CONVERSATIONS OF THE WEST: ANTIQUITY AND THE 19TH CENTURY

Morse Academic Plan: V55.0404.047 Fall, 2006

Teaching Staff:

Professor Friedrich Ulfers (friedrich.ulfers@nyu.edu): Lecturer
Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures
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Lectures: Monday and Wednesday, 2:00 – 3:15 p.m. SILVER (Main) 703

Recitations: Thursday (sec. 48) 8:00 am – 9:15 am 48 Cooper Sq. 111
Thursday (sec. 49) 9:30 am – 10:45 am 25 W. 4th St. C-10
Thursday (sec. 50) 3:30 pm – 4:45 pm Meyer 121
Thursday (sec. 51) 4:55 pm – 6:10 pm Silver 206
Friday (sec 52) 9:30 am – 10:45 am Waverly 370
Friday (sec 53) 11:00 am – 12:15 pm Silver 718

Reading List: (see Course Calendar below for dates and page assignments)

Sophocles, Sophocles I, University of Chicago
The Oxford Study Bible, Oxford University Press
Plato, Symposium, Hackett
Augustine, Confessions, Oxford University Press
Marx, Communist Manifesto, Norton Critical Edition
Darwin, Origin of Species, Norton Critical Edition
Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, Cambridge University Press
Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams, Avon Books
Thomas Mann, Death in Venice, Norton Critical Edition
Franz Kafka, The Metamorphosis, In the Penal Colony, and Other Stories, Simon and Schuster

Note: Assigned page numbers for all readings correspond to the editions specified above

Course Outline:

The course is divided into three parts: the first two parts focus on the “intellectual conversation” between celebrated works from Western antiquity and 19th century Europe. The final part examines two early 20th century works of fiction in light of the preceding ideas and arguments. The purpose of the course in general is to offer students a broad engagement with significant concepts arising within the Western tradition through a focused examination of relevant texts.
Grading Policy:

Grades will be comprised of the following components:

* First response paper of 5 – 7 pages length is worth 20% of the final grade.

* Midterm examination is worth 20% of the final grade.

* Second response paper of 5 – 7 pages length is worth 25% of the final grade.

* Final examination is worth 25% of examination.

* Attendance and participation is worth 10% of the final grade.

Attendance Policy: Attendance at all lectures is mandatory and attendance will be taken at every meeting. You are allowed two unexcused absences from lecture; subsequent unexcused absences will adversely affect your participation grade. Attendance is also required at all weekly recitation sections. You are allowed one unexcused absence from recitations; subsequent unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade as well. Attendance at lectures and recitations accounts for 50% of your participation score; participation in recitation discussions, the other 50%.

Additional Notes on Attendance: Please arrive at lecture on time. An attendance roster will be circulated shortly after the beginning of each class. If you do not arrive at class early enough to sign the attendance roster as it circulates throughout the room, you will be recorded as absent. Nobody will be allowed to sign the attendance roster at the end of class. Additionally, if you are seen to leave the lecture room after signing the attendance roster but before the lecture is completed, your name will be struck from the attendance roster for that day. Please speak with a T. A. before class begins if you need to dismiss yourself before the end of lecture.

Excused Absences: Absences from lecture or recitation can only be formally excused by a note from a medical professional or documented proof of some other crisis that made it impossible for you to attend class. A note from a dean will suffice in this respect; a note from your mother will not. It is entirely your responsibility to furnish T.A’s with the appropriate documentation.

Blackboard: Important supporting study materials will occasionally be posted on Blackboard. You should check Blackboard at least once a week for such materials. Additionally, important announcements will occasionally be emailed to you through Blackboard’s email server. You must check your registrar-issued “nyu.edu” email account to receive such notices.

Class conduct: Please turn off cell phones before the beginning of class. It is expected that students will not eat or leave trash in the classroom. If you arrive late or have permission to leave class early, please create as little disturbance as possible when entering or exiting. Please wait until the professor has announced that lecture is over before gathering your belongings to leave.
COURSE CALENDAR

Wed., Sept. 6  INTRODUCTION
Mon., Sept. 11  Sophocles, Antigone
Wed., Sept. 13  Sophocles, Antigone
Mon., Sept. 18  The Oxford Study Bible, The Book of Genesis
Wed., Sept. 20  The Oxford Study Bible, The Book of Genesis
Mon., Sept. 25  The Oxford Study Bible, The Book of Job
Wed., Sept. 27  The Oxford Study Bible, The Book of Job
Mon., Oct. 2  Plato, Symposium
Wed., Oct. 4  Plato, Symposium

FIRST PAPER ASSIGNMENT DUE IN RECITATION
Mon., Oct. 9  Augustine, Confessions (selections) (Books 1, 5, 6)
Wed., Oct. 11  Augustine, Confessions (selections) (Book 7, 8, 11)
Mon., Oct. 16  MIDTERM EXAMINATION
Wed., Oct. 18  Marx, Communist Manifesto
Mon., Oct. 23  Marx, Communist Manifesto
Wed., Oct. 25  Darwin, Origin of Species (selections) (TBA)
Mon., Oct. 30  Darwin, Descent of Man (selections) (TBA)
Wed., Nov. 8  Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy (selections) (see below for readings) *
Mon., Nov. 13  Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy (selections)
Wed., Nov. 15  Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams (selections)
Mon., Nov. 20  Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (selections) (see below) **

Wed., Nov. 22  Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (selections)

Mon., Nov. 27  Mann, *Death in Venice*

Wed., Nov. 29  Mann, *Death in Venice*

SECOND PAPER ASSIGNMENT DUE IN RECITATION

Mon., Dec. 4  Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*

Wed., Dec. 6  Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*

Mon., Dec. 11  Summary

Mon. Dec. 18:  FINAL EXAMINATION: 2:00 – 3:50 pm

* Birth of Tragedy readings:

1) “Attempt at Self-Criticism” (read all)

2) Nietzsche’s “Originary One” ("primal unity") pp. 14, 17-19, 26-28, 36, 41-45, 104

3) *The Apolline* pp. 15-17, 19-21, 50-51

4) *The Dionysiac* pp. 17, 21, 44-45

5) *Tragedy and tragic art* pp. 44-45, 98, 100-101, 103-104, 113-114, 115-116

6) *Justice in the context of the tragic* pp. 50-51

7) *The role of musical dissonance* pp. 36, 100-103, 113-114

8) *Socrates and Socratism* p. 12-19

** Interpretation of Dreams readings:

Chapter II: “The Method of Interpreting Dreams: An Analysis of a Specimen Dream” (read all)

Chapter VI: “The Dream-Work” (read sections A, B, C, D, and I)

Chapter VII: “The Psychology of the Dream-Process” (read section I)