COURSE TITLE:  SLE Seminar
DEPARTMENT CODE:
COURSE NUMBER:
UNITS:
REQUIRED TEXTS

Balzac, H., EUGENIE GRANDET, Penguin.
Dostoyevsky, F., NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND, Dutton
Freud, S., FUTURE OF AN ILLUSION, Anchor.
Freud, S., OUTLINE OF PSYCHOANALYSIS, Norton.
Pirandello, L., SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR, Dutton.
Polanyi, K., THE GREAT TRANSFORMATION, Beacon
Various Authors, Copied Selections, available at the beginning of the quarter.
SPRING QUARTER COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Term Paper

The written work for SLE in the Spring Quarter consists of a term paper of 15-20 pages on a subject of your own choice. The topic should be developed with the help of your tutor and any members of the SLE staff you might wish to consult. It should have something to do with the questions to be raised and the materials to be read during the Spring Quarter, but it need not be limited to them. It may refer back to subjects of the first two quarters, or it may deal with materials not in the formal syllabus. In all cases, your topic must be approved by your tutor.

The paper should demonstrate your ability to treat a complex intellectual problem with thoroughness and sophistication. It is important to think about it from the beginning of the quarter and to work on it steadily rather than to try to cram it into the last few weeks. The reading for the quarter does not diminish significantly toward the end of the quarter, for it is expected that you will work on your paper on a regular basis.

A successful term paper should try to achieve an appropriate balance between your own intellectual creativity and a scholarly appreciation of the literature relevant to your particular topic. Your personal contribution is probably the most important part of the paper. Although the topic should be of general intellectual interest, it should also be of personal concern to you. How you select it, define it, and investigate it are crucial aspects of this intellectual experience. The most significant problem that tends to develop is that of limiting the topic to a reasonable scope. You should try to bear this in mind, though the judgment of what is a reasonable topic is never a simple one.

We also suggest that a thoughtful paper should reflect on what others have thought on a topic. This kind of reading implies an intellectual conversation with the ideas of others rather than an attempt to read everything ever written on a subject. Some papers will involve secondary research, others intensive reading of primary sources. Your choice of topic and approach will determine the kind an extent of reading that you will do. Each paper should strive for an appropriate balance, though each one will differ in the degree and type of research involved. All papers should fall somewhere between the two extremes of a purely personal meditation, involving little or no reference to other sources, and a pure research report, involving only a review of the secondary materials with little or no analysis of your own.

Schedule

* On Sunday, April 24, at 5 p.m., a one page precis of your paper is due. This should briefly describe your work up to this point, giving an idea of the issues you are interested in, the scope of your topic, the materials you have already consulted or
are about to consult, and the major intellectual problems you foresee. It should demonstrate that you have already made substantial progress on your paper. It should be typed. You need hand in only one copy, which is for the use of the staff since your tutor should already know where you stand.

* On Sunday, May 22, at 5 p.m., two copies of your term paper are due. One is for your tutor, the other for the faculty. Standard bibliography and footnote form should be used.

(Note: the Sunday due date is to help you get the work done so that you have some time to do the reading for that week before Tuesday's plenary session.)

Final Exam

The final for the course will be an oral exam of about half an hour, to take place on Friday, June 3, Saturday, June 4, or Sunday, June 5 (Sunday only if necessary). Each student will be examined by a small group of the faculty and tutors, randomly assigned. The exam will cover the entire range of materials read during the year, with the greatest emphasis falling on the Spring Quarter reading. Of particular interest will be questions of how different kinds of periods treated similar questions or how they reformulated traditional problems in new ways. A list of general study questions will be distributed in advance to help you prepare for this exam. You should also be prepared to talk about the relationship between your term paper and the course as a whole, though this will not necessarily be the main focus of the exam. Students are not expected to have completely polished answers to questions; the emphasis should be on the quality of the ideas expressed, not the ease or glibness with which they are expressed.
WEEK 1: March 28 - April Fools' Day

TOPIC: The Origins of Capitalism

SCHEDULE:

3:15 Plenary--The Industrial Revolution and the Origins of Capitalism (Mancall)
4:15 Plenary--Science as a Theme for the Modern Period (Cohen)
7:00 Simulation Game--Star-Power (Reider & Cohen)

3:15 Plenary--Economic Liberalism of Adam Smith, et al (Mitchell)
4:15 Plenary--Liberalism: Theory and Ideology (Jepperson)
7:00 Plenary--Balzac and the Bourgeois Novel (Professor Giraud)

3:15 Discussion Sections

REQUIRED READING

Hobsbawm, *Age of Revolutions, 1789-1848* (to be started during Spring Break and completed by Week 2)

Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, pp. 33-76, 130-191

Smith, Adam and Bentham, Jeremy, *Voices of the Industrial Revolution* (copied selection)

Balzac, *Eugenie Grandet* (to be read during spring break)

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What were the conditions that made the emergence of a new society possible? What were the principal characteristics of the industrial age, compared with the previous one?

2. What were the characteristics of the bourgeoisie as a class? How did they differ from "middle classes" in the past (cf. Aristotle's *Politics*)?

3. How do Smith and Bentham reflect habits of mind inherited from Bacon? Why was their thought so attractive to the bourgeoisie? In what ways is it and is it not an apology for capitalism?

4. What basic elements of social life does Adam Smith think are important? What does he ignore?

5. How closely does modern capitalism resemble Smith's doctrines?
STUDY QUESTIONS, cont.

6. Are passions, for Balzac, human strengths or weaknesses?

7. How does the concern with money of the bourgeois world change the nature of social ties and obligations?

8. Why did Balzac select a provincial setting for Eugenie Grandet? Was it uniquely a provincial tragedy?

9. Is hypocrisy essential to the bourgeois world? Do Balzac and Machiavelli depict the same sort of hypocrisy?

10. How does the relatively new form of literature known as the "novel" reflect the new age?
WEEK 2: April 4 - 8

TOPIC: Marxism and Romanticism

SCHEDULE:

3:15 Plenary--Philosophical Origins of Marxism (Goheen)
4:15 Plenary--Introduction to Marxism (Mancall)
7:00 Plenary--"The Role of the Poet in the New Society" (Professor Carnochan)

3:15 Plenary--Romanticism in Music: Berlioz (Saffle)
4:15 Discussion

Thu 3:15 Discussion
7:00 Film--Metropolis

REQUIRED READING


Poems (copied selections)

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the basic theoretical ideas of Marx? What does he see as the defining features of the new system? How does he know that another system is possible?

2. What is the relationship between theory and practice for Marx? How is philosophy a materialistic act?

3. Why does Marx think that the proletariat will rebel? Is this inevitable? Will they need help from intellectuals? What kinds?

4. Is Marx's theory of history deterministic? What does he mean by human freedom? How does this differ from Adam Smith's idea of freedom? Does history come to an end for Marx after the Revolution? How important is this to his theory?

5. Why did reason prove to be an inadequate guide for the Romantic poet? What could Imagination teach that Reason could not?

6. How do Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats use space and movement to define their themes?

7. What image of the artist do these poems create?

8. What relationships do you see in these poems between memory and the imagination?

9. How do the poets treat the theme of quest?
WEEK 3: April 11 - 15

TOPIC: Applications of Marxism: History and Culture

SCHEDULE:

3:15  Plenary--Marxism as a System of Explanation (Mancall with Cohen)
7:00  Plenary--Marx as an Historian (Reider)
3:15  Plenary--Brecht and a Marxist Approach to Art (Mancall)
4:15  Discussion
3:15  Discussion
7:00  Film--The Organizer

REQUIRED READING


Hempel, Function of General Laws in History (copied selection)

Brecht, Mother Courage
A Short Organum for the Theatre (copied selection)

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the "laws" of capitalism that determine its development? Are these general laws of history, or specific to capitalism?

2. Is it fair for Marx to generalize about capitalism from the British example of 1860? How much of his critique is still valid today? How would you be able to verify this? Does it matter if the revolution has not come about in the specific manner he seems to have predicted?

3. What does Marx mean by "scientific socialism"? How does this compare with other ideas of science? How does Hempel's article implicitly criticize Marx's theory of history?

4. How is Marxism applied to specific historical situations, such as France in 1848? How does a Marxist historian do an historical analysis? How would this differ from other approaches to history? Is it simply a matter of how important they think economic causes are?
STUDY QUESTIONS, cont.

5. Why does Brecht oppose the Aristotelian tenets of illusion, empathy, and catharsis in theatre? What does he propose instead? What is the "alienation effect" and how does it work?

6. What does the character Mother Courage stand for? What does she believe in? What are the alternative roles suggested by her children, and why won't she accept them? Could Marx analyze the events of the play?

7. Does Mother Courage "learn" in the play? What is the audience supposed to have learned?
WEEK 4: April 18 - 22

TOPICS: Darwinian Revolution / Industrialization of Art

SCHEDULE:

3:15 Plenary--"Introduction to Darwin" (Professor Heller)
7:00 Plenary--The Industrialization of Art (Mancall)

Wed 3:15 Plenary--Darwin, cont. (Professor Heller)
4:15 Discussion Sections
3:15 Discussion Sections

REQUIRED READING


Benjamin, Walter, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (copied selection)

Lewis Foreman, "Machine-made Art" (copied selection)

Palgrave, Francis, "The Fine Arts in Florence" (copied selection)

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What doctrines in Aristotle made the conception of the evolution of man inconceivable?

2. With what traditional views does the theory of evolution conflict? Can they be harmonized with the theory of evolution?

3. After the theory of the evolution of man, is it still possible to declare that man is "half ape, half angel"?

4. Does the doctrine of the "survival of the fittest" have ethical implications? Economic implications?

5. Are man and society still in the evolutionary process? Has evolution stopped?

6. How can machines contribute to the process of artistic creation? Is machine-made art substantively different from other kinds of art? Does the value of a work of art inhere in its creation or in its existence as a material object? Why is an "original" worth more than a perfect "copy"? Is there a necessary conflict between the artist's oft expressed fear of industrialization in the reproduction of art and the socially democratic aspirations of our society today? How and why does art become "politicized"? Is there "right-wing" and "left-wing" art? If so, what are their respective characteristics? Can art ever be politically, socially or morally "neutral"?
WEEK 5: April 25 - 29

TOPICS: Implications of Darwin / Wagner

SCHEDULE:

Sunday, April 24, 5:00 p.m. One-page precis of term paper due.

3:15 Plenary--"Social Darwinism and Its Derivatives" (Goheen)

7:00 Plenary--"Wagner: The Artist as a Revolutionary" (Saffle)

3:15 Plenary--Philosophical Anthropology (Jepperson)

4:15 Discussion Sections

7:00 Plenary--"Wagner: The Artist as a Visionary" (Saffle)

3:15 Discussion Sections

ASSIGNMENTS

Appleman, Darwin, pp. 272-292; 299-307; 325-382; 385-422; 489-499; 533-544; 551-570; 629-651

Listen to Wagner record

Wagner, Art and Revolution (copied selections)

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is the "art-work of the future"? Did Wagner really believe that music and other dramatic arts could take part in processes of social protest and change? Why?

2. What are Wagner's principal innovations in the composition of instrumental and vocal (i.e. dramatic) music? How are these innovations reflected in the compositions we listen to this quarter?

3. Imagine you are Wagner or some other nineteenth-century artist. What sort of stand would you take on the problems of music and society facing the contemporary American cultural and political worlds? Why would you take these stands?

4. What criticisms can be made of the attempt to explain social and cultural phenomena in terms of biological phenomena?
STUDY QUESTIONS, cont.

5. "The reason that the human brain makes the human way of life possible is that it is the result of that way of life." Why is this quotation not a mere truism? Why do evolving biological systems not lend themselves to simple (unidirectional) causal explanations?

6. "The brain is not an organ of thinking, but an organ of survival, like claws and fangs." How might Darwin try to explain the development of man's symbolizing capacity?

7. What characteristics does a theory of evolution have as a type of explanation? How is it the same as or different from other types of explanation we have seen (e.g. in its interpretation of fossil records, relation of theory and logical reconstruction to evidence, etc.)?

8. Why might the very notion of a "human nature" be circumspect? Why might the term "human nature" be misleading?

9. Interpret: "The direction of man's organismic development is socially determined; to this extent it could be said that man is a self-producting being." What are some of the implications of this statement?
WEEK 6: May 2 - 6

TOPIC: Critiques of Rationalism

SCHEDULE:

3:15 Plenary--Nietzsche (Peter Lyman, UCSC)
7:00 Plenary--Breakdown of Representation in Art: Primitivism (Hoebelheinrich and Ehret)
3:15 Plenary--Weber (Cohen)
4:15 Discussion Sections
3:15 Discussion Sections
7:00 Film--The Trial

REQUIRED READING

Nietzsche, A Genealogy of Morals
Use and Abuse of History

Weber, Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is wrong with traditional culture in Nietzsche's view?
2. Does Nietzsche belong to the tradition of utopian thinking?
3. What reactions would Plato have to Nietzsche's thinking?
4. What is Nietzsche's response to the claim that "man is a rational animal?"
5. In what ways is Weber continuing the liberal tradition? How is he criticizing it at the same time? How does his method of studying capitalism reflect this?
6. What is Weber's philosophy of history? Does he make Nietzsche seem naive? On what points would he agree with Nietzsche?
7. In what ways is The Protestant Ethic a critique of Marx? How does Weber define capitalism? What specific ideas of Marx does he reject? Is he more optimistic about capitalism than Marx in the long run?
WEEK 7: May 9 - 13

TOPIC: The Search for the Unconscious

SCHEDULE

3:15 Plenary--Freud (Reider)
7:00 Film--Freud

3:15 Plenary--Joyce (Ryan)
4:15 Discussion Sections
7:00 Plenary--"Surrealism in Poetry" (Landauer)

Thu 3:15 Discussion Sections

REQUIRED READING

Freud, An Outline of Psychoanalysis

Joyce, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man; The "Epiphany" from Stephen Hero; and the Essays by Beebe, Levin & Burke.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Is man a rational animal after all? Are there underlying sources of human behavior that the conscious mind is unaware of? What kinds of evidence does Freud have for this? Does this construe proof? Is it reasonable to call psychoanalysis a science?

2. If Freud is right about human behavior, does this contradict Marx? Weber? What does he have in common with Nietzsche?

3. What is Freud's method of explanation? How does he get from observed symptoms to theory?

4. Why should an artist deal so much with his unique concerns of being an artist? What is an "artistic temperament"? In what ways is the artist a hero in the modern world? What is his "quest"? What does he stand in opposition to?

5. How important is the plot of The Portrait? Is Joyce's work like poetry? What is Joyce's "theory of art"? Does the concept of epiphany find parallels in the work of Freud? In the work of Wordsworth? Why are art and religion related vocations? Why are they different?

6. Why should Freudian analysis find Joyce's way of thinking dangerous for weaker persons than he?
WEEK 8: May 16 - 20

TOPIC: Irrationalism in Politics and the Arts

SCHEDULE:

3:15  Plenary--Freud's Theories on Politics and Society (Reider)
7:00  Plenary--Stravinsky (Saffle)

Wed 3:15  Plenary--Dostoyevsky (Ruotolo)
4:15  Discussion Sections
7:00  Plenary--Surrealism & Socialist Realism (Mancall)

3:15  Discussion
7:00  Film--Dr. Caligari

REQUIRED READING

Freud, Future of an Illusion
Civilization and Its Discontents

Dostoyevsky, Notes from the Underground

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How can Freudian thought be applied to the analysis of society? Is there a significant difference between Freud's psychological theories and his social theories?

2. What kinds of institutions does Freud find have psychological principles underlying them?

3. How would you go about reconciling Marx and Freud?

4. Is Notes a work of social criticism?

5. What is rationality, or irrationality, for that matter?

6. What types of social conditions might give rise to the type of consciousness represented in Notes?

7. Who is the narrator in Notes? Is there more than one narrative perspective? Is the narrator a reliable narrator? Can Notes be read literally? Can one legitimately infer authorial meaning or intentions from narrative statements?

8. Compare and contrast Dostoyevsky's view of man and society (assuming such views can be inferred) with those of Freud? What might Marx say of Notes?

9. Is the narrator sick, or all-too-sane, or does it matter?
WEEK 9: May 23 - 27

TOPICS: Revolution in Physics / Literature at the Breaking Point

SCHEDULE:

Sunday, May 22, 5 p.m. Term Paper Due

Tue 3:15 Plenary--"Social Construction of Reality"  
(Professor Hastorf)  
7:00 Plenary--Einstein (Yearian and Pesic)

Wed 3:15 Plenary--Heisenberg and Uncertainty  
(Yearian and 
Pesic)  
7:00 Plenary--Pirandello (Ellen Mease)

Thu 3:15 Discussion Sections

REQUIRED READING

Einstein, Relativity

Bohr, "Discussion with Einstein on Epistemological Problems 
in Atomic Physics" and "Atoms and Human Knowledge" (cpd. sel.

Heisenberg, "The History of Quantum Theory" and "The Copenhagen 
Interpretation of Quantum Theory" (copied selections)

Feynman, "Probability and Certainty" and "Seeking New Laws" 
(copied selections)

Pirandello, Six Characters in Search of an Author

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. When he was 16, Einstein considered the following question: 
You are running at the speed of light. What do you see? How 
would a beam of light look to you?

2. What are Newton's ideas of space and time? How does Einstein 
change them?

3. Does "relativity" mean that everything is relative? If not, 
what things are absolute or invariant?

4. Your roommate says, "A and B are moving past each other. 
According to Einstein, A says that B's ruler is contracted 
and B says that A's ruler is contracted. This is obviously 
contradictory." What is your response?

5. Describe the kind of reasoning used by Einstein in his "thought-
experiments". Are they empirical? Merely theoretical?

6. Einstein remarked in later years that he was not influenced by 
the Michelson-Morley experiment in his development of special 
relativity; he refers to theories as "free creations of the 
human mind". Why, then, had no one put forward the relativity 
theory earlier?
STUDY QUESTIONS, cont.

7. Why does the speed of light have such a special place in the relativity theory? Why isn't some other speed so important? (sound, for instance)

8. Why does Bohr feel that the principle of complementarity is a profound limitation on human knowledge, rather than merely an expression of experimental limitations?

9. Your roommate says, "It's absurd to describe an electron as both a wave and a particle. These are contradictory qualities and it is senseless to apply them to the same object." Your response?

What does Einstein mean in saying, "God does not play dice"? How does he know?

11. What implications do relativity and quantum mechanics have for the broader realms of thought? (keep in mind "the fallacy of fatuous parallelism" that came up last quarter)

12. Since the Renaissance, there seems to be a widening gap between the world of common sense and that of physical theory. Which description is to be believed? How do you reconcile them?

13. How is Pirandello's play radically different from previous forms of drama? What does he have in common with Brecht? What is a "character" to Pirandello?

What is Pirandello trying to say about art? What is its relationship to the theme of illusion and reality? In what sense is art real? In what sense is it realistic?

What are the implications of this kind of drama for the relationship of art to moral issues and political problems? What is the relationship between reason and passion in Pirandello? Is it fair to call him a "nihilist"?
WEEK 10: May 30 - June 4

TOPIC: Summing Up: Science and Art

SCHEDULE:

3:15  Plenary--Implications of Modern Physics
      (Pesic, Jepperson)
7:00  Plenary--"Sunday Morning"
      (Professor Carnochan)
3:15  Summing it all up (Staff)

Friday and Saturday  ORAL EXAMS

REQUIRED READING

Stevens, "Sunday Morning"

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is Stevens saying in the poem?
2. What parts of the poem give you any trouble in understanding them? (Be prepared to talk about them.)
3. If you think this is a beautiful poem, why?