Maimonides (copied selection)
Gay and Webb, pp. 49-81

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Study Questions

1. Following Aristotle, Aquinas distinguishes between intellectual and moral virtues. Do you find any difference between Aquinas's account and Aristotle's?
2. Could Aristotle be a Christian on the basis of his ethical theory alone? Why or 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 sites 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 Boccaccio's attitude toward religion, the Church, priests, etc.? Why does he show them being hypocrites so frequently?
8. What insights into daily life, customs, and social structure does Boccaccio provide? What is his attitude toward women?
9. What are Boccaccio's positive values that emerge underneath the humor? Is Boccaccio a humanist? In what sense?
10. The sub-title of the Decameron is "Prince Galahalt." What is the significance of that sub-title?
11. What is the source of al-Ghazali's unhappiness?
12. According to al-Ghazali, can people reach an unmediated understanding of reality? Can they attain such understanding through their own efforts?
13. How did al-Ghazali attempt to reconcile the conflicting truths produced by reason and revelation?
WEEK 4
Christian Culture

Monday, January 28th
5:00pm PAPER #1 DUE

Tuesday, January 29th
3:15pm Plenary: Gothic Art
Prof. Barry Katz, VTSS
6:00pm Lecture: The World of Dante's Inferno
Prof. Jeffrey Schnapp, Italian

Wednesday, January 30th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Lecture: Christine de Pizan and Nuns
Prof. Judy Brown, History

Thursday, January 31st
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm The Seventh Seal, Suzanne Greenberg, SLE

Reading:
Dante Alighieri, The Inferno (ca. 1310)
Christine de Pizan, Book of the City of Ladies (ca. 1405) (pages to be announced)
Gay and Webb, pp. 29-45

Study Questions

1. Generally, souls are positioned in Dante's hell according to the nature of their failure in moral virtue. How, then, does one explain the presence in Canto 4 of such virtuous persons as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Homer, Virgil, etc.?
2. 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?
3. 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?
4. 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?
5. 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?
6. 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 whom he encounters in the Inferno?
7. Discuss the rhetorical conventions of citing authorities as it is used in the Book of the City of Ladies.
8. What is the role of women in Christine de Pizan's world? Are females anything more than pleasing companions? What special virtues do they possess?
9. How does Christine de Pizan's understanding of women compare to that of Aquinas?
10. Is the Book of the City of Ladies a Utopia?
11. For Christine de Pizan, what changes in society are necessary to allow women the fullest expression of their virtue?
12. Do the women whom Christine de Pizan holds in high regard share values of religion and education?

13. How does Christine de Pizan view the family?
WEEK 5
The Creation of Social Science

Tuesday, February 5th
3:15pm Plenary: Machiavelli and Political Theory
   Prof. Larry Ryan, English
6:30pm Lecture: Ibn Khaldun
   Mark Mancall, SLE

Wednesday, February 6th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:30pm Utopias
   Jon Reider, SLE

Thursday, February 7th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Film: A Man for All Seasons.
   Molly Schwartz-Rosenhan, SLE

Reading:
Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince (ca. 1532)
Thomas More, Utopia (ca. 1516)
Ibn Khaldun (copied selections)
Gay and Webb, pp. 84-121

Study Questions

1. Is politics a moral, amoral, or an immoral activity? Is politics about the public good or about power? Is it possible to be an effective politician and a morally good person at the same time?

2. 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?

3. Does Machiavelli's idea of justice go beyond "might makes right?" What would he think of Thrasyvachus (Plato)? Which speech from Thucydidies most resembles his thought (Cleon, Diadochus, or the Athenian generals at Melos)?

4. What would it mean to study politics scientifically? Is this what Machiavelli does? How do his methods compare with those of other political writers such as Aristotle?

5. What is Machiavelli's view of human nature? How might Machiavelli's personal experience in an environment of severe political disorder have influenced his thought?

6. What does Machiavelli mean by "civic virtue?" Is it more or less important to a nation than the concrete institutions of government? What causes the corruption of civic virtue, and what can be done to reverse this corruption?

7. What are Machiavelli's views on "liberty" and the popular government? Is a popular government a more or less powerful system than a principality? Must popular government be linked to imperialism and expansion? What happened to popular government in Rome?

8. Do you think Machiavelli had different purposes in mind when he wrote the Prince and the Discourses? Do the two form a unified body of thought, or are they contradictory?

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

10. 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?

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

12. 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?

13. Why does More, a devout Catholic, create a utopia without Christianity?
WEEK 6
The Discovery of the "Other"

Tuesday, February 12th
3:15pm Plenary: The Tempest
   Prof. Ron Rebholtz English
6:30pm Lecture: The New World
   George Handley, SLE

Wednesday, February 13th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:30pm Female Mystics
   Prof. Hester Gelber, Religious Studies

Thursday, February 14th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Film: Henry V, Leigh Sealy, SLE

Reading:
William Shakespeare, The Tempest (ca. 1611)
Bartolome de las Casas, "In Defense of the Indians" (ca. 1550) (copied selection)
Michel de Montaigne, "On Cannibals", "On Coaches" (ca. 1580) (copied selection)
"Life of St. Teresa" (copied selection)
Gay and Webb, pp. 169-175; 201-214; 216-220

Study Questions
1. How would Shakespeare have us respond to the suffering and weakness of mankind?
2. What evidence is there that the actions of various characters violate 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 (Ariel) in this presentation of the upsetting of order?
3. 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 may the storm itself symbolize?
4. What is Caliban's attitude toward nourishment, work, and sexual promiscuity? How do he and Ariel describe pleasure and freedom? How would their utopian dreams differ from that of Gonzalo?
5. In his actions and in his advice, how does Gonzalo display considerate behavior towards others in Act I, Sc. I; and Act II, Sc. I? Is this behavior political, too?
6. What relative value does Prospero attach to his learning at the beginning of the play? How does he feel about it at the end? What has effected the change?
7. Why was the existence of the American Indians a problem for the Spanish? Why was Aristotle relevant to attempts at solving the problem?
8. How would you apply other philosophers we have read: for example, Plato, St. Augustine, Pico, to this issue? Could you use Aristotle differently than Las Casas did in his response to Sepulveda?
9. 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?
10. Do you think Las Casas has a good argument? How would you support his reasoning but on other grounds?
11. 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 his attitude compare with those of Las Casas and Shakespeare toward "savages"? How does Columbus' attitude compare to that of Montaigne?
Monday, February 18th 5:00pm PAPER #2 DUE
Tuesday, February 19th 3:15pm Plenary: Dissent and Criticism
Mark Mancall, SLE
6:30pm Lecture: The Reformation
Prof. Van Harvey, Religious Studies
Wednesday, February 20th 3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:30pm Lecture: Free
Thursday, February 21st 3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Film: The Return of Martin Guerre,
Jon Reider, SLE

Reading:
John Calvin and Martin Luther (copied selections)
Jonathan Swift, Gulliver’s Travels (ca. 1726) (pages to be announced)
Gay and Webb, pp. 123-160

Study Questions

1. Is 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?
2. 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?
3. 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' with its Aristotelian inheritance?
4. 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?
5. How does Luther conceive of the relationship of Church and State? What traits must the good prince have?
WEEK 8
The Idea of Science

Tuesday, February 26th
3:15pm Plenary: The Scientific Revolution
   Prof. Peter Galison, History of Science
6:30pm Lecture: Descartes
   Prof. John Perry, Philosophy

Wednesday, February 27th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:30pm Lecture: The Idea of Science
   Prof. Albert Hastorf, Psychology

Thursday, February 28th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm SLE Players

Reading:
Galileo Galilei (copied selection)
Rene Descartes, The Meditations Concerning First Philosophy: I,II,III,VI (ca. 1641)
Sir Francis Bacon (copied selection)
Gay and Webb, pp. 230-244

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Study Questions

1. Is there a necessary conflict between science and religion?
2. What traditional views were threatened by 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 of matter?
6. What did Galileo mean by "interrogating nature"?
7. Would "I doubt, therefore I am" be as indubitable as "I think, therefore I am"? Why is the latter question so crucial to Descartes?
8. Why does Descartes find it difficult to know that physical objects exist?
9. How does Descartes know that the mind and the body are two distinct "substances"?
10. Why does Descartes find the "geometrical method" so attractive?
11. Suppose you are asleep; does the "I" no longer exist?
12. Is Descartes' doctrine of innate ideas the same as Plato's "theory of ideas"?
13. How does the inductive method differ from logic?
14. Why does Bacon think there is a need for a new approach to scientific investigation?
15. What does Bacon see as the purpose of scientific investigation? Must scientific work have a practical aim?
16. What are the four "Idols"? Which do you think is the most dangerous? Is Bacon's method sufficient enough to eliminate the "Idols"?
WEEK 9
Social Theory & Romanticism

Monday, March 4th
PAPER #3 DUE

Tuesday, March 5th
3:15pm Plenary: The Enlightenment
   Prof. Carolyn Lougee, History
6:30pm Lecture: Rousseau
   Jon Reider, SLE

Wednesday, March 6th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:30pm Lecture: Goethe
   Prof. Katharina Mommsen, German Studies

Thursday, March 7th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Film: La Nuit de Varennes, Jon Reider, SLE

Reading:
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract (ca. 1762)
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, The Sorrows of Young Werther (ca. 1774)
Gay & Webb, pp. 334-372; 402-414

Study Questions

1. How do you interpret Rousseau's statement: "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains"? Why would he want to render those chains "legitimate?"

2. How important is the social contract in the Social Contract?

3. What is the relationship of the individual to the community in the Social Contract? What is the "general will?" What is "the will of all?" Which corresponds with our contemporary views of pluralism? What trenchant criticisms of our society is implied by Rousseau's analysis?

4. What is the role of the legislator? Do you read Rousseau as a totalitarian, a democrat, or something else? What are the similarities and differences between Rousseau and other political thinkers such as Plato and More?

5. What is "popular sovereignty?" Describe a Rousseauian democracy. What would Rousseau think of representation, of "checks and balances," of federalism, of republicanism?

6. According to Rousseau, is private property legitimate or illegitimate? What is your opinion?

7. What kind of character is Werther? How could he be taken as a criticism of the rationalism characteristic of the Enlightenment?

8. Do you think we are meant to sympathize with Werther's plights? Is his fate melodramatic or tragic? In what sense is he heroic?

9. What is the image of love that Goethe depicts? How does it differ from that of Plato? What affinities does Goethe have with Euripides?

10. How does Werther demonstrate that it is the literature of a new bourgeois age, even as it is ostensibly revolting against conventional bourgeois values?
WEEK 10
Rise of Capitalism

Tuesday, March 12th
3:15pm Plenary: Capitalism
Mark Mancall, SLE
6:30pm Lecture: Adam Smith
Prof. John Gurley, Economics

Wednesday, March 13th
3:15pm Discussion Sections

Reading:
Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe (ca. 1719)
Adam Smith (copied selection)
Gay and Webb, pp. 414-417; 443-456

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Final Examinations Due Monday, March 18, 12:00 noon