

Class Meeting 7

Wrapping-up our initial "inquiry into Values

(Complete Reading of Part IV of ZAAMM)

Theme: Wrapping up ZAAMM

PREPARATION:

READ: 7-1 ZAAMM Part IV: Chapters 27-32 (pages 329-412)

ZAAMM is at once the story of a motorcycle journey across the country; a meditation on values and the concept of Quality; and an allegorical tale of a man coming to terms with his past. No doubt it can be described in many other ways as well, what is your definition of it?

Some Further Questions to Think About:

- a) In the penultimate chapter comes the climactic confrontation between father and son. The setting is the Mendocino coast. The episode starts in a crowded restaurant and moves to the roadside on a foggy cliff overlooking the ocean. Voices of the narrator and Chris alternate and then the italicized voice of the narrator's alter ego is heard. The two male adult voices overlap and combine with the son's voice as the three voices negotiate the denouement. Do the conditions of mutual and reciprocal agreement arrived at allow for both reconciliation and differentiation? Are the concluding circumstances – as described – adequate to justify the narrators/authors relatively unguardedly optimistic final paragraph?
- b) Does the book leave you (the reader) pointing in an intellectually defensible, emotionally satisfying, and practically effective/useful direction? Please elaborate. Pay particular attention to the evidently intended convergence, in the conclusion, of the narrator's monologue with its dialogical counterparts (e.g. the father/son relationship, the travelogue ("a journey through the high country"), the Chautauqua.
- c) How would you characterize the work as a whole? Is it an informal but ambitious and wide-ranging philosophical treatise? A passionate paean to virtue, a plaintive plea for ethical lifeways and faithful scholarship, a call to honest teaching and genuine learning (e.g. "the need for caring"; the "church of reason"), a "how-to" guide, a handbook for those in search of right livelihoods"? The point is that ZAAMM is plainly a text of many meanings; a multidimensionally relevant treatise-in-novel-form...
- d) What significance (if any) do you read into the episode in which Chris and his father remove their helmets for the remainder of the journey?
- e) The last two sentences of the book are: "It's going to get better now. You can sort of tell these things". How does this "resolution" strike you? Hopefully, you will have also read the author's Afterword, and did so after completing your reading of the text. If so, please comment on the cognitive/affective impact of having done so. With respect to the central issue of "conflicting perspectives" (differing points of view?): what are your present thoughts and feelings about the classical /romantic dichotomy with which ZAAMM has been so centrally concerned?
- f) How are the concepts of "quality" and "affect" related?

WRITE: Reaction Paper #6

You might use the time to catch up with work on which you may have fallen behind, and/or get started on the readings for next class.

In addition:

VIEW: "Keeping Score – Revealing Classical Music":

Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony explore an exceptionally romantic piece of classical music: *Symphonie Fantastique* by Hector Berlioz. (The DVD includes both a comprehensive narrative/analysis and a full-length concert performance of the work. Make sure to take in both.) Otherwise, the narrative part is available online at: <http://video.pbs.org/video/1295290184>. You should also listen to some version of the entire symphony recording w/o interruptions.

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9.68 Affect: Neurobiological, Psychological and Sociocultural Counterparts of "Feelings"
Spring 2013

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