Civilization as Journey
HONRS 201-202, Honors Civilization 1-2 / Winter 2005 / MWF 9-11 am / 321 MSRB
Gideon Burton, English / Dean Duncan, Theatre and Media Arts

Combining both halves of the History of Civilization GE requirement into one six-hour seminar, this course takes travel as its central theme for telling the story of civilization, and has a literary focus (providing an excellent way to fulfill Honors Great Works requirements). This course about traveling will be followed by actual travel—a study abroad experience sponsored by the Honors program and centered in London during Spring 2005. That program will be an exciting (but completely optional) sequel to the civilization course (info at http://burton.byu.edu/Europe2005).

Whether considering Adam and Eve’s expulsion from Eden or the story of evolution, the history of humankind is a travel narrative in which we change and develop in response to the journey. Whether we consider the migration of peoples or the adventures of representative individuals, travel narratives reveal core cultural values and shape our identities. Such narratives often take on symbolic, archetypal, or psychological dimensions, and come to shape future generations as readers vicariously journey through literary means.

We will consider literal, mythical, and psychological journeys from the history of civilization—from Homer’s Odyssey in antiquity to Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s Progress in the Reformation; from Dante’s metaphysical journey through hell, purgatory, and heaven, to Chaucer’s pilgrims’ narrative travels to Canterbury; from the various typological travels to promised lands (by ancient Israel, Lehi, the Mormon pioneers) and fictional travels to utopian societies, to the transcendental journeys of Thoreau and Whitman; from the peregrinations of Don Quixote or Candide to the explorations of science by Darwin or of conquest by Cortez. Along the way we will explore corollary themes such identity and how travel configures both personal and group identities; hospitality and the ethics of being guest or host; translation; vicarious travel through literature; travels for commerce, exploration, conquest, and religion; and the idea that history itself is a voyage toward or away from various social, economic or aesthetic ideals.

Antiquity
- Bible and Book of Mormon selections
- The Epic of Gilgamesh
- Homer, The Odyssey
- Euripides, The Bacchae
- Virgil, Aeneid (selections)
- Beowulf

Middle Ages
- Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales
- Dante, The Divine Comedy (Inferno)
- The Arabian Nights
- Marco Polo, Travels

Renaissance
- Shakespeare, The Tempest
- Cervantes, Don Quixote
- Montaigne, Essays (selections)
- Milton, Paradise Lost
- John Bunyan, Pilgrim’s Progress

Enlightenment & Romantic (17-18th centuries)
- Pascal, Thoughts (selections)
- Voltaire, Candide
- Henry Fielding, Tom Jones
- Lessing, Nathan the Wise
- Jonathan Swift, Gulliver’s Travels
- Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe
- Mary Shelley, Frankenstein

19th-20th Century
- Melville, Moby Dick
- Thoreau, Walden
- Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass
- Twain, Huckleberry Finn
- Jack Kerouac, On the Road
- Jack London, The Sea Wolf
- E. M. Forster, A Passage to India
- Clarke / Kubrick, 2001: A Space Odyssey

Requirements
In addition to assigned readings, students will be required to compose short analytical essays (including a researched component) as well as creative works (personal narratives regarding their travel experiences and the philosophy of experience). Students will also read, individually, full-length travel narratives or other primary works and will report on these both orally and in writing.

Instructors
Gideon Burton (English dept.) has taught at BYU since 1994. He inaugurated the Honors course in Rhetoric and Civilization, which he has frequently taught. He maintains two academic websites: Silva Rhetoricae: The Forest of Rhetoric (http://rhetoric.byu.edu) and the Mormon Literature Database (http://mormonlit.byu.edu). He teaches courses in Shakespeare, Renaissance literature, literature and film, and Mormon literature, and serves as associate editor of BYU Studies over arts and sciences. He has traveled broadly through Western and Central Europe, as well as India, and regularly advises honors theses and field studies.

Dean Duncan (Theatre and Media Arts dept.), a native of Edmonton, Alberta and former resident of Glasgow, Scotland, has taught at BYU since 1992. He is interested in and has taught about the history of storytelling, the ways that stories have been enacted on stage and screen, and the integration of the arts in various modern media settings. He frequently teaches a course on children’s media and helps direct BYU’s Children’s Media Initiative. He has taught in various capacities in the Honors program, advised honors theses, and contributed to the creation of the Honors Great Works list. In 2003 he published Charms That Soothe: Classical Music and the Narrative Film (Fordham Univ Press).

Burton and Duncan maintain broad interest in the humanities. They have taught courses together in Shakespeare, Film, and Travel Writing. In 2002 they co-directed the London Theatre study abroad program, and they will head the Honors/GE Spring 2005 study abroad program in European Travel and Culture (based in London).