

## Summer 2014 Graduate Institute Preceptorials

### **Confucius, *Analects* (Lun Yü)**

The *Selected Conversations* (Lun Yü) attributed to Master Kong (Kong Fuzi; d. 473 BCE), who lived at a time of social and political turmoil, offer a complete intellectual and spiritual portrait of him in various particular situations and engaged in conversation with people ranging from students to government officials and nobles. The country could emerge from its crisis, he thought, only through the moral cultivation of its people, beginning with the rulers. In order to help his interlocutors begin to develop an all-encompassing sense of virtue, the Master offered them examples and analogies, rather than abstract teachings, and challenged them through questions to discover the truth themselves. Two centuries later his chief interpreter, Meng Zi, characterized the Master's Way as being the Way of cultivated-goodness-in-relation-to-others and of sense-for-action-appropriate-to-context.

**Required Texts:** Both of the following are required. (1) Principal text – *The Analects* (Oxford World's Classics) by Confucius, Raymond Dawson, Translator (Publisher: Oxford University Press, USA, 2008 or 1993; ISBN 0199540616 or 0192839209). (2) Interpretive translation with Chinese text– *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation*, Roger Ames and Henry Rosemont, Translators (Publisher: Ballantine Books, 1999; ISBN 0345434072). In addition, it might be helpful to consult translations by Huang, Waley, Watson, and others.

**First Assignment:** 1) Reading – pp.3-12 in Dawson. 2) Writing – Please write a paragraph on Book I, section 2 and email it to [Robert.Druecker@sjc.edu](mailto:Robert.Druecker@sjc.edu) before the first class. In it, try to work out what a gentleman might be like based *solely* on what is said in I.2 about his relation to the root and on your own experiences and imagination.

**Tutor:** Mr. Robert Druecker

**This preceptorial applies to the Philosophy & Theology and Politics & Society segments.**

### **Darwin and Sociobiology**

Knowing his readers might be very suspicious of his application of evolution by means of natural selection to humans, Darwin wrote a separate treatise to make the case. In the *Descent of Man*, Darwin analyzes the structures of the human body, mental powers, and even something he calls the "moral sense" in order to make the argument that we are subject to the powers of evolution by means of natural selection. We will read the *Descent* in its entirety, evaluating for ourselves his argument and evidence for the claim. After getting a foundation in Darwin, we will focus on contemporary treatments of some of the same topics, including Richard Joyce's *The Evolution of Morality* and *Not By Genes Alone: How Culture Transformed Human Evolution* by Peter Richerson and Robert Boyd.

**Recommended Text:** Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*. With an Introduction by James Moore and Adrian Desmond. (London: Penguin Books, 2004; ISBN-10: 0140436316, ISBN-13: 9780140436310). Additional texts to be announced.

**First Assignment:** Chapters 1 and 2 of Darwin's *Descent of Man*.

**Tutor:** Mr. Jason Tipton

**This preceptorial applies to the Philosophy & Theology, Politics & Society, and Mathematics & Natural Science segments.**

### **Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit***

Hegel's masterpiece tells the story of human thought coming to know itself completely through its historical unfolding. It serves as a prologue to absolute knowing, in which philosophical wonder will finally be converted into wisdom. The work is an organic whole whose episodes include, among other things: Newtonian science, a struggle for life and death, phrenology, seduction and the life of pleasure, ancient Greek tragedy, the French Revolution, and the Christian incarnation.

We will attempt to work through the whole of the text, depending on each other's help in reading Hegel's challenging prose at every turn.

**Recommended Text:** Any translation is welcome. An edition with numbered paragraphs (so-called 'Miller numbers') will be helpful. We may want to consult the original German occasionally.

**First assignment:** Introduction (*not* the Preface): §§73-89.

**Tutor:** Mr. Matthew Caswell

**This preceptorial applies to the Philosophy & Theology, Politics & Society, and Mathematics & Natural Science segments.**

### **Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason***

Kant's project in this monumental book is to determine the limits of human reason, and thereby the boundaries of both modern science and religious belief. In the epigraph to the *Critique's* second edition he presents this project as a continuation of Francis Bacon's *Great Instauration*, a foundation or restoration of the sciences "for the greatness and benefit of humanity" [B ii]. In the *Critique* itself Kant plots a course between skepticism and dogmatism, arguing that knowledge is possible, but necessarily limited – in surprising ways – by experience. If, by assuming that our knowledge must conform to objects, we have made little progress in metaphysics, Kant asks, why not find out by experiment whether we can make more progress by assuming that objects must conform to our knowledge? In carrying out this experiment, Kant likens himself to Copernicus, who "[h]aving found it difficult to make progress... when he assumed that the entire host of the stars revolved around the spectator... tried to find out by experiment whether he might not be more successful if he had the spectator revolve and the stars remain at rest" [B xvi]. We will read the whole of the work.

**Recommended Texts:** Any edition that includes the standard page numbers of the First (1781) [A] and Second (1787) [B] Academy editions of the *Critique* is acceptable, since our reading assignments will refer to these numbers. Of such editions, the following three are best: Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. Translated by Werner S. Pluhar. Introduction by Patricia W. Kitcher. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1996; ISBN-10: 0872202577, ISBN-13: 9780872202573) is a good choice for its readable typeface and extensive index; while Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. Translated and Edited by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998; ISBN-10: 0521657296, ISBN-13: 9780521657297) is a good choice for its extensive notes, though its typeface is harder to read. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. Second Edition. Translated by Norman Kemp Smith. With a New Introduction by Howard Caygill and a New Bibliography by Gary Banham. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007; ISBN-10: 0230013384 ISBN-13: 9780230013384)

9780230013384) is a favorite of long standing whose English may seem a little dated, and which does not translate Kant's Latin passages.

**First Assignment:** Epigraph, Dedication, Preface, and Introduction to the Second (1787) Edition [B ii-30].

**Tutor:** Mr. Jeff Black

**This preceptorial applies to the Philosophy & Theology and Mathematics & Natural Science segments.**

### **Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics***

We will read selections from Spinoza's *Ethics*, the complete title of which is *Ethics Demonstrated in the Geometric Order*. It has five parts: Of God, Of the Nature and Origin of the Mind, Of the Origin and Nature of the Emotions, Of Human Bondage (or the Strength of the Emotions), and Of the Power of the Intellect (or Of Human Freedom). Central to Spinoza's project are the natural laws of body and man as a social and political being. The book is arranged like Euclid's *Elements*, with definitions, axioms, and propositions. We will attend both to the substance of Spinoza's account and to his curious use of geometric demonstration.

**Required Edition:** Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics, Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect, and Selected Letters*. Translated by Samuel Shirley. Edited and Introduced by Seymour Feldman. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1992; ISBN-10: 0872201309, ISBN-13: 9780872201309).

**First Assignment:** Part I (Concerning God): definitions, axioms, propositions 1-11 (and scholium).

**Tutor:** Mr. Peter Kalkavage

**This preceptorial applies to the Philosophy & Theology, Politics & Society, and Mathematics & Natural Science segments.**