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LS 152L.09: Introduction to the Humanities

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LS 152L Introduction to the Humanities

Spring, 2001  Paul Dietrich
Office: LA 145
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Hours: MWF 11-12 & by appt.

Course Syllabus

I. Cosmos and Society in the Late Middle Ages (14c)
1/30 Introduction. Dante’s Divine Comedy
2/1 Inferno - The Hell Descent and Damnation
2/6 Purgatorio - The Ascent of the Mountain and Purification
2/8 Paradiso - The Love that Moves the Sun and Beatitude
2/8 Petrarch and the Wonder of the Human
II. The Italian Renaissance and the Dignity of Man (15c)
2/12 Christian Humanism and Renaissance Platonism in Ficino and Pico
III. Europe’s Reformations - Catholic Reform and the Protestant Reformation (16c)
2/15 The Philosophy of Christ and Holy Folly in Erasmus
2/20 Martin Luther and Christian Liberty
IV. Renaissance Humanism and the Exploration of the Self (16c/17c)
2/22 Montaigne and the Book of Myself
2/22 Heroism, Romance, Chivalry and Folly in Cervantes
2/27 Shakespeare’s Hamlet - An Anatomy of Melancholy
3/1 - The Action of the Tragedy
3/6 - Character and Criticism
V. The Poetry of Meditation in the Age of the Baroque (17c)
3/8 The Erotic and the Sacred in Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan, and Marvell
VI. The Scientific Revolution and the Birth of Modern Philosophy (17c)
3/13 Science, Method and the Reasons of the Heart - Bacon, Descartes’ Discourse on Method, and Pascal
VII. Reason Enthroned - The Age of the Enlightenment (18c)
3/15 The Proper Study of Mankind - Pope, Hume, Kant
VIII. From Neoclassicism to the Romantic Reaction (18c/19c)
3/27 Goethe’s Faust - The Myth of the Magus
3/29 - Mephistopheles and Faust’s Wager
4/3 - Gretchen/Margarete/Helena and the Eternal Feminine
4/5 The Visionary Universe of William Blake
IX. The American Revolution and the Democratic Experiment (18c/19c)
4/10 Deism, Federalism, and Self-Reliance in Franklin, Madison, and Emerson
X. Revolution, Realism and Modernism (19c)
4/12 Marx, Materialism and Revolutionary Practice
4/17 Dostoevsky’s The Brothers Karamazov
4/19 - A Poetics of Polyphony
4/24 - Murder, Madness, and Morality
4/26  - The Psychology of Guilt and Freedom
5/1   - Suffering, Salvation and Totalitarianism
5/3   Hopkins and Early Modernism
XI. The Apocalypse of Modernity (20c)
5/8,10 Conrad’s Heart of Darkness

Required Reading

Dante, The Divine Comedy, Everyman Paperback
Shakespeare, Hamlet, Signet Edition
Descartes, Discourse on Method, Library of Liberal Arts
Goethe, Faust Part One, Oxford World’s Classics
Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, Everyman’s Library
Conrad, Heart of Darkness, Dover
LS 152 FacPac (Sections 7 & 9)

Course Requirements

1. Summary responses (1-2 pages) to eight of the plenary lectures
due Tuesday following lecture. (Late papers will be marked down.)
2. Timely completion of assigned reading.
3. Thematic essays (4-5 pages) in response to two of the major
readings (e.g., Dante or Hamlet; Faust or Dostoevsky). The first
essay is due before Spring break; the second is due at the end of
the term. Topics to be discussed.
4. Final Exam (Section 7 - Wed. 5/16, 8-10 a.m.; Section 9 - Tues.
5/15, 1-3 p.m.)

Attendance and participation will also be considered in the
final grade. More than three unexcused absences will lower final
grade.
Table of Contents

1. Francesco Petrarch, "Ascent of Mont Ventoux"
2. Marsilio Ficino, from Platonic Theology
3. Pico della Mirandola, "Oration on the Dignity of Man"
4. Desiderius Erasmus, Paracelsis
5. __________, from The Praise of Folly
6. Martin Luther, from The Freedom of a Christian (On Christian Liberty)
7. Michel de Montaigne, "On Experience"
8. Miguel de Cervantes, from Don Quijote
9. John Donne, "Elegy XIX. To His Mistress Going to Bed"
10. __________, "The Extasie"; "Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations"; "Good Friday, 1613. Riding Westward"
11. George Herbert, "Prayer"; "The Pulley"; "Love"
12. __________, "The Elixir"
13. Richard Crashaw, "The Weeper"
15. Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress"
16. Francis Bacon, from The New Science (Novum Organum)
17. Blaise Pascal, from Pensées
18. __________, "The Memorial"
19. Alexander Pope, from "An Essay on Man"
20. David Hume, "Personal Identity" from A Treatise of Human Nature
21. Immanuel Kant, "What is Enlightenment?"
22. William Blake, Selected Poetry and Prose
23. Benjamin Franklin, "Something of My Religion..."
24. James Madison, Federalist Papers, No. 10
25. Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance"
26. Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach"
27. Gerard Manley Hopkins, "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire..."