

# **COR101**

## **Narratives of the Self I, Section 1**

### **Fall Semester 2014**

#### **Professor Lutz**

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MWF 9:15 – 10:15 AM, H-203

Office Hours:	<i>Monday, Wednesday</i>	2:30-3:30
	<i>Tuesday, Thursday</i>	2:30-4:30

#### ***Course Description:***

Voyage usually suggests the action of leaving one place in the expectation of arriving elsewhere. Although some humans choose to live sedentary existences, most people experience both the difficulties and pleasures of changing their physical surroundings, of traveling. Something fascinates in the act of leaving a given site behind and being on the way to somewhere else. On the other hand, others are exiled and forced into travel. Cinema has understood the attraction of this kind of activity, and movies are full of train trips, auto journeys, sailings and treks across wide open spaces. This situation of being “in transit,” of being “in transition” can serve as an overarching metaphor for this course. It may be one way of approaching how singers, poets, storytellers, philosophers, dramatists, filmmakers and others narrate something we could call the self.

For it is the creation of a self that we will study as it emerges in periods far removed from our own. The way this persona manifests itself will vary greatly. In some cases it will be a matter of unfolding discovery not unlike the excitement and anxiety associated with a long and perilous voyage. Travel was not easy in the ancient world. It can even be hazardous in the modern setting. Where am I going, and how do I get there? In other cases the individual will be investigated in relationship to others by completing an inner voyage of discovery. Who is a virtuous person? How do we know? These questions will preoccupy the travelers and seekers we meet through epic poetry, philosophy and drama. We will try to follow in the wake of their ships, alongside their caravans, at their footside into the realm of the unexpected and ill defined.

Sundiata, an epic of old Mali, will be a key text as we enter into a discussion about ancient origins, leaders, family and storytelling connecting the African story to that of ancient Greece in The Odyssey. The Sundiata epic poem will be complemented by its retelling by an African storyteller (“*griot*”) in the film Keita. Our study will thus begin with two famous voyages, that of Sundiata, leading to the founding of the ancient empire of Mali, and the voyage of Odysseus in The Odyssey. These travels have come to serve as models for other kinds of wanderings and adventurous journeys, spiritual and romantic, sceptical and confident, tortured and serene. We will then turn our attention to a representation of the self from Shakespeare in his historical play Henry V. Our reading and class discussion will be complemented by attendance in October of a Georgia Shakespeare performance of Henry V. ATTENDING ONE OF THE GEORGIA SHAKESPEARE PERFORMANCES OF HENRY V OCTOBER 15 OR 16 IN THE EVENING OR THE MATINEE PERFORMANCE OCTOBER 19 IS MANDATORY. MAKE ARRANGEMENTS NOW! NO EXCUSES WILL BE ACCEPTED. RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE FOR ONE OF THE DATES.

Our reading of the personal adventure of these mythic heroes will be enriched by study of much later ancient Greek texts concerning the defense of Socrates as recounted by Plato. Socrates is faced with accusations of immorality and faces death. His will therefore be a very different kind of personal trial as he chooses to be partly responsible for his own demise out of principle. We will also complement our various readings with a female voice, that of the French medieval writer Christine de Pizan, thereby invoking another voice situated between classical Greece and Shakespeare. We will therefore encounter many voices over the course of the semester. Several of the texts will have been written in a language other than English, and competent translations will allow us to enter into these other linguistic universes.

The challenge we face concerns finding the questions these texts pose. To succeed will demand careful reading, re-reading, viewing, discussion and much reflection. This is a course about thinking. It is writing intensive. The subject matter contains complexity and no small amount of anxiety. The goal will be to develop the kind of analytic skills to respond to the richness of these very diverse objects of study.

As we travel together this semester, the nature of the journey will become more apparent. Starting with the strange attributes of the Buffalo Woman, mother to the emperor-to-be Sundiata, Odysseus confronting the perilous waters of a mythical Aegean world, the troubled reign of Henry V in Shakespeare’s epic historical play, Socrates on trial and a medieval female voice, we will soon find ourselves navigating through the regions of the mind and the heart. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1995) defines “self” to be, among other things, “a person or thing as the object of introspection or reflexive action.” (1253) We will attempt to write about the narrating of this phenomenon.

### ***This Course and The Core:***

This is the first semester of a two-semester sequence entitled Narratives of the Self. The second semester will treat texts exclusively from later centuries, including a contemporary novel. The sequence is required of all first-year Oglethorpe students. It is then followed in the second year by the study of the self in community. Third and fourth year Core courses build upon the intellectual experiences of the first two years. Our intention is to provide students with an interdisciplinary series of integrated courses which, together with the fine arts, mathematics and, for Bachelor of Arts students, foreign language, constitute a compelling “second major” in the best tradition of a liberal arts education.

### ***Texts:***

Niane, D. T., Sundiata an epic of old Mali, tr. G. D. Pickett (Pearson Longman)

The Odyssey of Homer, tr. Richmond Lattimore (Harper Perennial)

Note: Most Narratives sections will use the Fagles translation. We will not. *Please buy the Lattimore translation.*

Pizan, Christine de, The Book of the City of Ladies (Persea)

Shakespeare, Henry V (Folger Shakespeare Library)

Plato, The Last Days of Socrates, tr. Hugh Tredennick and Harold Tarrant (Penguin)

YOU MUST ACQUIRE THESE EDITIONS. THE TRANSLATIONS HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY SELECTED, AND REFERENCE TO THE SAME EDITION IS CRUCIAL FOR EFFECTIVE CLASS DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF PAPERS. THIS IS ALSO TRUE FOR THE SHAKESPEARE PLAY.

### ***Class Periods:***

Readings will be assigned for each class meeting with few exceptions. It is the responsibility of the students to have carefully prepared the material before coming to class. Time will also be allotted to reading and critiquing the drafts of each other’s work.

### ***Essays and Short Papers:***

The Odyssey and Sundiata an epic of old Mali, our first texts, will be the object of three two-page essays, the first graded writing assignments for the course. All students will conference with the instructor after the first essay. The essays will be followed by a four-page paper with topics drawn from the Shakespeare play Henry V. One five-page paper will then be written on The Odyssey, one three page paper on the Plato texts and one three page paper on The Book of the City of Ladies. The final paper on Christine de Pizan will be due on the last day of class Monday December 8. The four-page paper will require a two-page draft on the assigned date.

Students will then receive comments to aid in the preparation of the final version of each paper. **Students who do not provide a rough draft on the assigned date will not benefit from this procedure.** Between the four-page paper on Henry V and the five-page paper on The Odyssey, students should meet with the instructor to review the completed paper and discuss the paper in progress. There will be no final examination. A list of three or more topics from which to choose for each essay and paper will be announced in advance of the due date.

Final papers and essays (not drafts) will be read anonymously by the professor. Students will be asked to supply only their student numbers. The text should be prepared in 12-point type. The pages should be numbered and double spaced. **A word count should be included at the end of the paper.** 500 words is average for a two-page essay, 750 for a three-page paper, 1000 for a four-page paper and 1250-1500 words is average for a "five page paper." In Microsoft Word, the word count is easy to obtain with the "Tools" drop-down menu. Citations are assumed to be from the text ordered for the course unless otherwise noted. After quoting a passage from the text in your paper, simply type the page number and other reference data in parentheses at the conclusion of the quotation. Make sure that you keep the format when quoting lines of verse in The Odyssey and Henry V. *Good papers make judicious use of appropriate citations. They are the only evidence you have to support your arguments and are therefore essential. They do not, however, constitute an argument in and of themselves.*

All papers should be submitted electronically to the Moodle class page by the due date. There are no exceptions to this procedure.

**Schedule:**

August	18	Monday	Introduction to the Course
	20	Wednesday	<u>Sundiata</u> Introduction, xi-xxiv
	22	Friday	<u>Sundiata</u> , 1-37
	25	Monday	<u>Odyssey</u> , Books I-III
	27	Wednesday	<u>Odyssey</u> , Books IV-VI
	29	Friday	<b>Essay #1 (2 pages)</b> The film <u>Keita</u> (part I)
September	1	Monday	<b>Labor Day Holiday</b>
	3	Wednesday	<u>Sundiata</u> , 38-70
	5	Friday	<u>Sundiata</u> , 70-84
	8	Monday	The film <u>Keita</u> (part II)
	10	Wednesday	<b>Essay #2 (2 pages)</b>

	12	Friday	<u>Odyssey</u> , VII-IX
	15	Monday	<u>Odyssey</u> , X-XII
	17	Wednesday	<b>Essay #3</b>
	19	Friday	Pizan, p. 1-51
	22	Monday	<u>Henry V</u> , Act I
	24	Wednesday	<u>Henry V</u> , Act II
	26	Friday	<u>Henry V</u> , Act III
	29	Monday	<u>Henry V</u> , Act IV
October	1	Wednesday	<u>Henry V</u> , Act V
	3	Friday	<b>Draft of 2 pages of 4-page Paper Due</b>
	6	Monday	Pizan, p. 52-97
	8	Wednesday	<b>Henry V Drafts Returned and Discussed</b> Pizan, p. 99-150
	10	Friday	<b>4-page Paper Due</b>
	13	Monday	<b>Fall Break</b>
	15	Wednesday	Discussion of <u>Henry V</u> and preparation for GS performance <b>Georgia Shakespeare (evening)</b>
	16	Thursday	<b>Georgia Shakespeare (evening)</b>
	17	Friday	<b>No Class</b>
	19	Sunday	<b>Georgia Shakespeare (matinee)</b>
	20	Monday	<u>Odyssey</u> , XIII-XV
	22	Wednesday	<u>Odyssey</u> , XVI-XII
	24	Friday	<u>Odyssey</u> , XIX-XXI
	27	Monday	<u>Odyssey</u> , XXII-XXIV

	29	Wednesday	<b>Draft of 2 pages <u>Odyssey</u> Paper Due</b>
	31	Friday	Plato, <u>Euthyphro</u>
November	3	Monday	Plato, <u>Euthyphro</u> <b>Odyssey Drafts Returned and Discussed</b>
	5	Wednesday	Workshop on Odyssey Paper
	7	Friday	<b>No Class</b>
	10	Monday	<b>Odyssey Paper Due [5 pages]</b>
	12	Wednesday	Plato, <u>Apology</u>
	14	Friday	Plato, <u>Apology</u>
	17	Monday	Plato and Homer (excerpt from <u>The Republic</u> )
	19	Wednesday	Workshop on Plato Paper
	21	Friday	<b>Paper Due (Plato) [3 pages]</b>
	24	Monday	Pizan, p. 150-199
	26	Wednesday	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>
	28	Friday	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>
December	1	Monday	Pizan, p. 200-257
	3	Wednesday	Discussion of Pizan
	5	Friday	Workshop on Pizan
	8	Monday	<b>Paper Due (Pizan) [3 pages]</b> (Last Class)

### **Grading:**

Writing is a difficult and cumulative process. All essays and papers will receive written comments on both form and content.

The following percentages will be used in figuring the final grade:

Class Participation), in-class writing	20%
Three Two-Page Essays	30%
Two Three-Page Papers	22%
One Four-Page Paper	12%
One Five-Page Paper	16%

***Attendance:***

**Class depends on good discussion, and some written work will be done in class. For that reason, attendance is expected. It should also be obvious that excessive absence will result in a low class participation grade or no grade at all. However, although preparation for class is expected, not coming to class at all is worse than coming to class less than completely prepared.**

***Honor Code:***

The students and faculty of Oglethorpe University expect each other to be truthful in the academic endeavor they share. Faculty assume students complete work honestly and act toward them in ways consistent with that assumption. Students are expected to behave honorably in their academic work and are expected to insist on honest behavior from their peers.

Our honor code is an academic one. The code proscribes cheating in general terms and also in any of its several specialized sub-forms (including but not limited to plagiarism, lying, stealing and interacting fraudulently or disingenuously with the honor council). The Code defines cheating as “the umbrella under which all academic malfeasance falls. Cheating is any willful activity involving the use of deceit or fraud in order to attempt to secure an unfair academic advantage for oneself or others or to attempt to cause an unfair academic disadvantage to others. Cheating deprives persons of the opportunity for a fair and reasonable assessment of their own work and/or a fair comparative assessment between and among the work produced by members of a group. More broadly, cheating undermines our community’s confidence in the honorable state to which we aspire.”

Students will pledge to have completed papers honestly by signing the following at the conclusion of each paper:

*I pledge that I have acted honorably.*

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

All references to sources should be duly cited and acknowledged.

Examples of cheating include but are not limited to:

Obtaining or offering either for profit or free of charge materials one might submit (or has submitted) for academic credit. This includes uploading course materials to online sites devoted, in whole or in part, to aiding and abetting cheating under the guise of providing "study aids."

*Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Honor Code and will not be tolerated. **Never consider copying work from the Internet or buying a paper. Don't even think about it.** Your pledge indicates that the ideas and the wording in your paper are your own unless another source is noted. Violators of this rule will be reported to the Honor Council. Unpledged work will not be graded.*

*Plagiarism includes representing someone else's words, ideas, data, or original research as one's own, and in general failing to footnote or otherwise acknowledge the source of such work. One has the responsibility of avoiding plagiarism by taking adequate notes on reference materials, including material taken off the Internet or other electronic sources, used in the preparation of reports, papers, and other coursework.*

***Incompletes:***

An incomplete for unfinished work at the end of the semester will be granted only in the most exceptional cases. All incompletes must have permission from the instructor with a clear understanding of the work which remains to be completed. According to university regulations all remaining work for the course must be completed within 30 days following the date of the scheduled final examination (December 15, 2014) or the grade of "F" will be assigned permanently.