Comparative Literature 202
Spring 2005
Michael Palencia-Roth
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1 p.m. – 2:20 p.m.

Office hours: Tuesdays, 2:30 – 5 p.m. and by appointment
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Comparative Literature 202 explores the interface between literature and ideas in the modern western
heritage. We read five seminal thinkers all semester long, thinkers whose ideas and methods have
contributed much both to literature and to its interpreters. The thinkers studied this semester are: Karl
Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, Simone de Beauvoir, and Mikhail Bakhtin. After two days
devoted to the intellectual background of modern western thought, we will wrestle directly with the thought
and language of each of these thinkers. Within two weeks, in consultation with me, each student will
choose for an independent study in depth a major western author, will read that author (and about that
author) all semester long, will meet with me privately and, toward the end of the semester, will write a 15-
20 page paper on that author in relation to one or more of the five thinkers studied. I will guide each
student through this process from beginning to end. Also, students are asked to keep an “intellectual
journal” throughout the semester and to hand that journal in to me periodically for my commentary. I will
give instructions on the form of the journal later on. There will be no midterm, but there will be two in-
class themes on subjects given out beforehand, and there will be a final examination.

Week 1:
Tuesday, 1/18/2005 – Introduction. Thursday, 1/20/2005 – Background

Week 2:
Tuesday, 2/25/2005 – Karl Marx, The Portable Marx, pp. 10-11; 11-17; 131-152; 155-158.

Week 3:
Tuesday, 2/1/2005 – Karl Marx, The Portable Marx, pp. 369-374; 375-394
Thursday, 2/3/2005 – Karl Marx, The Portable Marx, pp. 432-465; Selected terms from “The

Week 4:
Tuesday, 2/8/2005 – Friedrich Nietzsche, Basic Writings of Nietzsche – from The Birth of
Tragedy, pp. 17-27; 56-98.
Thursday, 2/10/2005 – Friedrich Nietzsche, Basic Writings of Nietzsche – from Beyond Good and
Evil, pp. 192-266; 391-427.

Week 5:
Tuesday, 2/15/2005 – Friedrich Nietzsche, Basic Writings of Nietzsche – “Seventy-Five
Aphorisms,” pp. 146-178; from Ecce Homo, pp. 673-725.
726-791.

Week 6:
Tuesday, 2/22/2005 – In-class essay/ Marx & Nietzsche
Thursday, 2/24/2005 – Sigmund Freud, Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis # 1-4
Week 7:
Tuesday, 3/1/2005 – Sigmund Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* # 5-10; Read concurrently, beginning on second day of Freud: Sigmund Freud, *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (all)

Week 8:
Thursday, 3/10/2005 – Free (ACLA)

Week 9:
Tuesday, 3/15/2005 – Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, pp. 147-211; 267-278

SPRING BREAK

Week 10:

Week 11:

Week 12:
Tuesday, 4/12/2005 – In-class essay / Freud and Beauvoir [Paris]

Week 13:
Thursday, 4/21/2005 – Presentations

Week 14:
Tuesday, 4/26/2005 – Presentations
Thursday, 4/28/2005 – Presentations

Week 15:
Tuesday, 4/3/2005 – Presentations and last day of class

**Requirements and policies:**

- Journals: 15%
- Two in-class themes: 30%
- Term paper: 30%
- Final exam: 15%
- Oral explication exercises and participation: 10%

**FINAL EXAM:** Friday, May 13, 1:30 – 4:30