Late Modern Philosophy
(PHIL10175)

Course Organiser: Dr. Dave Ward
6.05 DSB
Dave.Ward@ed.ac.uk
Office Hours: Wednesdays 10-1130

Course Secretary: Ann-Marie Cowe
Email: Philinfo@ed.ac.uk

Course Summary: This course focuses on some key texts and thinkers from just over 100 years of German philosophy – from Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason (1781) to Nietzsche’s Gay Science (1882), by way of Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit (1807). The story in a nutshell: Kant, simultaneously inspired and dismayed by the rationalist and empiricist philosophers that preceded him, argued for a new job description for philosophy, and a new way of carrying it out. The most important philosophical task is to set out the scope and limits of human rationality, and this can be achieved by identifying necessary ways that we think about and experience the world. Hegel takes up Kant’s project, but argues that our ways of thinking and experiencing are continually evolving – and perhaps improving. Nietzsche has a different reaction to Kant. Like Hegel, he thinks that our ways of thinking and experiencing are shaped by contingent forces beyond our control. Unlike Hegel, he argues that this should make us profoundly pessimistic about our thoughts and values, and should lead us to radically rethink what we want out of philosophy, and out of life. We’ll work through key parts of the most important works of each of these thinkers, critically assessing their arguments and their vision for philosophy. We’ll also think about how they influenced, and were influenced by, other important figures and movements in the history of ideas.

Course Structure: There is a weekly 2-hour seminar on Mondays. I’ll use this seminar to try to give helpful backdrop to the material we’re covering in each week’s tutorials. The 1-hour tutorial groups for the course begin in week 2. These will be devoted to detailed discussion of the reading for that week – so please make sure you’ve read and thought about the core reading prior to coming to the tutorial. Please see the course’s Learn page for class times, locations, and details on how to sign up for tutorial groups.

Assessment: There are three pieces of assessment for this course. Two short essays in which you’ll define one or more key terms from the core readings, and say something about its role in the relevant philosopher’s argument. Each of these is worth 20% of your mark for the course. The final essay will invite you to consider a question or argument raised by the work we’ve considered in more detail.

Short essay 1 (750 words; 20%): Due Thursday 18th October 2018, by 12pm
Short essay 2 (750 words; 20%): Due Thursday 15th November 2018, by 12pm
Long essay (2500 words; 60%): Due Thursday 13th December 2018, by 12pm

Questions and guidance for each essay will be posted at least 4 weeks before the deadline on Learn.

Schedule and Readings
I’ll post detailed suggestions about further readings and resources for each of the weeks of the course as we go along. The following lists the main texts for the course, and the core readings for each week.

**Primary Texts:**

- **Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* (CPR)**
  
  There are two main translations of this – one by local lad (check out his portrait on the 6th floor of DSB) Norman Kemp Smith, and a more recent one by Paul Guyer and Allen Wood. The Kemp Smith is a bit easier to read, the Guyer & Wood a bit more faithful to the original German. Take your pick.

  An easier option is the version available online at Jonathan Bennett’s ‘Early modern texts’ website, where he’s tried to simplify and helpfully annotate the text: [https://bit.ly/2wJ73E1](https://bit.ly/2wJ73E1)

- **Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* (PoS)**

  Unfortunately not even Jonathan Bennett could make Hegel easy to read. The main translation in English is A.V. Miller’s, though new ones by Michael Inwood and Terry Pinkard came out this year. Sadly they’re only available in hardback, and are currently super-expensive. If you’d like your own copy of the *Phenomenology*, I recommend getting a paperback of Miller’s translation for now.

  Happily, Terry Pinkard put an old version of his translation on his website for anyone to use, and I’ll be sharing excerpts of that for the relevant weeks of the course.

- **Nietzsche’s *Gay Science* (GS)**

  I’ll be using Walter Kaufmann’s translation, currently available for a fiver online. The Cambridge University Press edition, translated by Josefine Nauckhoff, is also fine. Steer clear of any other English translations you might come across. You’ll need to buy (or arrange to have reliable access to) a copy of one of these for the course.

**Secondary Texts:**

I’ll give more detailed week-by-week recommendations as the course progresses. But there are three great books, each tying together most of the material we’ll look at on this course, which I’ve found particularly helpful:


  A deceptively boring title for a great book. Pinkard gives readable digests of the broad outlines of Kantian and Hegelian philosophy, including excellent treatments of many important figures that we’ll only touch upon on the course. As a good Hegelian, he has lots of interesting things to say about the social and historical context that shaped the philosophers he’s discussing.


  Craig tries to show how the figures on our course can be seen as fitting into an overarching narrative about the changing ways in which philosophers have thought about our place in the natural world. It’s more interesting than that makes it sound. Pro: takes in loads more stuff than we cover on this course; maybe the most readable of the three books; Con: Doesn’t say much about Kant or Nietzsche.

Perhaps not the most thrilling title either. But this book is all about the big philosophical picture we’re trying to get a look at on this course, and why it matters. It’s called ‘modernism as a philosophical problem’ because Pippin thinks that Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche are all articulating, and in different ways struggling with, a vision of what it means to live one’s life in a ‘modern’ society. Even though they were writing 100-200 years ago, he argues they still do the best job of diagnosing our current problems, and carving up the space of possible answers. Only physical copies of this one in the library, sadly.

**Week 1: Introduction; Hume; Kant**

Core reading: None (No tutorials this week – but get started on the reading for next week, and perhaps take a look at some of the week 1 resources I post!)

Additional Reading: Kant: *What is Enlightenment?*; Foucault: *What is Enlightenment?*; Schopenhauer: excerpt from *World as Will and Representation*. [All available on Learn; all short and easy (except maybe Foucault)]

**Week 2: Kant’s Critical Project**


Additional Reading:
- Pinkard: *German Philosophy*... ch.1

**Week 3: Kant’s Transcendental Deduction**


Additional Reading:
- Pinkard: *German Philosophy*... ch.1

**Week 4: From Kant to Hegel**

Core reading: *PoS*, Introduction; Hegel: *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*, ch.3: Freedom, the Individual, and the State [.pdfs on Learn]

Additional Reading:
- Pippin: *Modernism as...* ch.3

**Week 5:** From Consciousness to Self-Consciousness

**Core reading:** *PoS*: §90-§110; §166-§197 [.pdfs on Learn]

Additional Reading:
- Pinkard: *German Philosophy*... ch.9
- Craig: *The Mind of God*... ch.4

**Week 6:** From Self-Consciousness to World Spirit

**Core Reading:** *PoS*: §197-§231 [.pdfs on Learn]

Additional Reading:
- Charles Taylor (1979): *Hegel and Modern Society*, ch.2
- Stern: *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to PoS*, ch.5

**Week 7:** From Hegel to Marx

**Core Reading:** Marx: *The German Ideology: Part I: Feurbach* [https://bit.ly/2npgntD]

Additional Reading:
- Craig: *The Mind of God*... ch.5
- Pinkard: *German Philosophy*... Introduction to pt.4

**Week 8:** Introducing Nietzsche

**Core Reading:** Nietzsche: *On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense; Beyond Good and Evil* ch.1: *On the Prejudices of Philosophers* [.pdfs on Learn]

Additional Reading:
- Nietzsche: *Twilight of the Idols*, ch.1 ‘The Problem of Socrates’

**Week 9:** The Gay Science (I)

**Core Reading:** Nietzsche: *The Gay Science, Book I*

Additional Reading:
- Pippin: *Modernism as*... ch.4
Week 10: The Gay Science (II)

Core Reading: Nietzsche: *The Gay Science, Book 3*

Additional Reading:
- Nietzsche: *The Gay Science, Book 2*
- Nietzsche: *On the Genealogy of Morals, Essay 2*

Week 11: The Gay Science (III)

Core Reading: Nietzsche: *The Gay Science, Book 4*

Additional Reading:
- Nietzsche: *On the Genealogy of Morals, Essay 3*
- Pippin: *Modernism as… ch.6*