

# PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

PHI 2800-001

FALL 2012

INSTRUCTOR: GABRIEL ROCKHILL

**Time:** TTh 2:30-3:45

**Location:** Garey 102

**Office Hours:** T 11-12/Th 12-1 (SAC 171)

**E-mail:** gabriel.rockhill@villanova.edu

**Phone:** 610-519-3067

**Teaching Assistant:** Emre Çetin Gürer <gurer.cetin@gmail.com>

## OVERVIEW

“We do not live in a revolutionary situation, and actually things are worse than ever. The horror is that for the first time we live in a world in which we can no longer imagine a better one.”

- Theodor Adorno, “Towards a New Manifesto?”

“We can accept the term utopian only if we believe that the established societies are in themselves eternal; only if we make political and social conditions into unchangeable metaphysical conditions.”

- Herbert Marcuse, *Art and Liberation*

This course examines the historical development and transformation of the relationship between philosophy and history. We begin by analyzing philosophy in the era of chronology, prior to the massive historicization of philosophic practice around the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. We then concentrate on the fundamental changes that occurred in philosophic practice through the course of this transformation. These changes were linked to what historians have called the *modern regime of historicity* or a novel conception of historical time as a linear process of development in which the past becomes autonomous and the future is transformed into an open horizon of possibility. It is within the modern regime of historicity that the 19<sup>th</sup>-century utopian philosophical and political projects developed, and it is to these that we will turn our attention in the third section of the course. We will then concentrate on how these projects have played themselves out in the historical conjuncture that is our own, by examining and evaluating various categories used to frame our current era (the “end of history,” the “exhaustion of utopia,” the “age of crisis,” etc.).

Students should come away from the class with an understanding of some of the central debates in historiography, the major “logics of history” that have been used to understand the past, and a set of conceptual tools for situating our present situation within the broader frame of history. In addition to being a philosophy class that introduces the thought of some of the major figures in the Western tradition (Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Engels, Arendt, Foucault), this course also draws on the work of historians (Koselleck, Ziolkowski), sociologists (Wallerstein) and political scientists (Fukuyama) in order to provide students with an interdisciplinary and comparative perspective on the historical transformations of the world that we are living in.

## REQUIRED MATERIAL

You are free to use other copies of the books listed below or photocopy the relevant

sections (depending on the length). However, these are the editions that will be referenced in class.

1. Hannah Arendt. *Between Past and Future*. New York: Penguin books, 1968.
2. Giambattista Vico. *New Science*. Trans. David Marsh. New York: Penguin Books, 1999.
3. G.W.F. Hegel. *Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. Trans. T.M. Knox and A.V. Miller. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
4. Reinhart Koselleck. *Futures Past*. New York: Columbia, 2004.
5. Theodore Ziolkowski. *Clio the Romantic Muse*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2004.
6. Immanuel Wallerstein. *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2004.
7. *Optional Book*: Vaughn, Lewis. *Writing Philosophy: A Student's Guide to Writing Philosophy Essays*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
8. Essays and articles will be made available to you electronically and placed on reserve in the library. **It is required that you print or photocopy them so that you can bring them to every class.** It is highly recommended that you collect them all together in a binder so that you have all of the course readings in one place.

#### REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance and Participation – 15%**. The class will be conducted as a seminar so it will be very important for you to come to class on time having engaged with the required material. This means taking notes on the readings, preparing informed questions and comments, and reviewing the material after class discussion. A cursory, passive overview of the material will prove insufficient. In addition, you should make sure that you organize your time wisely since some sessions will require more out-of-class work than others. Finally, it is your responsibility to arrive on time and make sure that your name has been checked on the attendance list (no changes will be made retroactively).
2. **Pop Quizzes – 25%**. There will be 2-3 pop quizzes on the course material at an undisclosed point in time during the semester.
3. **Mid-Term Paper – 25%**. You will be expected to write a 4-page double-spaced mid-term paper that critically responds to and engages with one of the readings in the first half of the semester. You will need to carefully review the material you choose and consult other relevant sources. The aim of this exercise is to have you succinctly present a core theme or issue and carefully work through its implications via rigorous philosophical argumentation and precise textual analysis. You can choose any of the required material from the first half of the semester.
4. **Final Exam – 35%**. A **comprehensive** final oral exam will be scheduled at the end of the semester. I will provide you with guidelines and study hints in advance of the exam. The best way to ensure a solid performance on your final exam is to take detailed notes on the lectures and readings. With the exception of students with disabilities that require alternative test-taking arrangements or other university approved exceptions, all tests must be taken in class at the day and time listed on the syllabus. No other make-up tests will be administered.

#### POLICY ON E-MAILS AND COMPUTER USE

1. I will try to respond to all e-mails in a reasonable time frame. As a general rule of

thumb, this means that you will get a response within 24 to 48 hours. If you send an email over the weekend or late at night, do not expect to receive a response back immediately, even if you deem it to be an emergency.

2. I will **not grant extensions via e-mail**.
3. In general, I will not provide my lecture notes or other material that you could have obtained in class. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain this material.
4. I will not provide information already available in the syllabus via e-mail.
5. **No computers** will be allowed in the classroom unless you obtain explicit consent from me.
6. **No cell phones or other technological devices** will be allowed in the classroom unless you obtain explicit consent from the instructor.

#### **POLICY ON GRADE CHANGES, LATE WORK AND ABSENCES**

1. I will not change grades based on oral negotiation. If you feel that I have overlooked something in my grading policy, please submit a detailed written explanation of what has been overlooked along with the graded copy of your work.
2. **No late work will be accepted.** Rather than looking behind in class, you should plan on looking ahead and catching up on future assignments any points you may have lost on past assignments. You will only be able to make up for late work in the most extreme cases, and preferably when you have let me know ahead of time that you have a serious extra-curricular problem.

#### **POLICY ON PLAGIARISM AND RESEARCH RESOURCES**

Any form of plagiarism is unacceptable. This includes, but is not limited to, referencing or paraphrasing someone else's ideas without proper citation as well as handing in someone else's work as your own. This also includes using any part of an Internet resource without proper citation. Any assignment that is at all plagiarized will automatically receive an F and, depending on the circumstances, may constitute grounds for failing the course. Moreover, every incident will be reported to the university and could constitute grounds for expulsion. For a good list of resources on what counts as plagiarism and how to avoid plagiarizing see <http://directory.google.com/Top/Reference/Education/Educators/Plagiarism/Prevention/>

You should be aware of the fact that not all of the information on the Internet is equally accurate. This is why I strongly encourage library research over Internet research and require that you do most of your work in the library. Of course, you should also be wary of the quality of published sources and try to get a feel for what is reliable (based on the author's name, the publisher, journals' reputations, etc.). If you have any questions regarding the quality of Internet or published resources, please contact me.

**PROGRAM** (subject to change)

#### **Section 1: Tradition and History**

8/28 Introduction.

8/30 Hannah Arendt. *Between Past and Future*. Preface and "Tradition and the Modern Age."

- 9/4 Hannah Arendt. *Between Past and Future*: “The Concept of History: Ancient and Modern.”
- 9/6 Albert Wright Levi. *Philosophy as Social Expression*: Chapter 4 (“Modern Philosophy: The Age of the Gentleman”).
- 9/11 René Descartes. *The Search for Truth*.

## Section 2: Historical Changes in the Enlightenment

- 9/13 Anthony Grafton’s “Introduction” to Giambattista Vico’s *New Science*.
- 9/18 Giambattista Vico. *New Science*: “Explanation of the Frontispiece.”
- 9/20 Giambattista Vico. *New Science*: “Elements” and “Principles” (Book 1, Section 2 and 3).
- 9/25 Ernst Cassirer. *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*: “The Conquest of the Historical World.”
- 9/27 Immanuel Kant. “What Is Enlightenment?”
- Midterm Paper Due**
- 10/2 Michel Foucault. “What Is Enlightenment?”

## Section 3: The Modern Regime of Historicity

- 10/4 *Class displaced to 10/5*  
*Please read the following material for discussion on 10/9:*  
 Reinhart Koselleck. *Futures Past*: “Author’s Preface” and “Modernity and the Planes of Historicity.”
- 10/5 (5-6:30 p.m.) *Outside Lecture*  
 Immanuel Wallerstein, “Cores and Peripheries in the 21st Century”  
 Rainey Auditorium, Penn Museum, 3260 South Street  
 University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
- 10/9 Reinhart Koselleck. *Futures Past*: “Historia Magistra Vitae.”

## Section 4: Philosophy’s Historical Transformation

- 10/11 Theodore Ziolkowski. *Clio the Romantic Muse*: “Preface” and “History: *From Decoration to Discipline*.”
- Semester Recess (10/15-10/19)*
- 10/23 Theodore Ziolkowski. *Clio the Romantic Muse*: “Philosophy.”
- 10/25 G.W.F. Hegel. *Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy* (first quarter of book).
- 10/30 G.W.F. Hegel. *Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy* (second quarter of book).
- 11/1 *Class cancelled*.
- 11/6 G.W.F. Hegel. *Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy* (third quarter of book).
- 11/8 G.W.F. Hegel. *Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy* (last quarter of book).

## Section 5: The Time of Revolution

- 11/13 Reinhart Koselleck. *Futures Past*: “Historical Criteria of the Modern Concept of Revolution.”
- 11/15 Hannah Arendt. “The Meaning of Revolution.”
- 11/20 Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx, “Manifesto of the Communist Party.”

**Section 6: 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Visions of History**

11/27 Gabriel Rockhill. "Eros of Inquiry: An Aperçu of Castoriadis' Life and Works."

Cornelius Castoriadis. "The Social-Historical: Mode of Being, Problems of Knowledge."

11/29 Francis Fukuyama. *The End of History and the Last Man*. "By Way of Introduction" and Chapter 5.

12/4 Immanuel Wallerstein. *Introduction to World-Systems Analysis*: "Historical Origins of World-Systems Analysis: From Social Science Disciplines to Historical Social Sciences" and "The Modern World-System in Crisis: Bifurcation, Chaos, and Choices."

12/6 **Final Exam Review**

12/13 **First Round of Final Exams**

12/20 **Second Round of Final Exams**

(8:30-11)