Western Cultural Tradition V-VI

Office Hours, Gasson 112
M.J.Hughes
W 2-4, T, Th, 2:45-4
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Phone and voicemail 552-4502
hughesma@bc.edu

Required Texts:
White, trans. Handbook of Epictetus [Hackett]
Machiavelli, The Prince [Hackett]
Milton, Paradise Lost [Macmillan]
Montaigne, Selections from the Essays, ed. Frame [AHM]
Hughes, ed., Readings in the Western Cultural Tradition [WCT pkt.]
Shakespeare, The Tempest
Shakespeare, Hamlet [Pelican]
Cervantes, The Portable Cervantes [Viking]
Descartes, Discourse on Method
Pascal, Pensées [Penguin]
Voltaire, The Portable Voltaire [Viking]
Rousseau, Discourse on the Origin of Inequality (Hackett)
And, to begin over Christmas vacation: Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov
[Vintage]

Always bring relevant books to class. In addition to the above readings there will be many shorter reading assignments handed out in class.

General Introduction: This course depends on all of us. The readings are only the start. The real substance depends on each of us individually, and all of us collectively—as readers, as thinkers, as interpreters, as hearts and minds. If we put ourselves wholeheartedly into this almost impossible task of coming to some (imperfect, flawed, evolving) understanding of the culture that helped to produce us, each of us will truly be strengthened by all the others. That is what makes it a seminar, and why every voice and every opinion makes a critical difference.

In this particular seminar the emphasis will be on literature and the history of ideas, and how each is informed by the other. In addition to seeking some sense of the cultural past, we will always be asking questions about what we should value or honor or doubt or mourn, about what has been left out or forgotten and what should never be forgotten. Pursuing these questions, as well as those that simply interest each of you individually, you should supplement your reading at all times with writing: notes and reflections. Ideally this writing will serve as a sounding board for your own reactions to the reading. Inevitably it will generate creative thinking, discussion, and papers, and serve as part of the inward journey that is your real education.
Hughes/WCT

Schedule of Discussion:

I. Looking Backward and Forward: Renaissance and Reformation, and beyond
   - **Handbook of Epictetus** (2nd. century A.D.)
   - Machiavelli, *Prince* (1515, pub. 1532)
   - Milton, *Paradise Lost*, (Note: 1667)
     - Bks I-II, III to line 345; IV to line 535; VIII, 1-205 and 249-end; IX, X, 707-end; XII. Read arguments (summaries) of all books.
   - Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, (1601)

II. Interlude: comedy, romance, magic
   - Cervantes, *Don Quixote* in the Portable Cervantes:
     - Part II (1615): chapters 1-17, 22-25 to p. 522, ch. 33, and pp. 664-702.
   - Shakespeare, *The Tempest*

III. Seventeenth Century Readings: faith, reason, science
   - Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (1637)
   - Mini lecture on scientific revolution

IV. The Age of Reason (The Enlightenment): science, reason, empiricism
   - Essays by Kant, Hume, and Condorcet [WCT pkt] and Voltaire, *Portable Voltaire*:
     - English Letters 530-541, and Philosophical Dictionary Selections: Adam (p. 54); Bishop (p. 88); Ecclesiastical Ministry (p. 109); Democracy (p. 102); Intolerance (p. 134); Nature (pp. 169-72); Religion (P. 187); Theist (207).
   - Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (1755)
   - Voltaire, *Candide* (1759) (pp. 229-328) in *Portable Voltaire*. 
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Requirements: First and above all: vigorous, prepared, and thoughtful class discussion of assigned readings. In addition, there will be three papers (5-8 pages), an optional fourth paper, and a final examination. Late papers will be penalized. The final exam will be Sat, Dec. 14, at 12:30 P. M. The double-credit grade will be computed approximately as follows: each paper: 15%, class participation with shorter written exercises 25%, and exam 30%. If you choose to write the optional 4th paper, your lowest paper grade will be eliminated. Paper due dates will be announced at least 10 days in advance.

Tentative paper due dates:
Monday, Sept. 16 at noon, in my mailbox, Gasson 102
Thursday, Oct. 17 in class
Monday, November 18, at noon in my mailbox
Tuesday, Dec. 10, in class