PREAMBLE
The term “Kafkaesque” has entered many languages, and Franz Kafka is widely recognized as perhaps the “classic” author of the perils and pitfalls of modernity. This course will examine many of the texts which helped make Kafka one of the most celebrated and notorious authors of the past century, and which served to refashion literature and all our notions about what literature can and cannot do. This course will look at the novel The Trial, the short stories The Judgement, The Metamorphosis, In the Penal Colony, The Hunger Artist etc., as well as short prose texts and passages from his diaries and letters. Films and other medial adaptations and representations of Kafka’s works will also be part of the course, as will the Kafka criticism of such authors as Gunther Anders, Elias Canetti, and Walter Benjamin. Political, feminist, theological, Judaicist, as well as contemporary “new historicist” and “cultural materialist” approaches to Kafka will also be considered. This course is given in English.

FORMAT
This course is in a lecture format and in a blend of fixed and flexible presentation. The lectures will be made available in audio format on the day they are scheduled to be given with the possibility for the subsequent submission of questions and comments by the class. The lectures will be recorded and available in their entirety on mycourses.

SELF-PRESENTATION (Selbstdarstellung)
I do not as a general rule mediatize myself, and for reasons of deeply held religious and philosophical conviction regard the generation of the simulacra of living human presence though Skype or Zoom as idolatrous and highly problematic. Students who nonetheless wish to get some idea of what I look and talk like may Google: Paul Peters Heine Orient. I studied German literature at the Free University of Berlin and my main areas of interest are Heinrich Heine, Franz Kafka, Bertolt Brecht, Paul Celan, postwar literature, Georg Büchner, the German Lied and Romanticism. In terms of my overall approach to literature and culture, I am most indebted, though not exclusively so, to the positions of Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno.

Similarly, if each student could email me a brief three sentence statement on their background and general academic interests, as well as their particular interest in this course, this would help me greatly in associating a person with a face.
I - Kafka’s World
“A Little Fable”
“The Destination”
Film: “Kafka”, “Der Golem”

II - A Son of Saturn: Birth of the Kafkaesque
“The Judgement”
“Letter to his Father”
Diary entry
Gunter Anders: Theory of the Kafkaesque

III - The Metamorphosis
(“Poseidon”, Diary entry)
Ovid etc - Metamorphoses
Freud: Theory of the Subconscious/ Hegel/ Marx: Alienation and Identity

IV The Trial
(“On the Question of the Laws”; “Leopards in the Temple”; “Give it Up”)
Elias Canetti: The Other Trial;
“Rejection”; “Silence of the Sirens”; “A Married Couple”
Spiegel - Sacrifice and Akedah
Interpreting the Trial (Dostoyevsky)
Alterity on Trial: Dreyfus, Oscar Wilde
Film “The Trial” (Orson Wells)

V - Benjamin on Kafka
“Franz Kafka”: “Idea for a Mystery”;
“Josephine the Singer, or the Mouse-Folk”

VI In the Penal Colony/Report to an Academy
(“In the Gallery”; “The Bucket Rider”)
Fanon/Memmi/Cesaire - Theories of Colonialism (and of the Colonized)
Jewish Messianism and Eschatology
Dreyfus/ Congo/ etc.

VII Amerika (excerpts)
The Stoker - The Lift Boy - The Nature Theater of Oklahoma
“The Wish to become a Red Indian”

VIII - “The Hunger Artist”
Rilke: “Der Panther”; “An old Manuscript”

(Deutsch) *Der Prozess; Die Erählungen*. Elias Canetti, *The Other Trial*.

METHOD OF EVALUATION:

Two papers 50%
(ca 6-8 pages each)
takehome final exam 40%
participation 10%

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Virtual office hours: Tuesday, 14-1500
or by appointment.

POLITIQUE DE LANGUE

Tous les travaux écrits pour ce cours peuvent aussi être redigés en français.

Sie dürfen alle schriftlichen Arbeiten in diesem Kurs auch in deutscher Sprache verfassen.
The books will be available from the bookstore for curbside pickup or delivery by post.
The course pack will be available digitally. Additional materials will be emailed to you.

EVALUATION
Two Papers 50  (25% each)
takehome 40
Participation 10
LEGAL STUFF (but important)

Language of Submission:
“Students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.”
“Chaque étudiant(e) a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.”
The language of instruction this course is English. Written work may be submitted in English, French, or German.

Academic Integrity:
McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures” (see McGill’s guide to academic honesty for more information).

Extraordinary Circumstances Statement
In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s and instructor’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.
COMMENT: There can be in my view no substitute for the direct personal interaction of living and present human beings in the educational process, and this course is not going to pretend to be such a substitute. I will however do my best as instructor to provide a positive educational experience and environment.

Copyright of lectures and personal image and utterance Statement
© All Instructor-generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. All lectures and lecture materials remain the instructor’s intellectual property and are governed by copyright. As such, you may use these only for your own learning (and research, with proper referencing/citation) ends. You are not permitted to disseminate or share these materials other than in the context of the course; doing so may violate the instructor’s intellectual property rights and could be cause for disciplinary action.
Similarly, you as students have an inalienable human and legal right to control over your own image and utterance, and that these not be medially disseminated without your prior and express consent. To ensure this, NO recordings will be made of classroom discussions or student class presentations in this course.

Lecture/Conference/Seminar Recording Statement
The pre-recorded lectures for this course will be available on the scheduled day on Mycourses recorded lectures. due to the lecture format of this course and the legal and for me ethical problematic of the reproduction of your utterance and image, it should be pointed out that there will in fact be no Zoom discussion in this course, but we will address the discussion aspect differently.

Netiquette Statement
The University recognizes the importance of maintaining teaching spaces that are respectful and inclusive for all involved. This also applies to all your communications through the internet and the computer in this course.

Indigenous Land Statement:
McGill University is on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous people whose footsteps have marked this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.

COMMENT The genuine recognition of indigenous land title, a fair and just settlement of First Nations land claims, and systemic racism towards indigenous people remain ongoing and pressing issues of the Canadian polity.

Sensitive content / Trigger warning
Please be aware that some of the course content may be disturbing for some students. These themes been included in the course because of its thematic focus. Please contact the instructor if you have specific concerns.

*Inclusive learning Environment:*
*As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the Office for Students with Disabilities, 514-398-6009.*

If you use text-matching software freely available on the internet:
Note that to support academic integrity, your assignments may be submitted to text-matching or other appropriate software (e.g., formula-, equation-, and graph-matching).”