PROGRAM IN STRUCTURED LIBERAL EDUCATION

Winter 1992
Department 999
Course No: 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)

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Lecturer in SLE, Ph.D. in Classics. Research interests in Greek and Roman literature, ancient sexuality, food, feasting, and decadence. 7-4238 (home)

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

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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. 723-4800 (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); 326-3465 (home)

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

Arberry, The Koran Interpreted, (Macmill)
Attar, Conference of the Birds (Penguin Classics)
St. Augustine, Confessions (Penguin)
Cervantes, Don Quixote, trans. Starkie (New American Library/Signet Classics)
Dante, Inferno, trans. Mandelbaum (Bantam)
de Pizan, Book of the City of Ladies (Persea Books)
Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy (Arete)
Goethe, The Sorrows of Young Werther (Random House)
Locke, The Second Treatise of Government (Hackett)
Machiavelli, The Prince (Harlan Davidson)
More, Utopia (Harlan Davidson)
Rabelais, Gargantua and Pantagruel (Penguin)
Rousseau, Basic Political Writings (Hackett)
Shakespeare, The Tempest (New American Library)
Shakespeare, King Lear (New American Library)
WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

PAPER #1 5-7 pages Due Monday, January 27th at 5:00 pm

"First St. Paul and then St. Augustine fundamentally altered the essential message of the Gospels, so that Christianity as it developed bore little relation to its origins." Discuss critically.

PAPER #2 5-7 pages Due Monday, February 17th at 5:00 pm

"Every state is founded on force, but no state survives on force alone." Discuss this assertion with relation to Machiavelli and More.

PAPER #3 5-7 pages Due Monday, March 2nd at 5:00 pm

Madness is a key to the understanding of reality in both King Lear and Don Quixote. How does each author use these concepts to question the "reasonableness" of ordinary reality? Is madness a viable strategy for living in the world of these texts? Are there other alternatives?
The SLE Players

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 thespian 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 27th, 1992.
**WEEK 1**  
*Intro to Christianity & Christian History*

**Tuesday, January 7th**  
3:15pm Plenary: Christianity  
Prof. Alice Bach, Religious Studies  
6:00pm Lecture: St. Augustine  
Prof. John Freccero, Italian Studies

**Wednesday, January 8th**  
3:15pm Discussion Sections

**Thursday, January 9th**  
3:15pm Discussion Sections  
6:00pm Film: Double Feature: The Last Temptation of Christ and Life of Brian, Ed Frueh

**Reading:**  
St. Augustine, *Confessions* (ca. 397-398): Bks. 1-4, 7,8,10  
Craig, *Heritage of World Civilizations*, pp. 165-180

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**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 "Judeo-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 14th
3:15pm Plenary: Islam as Religion and Culture
Prof. Joel Beinin, History
6:00pm Lecture: The Qur'an
Prof. Jamshed Choksy, History

Wednesday, January 15th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:30pm The Conference of the Birds
Ed Frueh, SLE

Thursday, January 16th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Film: TBA

Reading:
The Koran Interpreted: Readings to be assigned
Farid Ud-Din Attar, The Conference of the Birds
Heritage, pp. 313-332, 613-626

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?
5. What is the function of the hoopoe in Attar's allegorical framework? In this context, how is his relation to the other birds significant?
6. Who or what is the Simorgh? Why is he the journey's end?
7. Why does Conference of the Birds have so many inset tales? What do the tales have in common? What function do they serve?
8. Analyze the story of Sheikh Sam'an. Why is this story given such prominence? What is its basic theme? How does it fit into the general allegorical framework?
9. What is the significance of love in Conference of the Birds? What are the different types of love present? Is there a consistent attitude toward love?
10. What is the view of the Self in the work? How does it tie in with the Sufi notion of the Way?
11. What are the Seven Valleys of the Way? What is their allegorical significance?
12. Does a consistent view of the world and of human life emerge in Conference of the Birds?
WEEK 3
The Medieval Religious World View

Tuesday, January 21st
3:15pm Plenary: The World of Dante's Inferno
   Prof. John Freccero, Italian Studies
6:30pm Lecture: Aquinas
   Prof. Van Harvey, Religious Studies

Wednesday, January 22nd
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Lecture: Maimonides
   Prof. Arnold Eisen, Religious Studies

Thursday, January 23rd
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Film: The Seventh Seal
   Suzanne Greenberg, SLE

Reading:
Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1266-1272) (copied selection)
Dante Alighieri, The Inferno (ca. 1310)
Heritage, pp. 429-448

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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 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. 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.?
8. 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?
9. 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?
10. 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?
11. 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?
12. 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?
WEEK 4
Renaissance Culture

Monday, January 27th
5:00pm PAPER #1 DUE

Tuesday, January 28th
3:15pm Lecture: Rabelais and Renaissance Humanism
Prof. Ralph Hester, French and Italian
6:00pm Plenary: Gothic Art
Prof. Barry Katz, VTSS

Wednesday, January 29th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:30pm Lecture: Christine de Pizan
Mollie Schwartz Rosenhan, SLE

Thursday, January 30th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Film: The Return of Martin Guerre.
Jon Reider, SLE

Reading:
Rabelais, Gargantua
Christine de Pizan, Book of the City of Ladies (ca. 1405) (pages to be announced)
Heritage, pp. 335-390

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Study Questions

1. 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?
2. How does Christine de Pizan's understanding of women compare to that of Aquinas?
3. Is the Book of the City of Ladies a Utopia?
4. For Christine de Pizan, what changes in society are necessary to allow women the fullest expression of their virtue?
5. Do the women whom Christine de Pizan holds in high regard share values of religion and education?
6. How does Christine de Pizan view the family?
7. What is the function of Author's Prologue ?(Gargantua) What does it tell us about the work as a whole?
8. Why does Rabelais use giants as his main characters? What does the use of giants tell us about some of the basic concerns of the work?
9. Is Gargantua a hero? Compare him to earlier figures such as Odysseus and Orestes. How are the events of his early life significant?
10. Explain the purpose and effect of the "arse-wipe" episode. Is this episode funny? Vulgar? Gross? What constitutes the boundary between the humorous and the vulgar?
11. What is education in Gargantua? How does Gargantua learn?
12. Does Gargantua present a consistent view of the world? What is the attitude toward the individual, the family, society, the Church?
13. Do women play a significant role in the work? How do they demonstrate positive and negative qualities?
14. What are the guiding principles of the Abbey of Theleme? What is its function in the work as a whole?
WEEK 5  
The Creation of Social Science

Tuesday, February 4th
3:15pm Plenary: Machiavelli and Political Theory
Prof. John Freccero, Italian Studies
6:30pm Lecture: The Reformation
Prof. Van Harvey, Religious Studies

Wednesday, February 5th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:30pm Utopias
Jon Reider, SLE

Thursday, February 6th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Film: A Man for All Seasons.
George Cattermole, SLE

Reading:
Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince (ca. 1532)
Thomas More, Utopia (ca. 1516)
Heritage, pp. 448-475, pp. 457-473

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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 Thrasymachus (Plato)? Which speech from Thucydides most resembles his thought (Cleon, Diotodus, 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. In what ways is Thomas More a “Renaissance” thinker? What aspects of his thought are more medieval in emphasis?
8. 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?
9. What is the purpose of creating a Utopia that, by definition, may never be realized? What does he borrow, and not borrow, from Plato?
10. 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?
11. Why does More, a devout Catholic, create a utopia without Christianity?
WEEK 7
The Discovery of the "Other"

Monday, February 17th 5:00pm PAPER #2 DUE
Tuesday, February 18th 3:15pm Plenary: The Tempest
Prof. Lawrence Friedlander, English
6:30pm Lecture: The New World
George Handley, SLE alumnus

Wednesday, February 19th 3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:30pm Lecture: FREE

Thursday, February 20th 3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Film: The Mission,
Mollie Schwartz Rosenhan, 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)
Heritage, pp587-602

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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?
The Idea of Science

Tuesday, February 25th
3:15pm Plenary: The Scientific Revolution
Prof. Dennis Phillips, Philosophy and Education

6:30pm Lecture: Descartes
John Goheen and Ed Frueh, SLE

Wednesday, February 26th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:30pm Lecture: The Idea of Science
TBA

Thursday, February 27th
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)
Heritage, pp. 561-584; pp. 649-656

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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

Monday, March 2nd
PAPER #3 DUE

Tuesday, March 3rd
3:15pm Plenary: The Enlightenment
   Prof. Carolyn Lougee, History
6:30pm Lecture: John Locke
   Prof. Mark Tunick, Political Science

Wednesday, March 4th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:30pm Lecture: Rousseau
   Jon Reider, SLE

Thursday, March 5th
3:15pm Discussion Sections
6:00pm Film: La Nuit de Varennes, Jon Reider, SLE

Reading:
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract (ca. 1762)
John Locke, The Second Treatise of Government (1689), Chapters 1-5, 7-9
Heritage, pp 656-670

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. Does Locke define "human nature"? What are the basic psychological principle's of Locke's view of human nature? How do his political principles grow out of his psychology?
8. What is the difference between "liberty" and "license" in Locke?
9. Why does Locke argue we have a private right to property in nature? How does the invention of money affect the right to property? Do you agree that the poorest wage laborer in England is better off than the richest Indian Chief in America?
10. What is Locke's critique of slavery? of suicide?
11. Locke speaks of the ways we are equal. In what respects does he assume we are not equal? What kinds of inequality are legitimate?
12. What are the traditional elements of Locke's thought? What is radically new?
13. What did the American Founding Fathers borrow from Locke? What did they leave behind?
14. What does the statement, "All Americans are unconscious Lockeians." mean? Do you think it is true? Is it a good thing?
WEEK 10
Romanticism

Tuesday, March 10th
3:15pm Plenary: Goethe
   Prof. Herbert Lindenberger, English
6:30pm Lecture: Beethoven
   Prof. Geo Houle, Music

Wednesday, March 11th
3:15pm Discussion Sections

Reading:
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, The Sorrows of Young Werther (ca. 1774)
Beethoven

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Study Questions

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

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

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

4. How does Werther demonstrate that it is the literature of a new bourgeois age, even
   as it is ostensibly revolt against conventional bourgeois values?

FINAL EXAMS DUE MONDAY, MARCH 16, 12:00 NOON