

# *Syllabus: Critics of Modernity*

PHIL 329, Fall 2003

TR 1:15-3:00

Office Hours: TR 9-9:30; W 1-3; & by appt.

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Hello, and welcome to **Critics of Modernity**. In this course, we will examine the concept and practice of modernity from a post-colonial perspective. We will begin with an introduction to the self-understanding of modernity specifically through the writings of Immanuel Kant and Antoine de Condorcet. We will look to its complement in the sociological or historical materialist approach, specifically the critical modernism of Karl Marx and world-systems theory of Immanuel Wallerstein. We then turn to non-Eurocentric perspectives, especially as they have emerged in Post-Colonial and Diasporic Philosophy, and will conclude the course with a genealogical critique of the disciplinary foundation for modernity as presented by the influential French writer Michel Foucault.

## **TEXTS**

- Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays* (Hackett, 1983)
- Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (Signet, 1998)
- Robert C.J. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Blackwell, 2001)
- Immanuel Wallerstein, *Utopistics: Or, Historical Choices of the Twenty-First Century* (The New Press, 1998)
- Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Vintage, 1979)
- Copy Packet (Available in Philosophy Department Office, Campion D6)

## **READING CALENDAR**

### *Section 1: What is Enlightenment?*

#### **Week One: August 28**

- Introduction

#### **Week Two: September 2 & 4**

- Kant, *What is Enlightenment?*
- Goldmann, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*
- Young, *Post-Colonialism* [pp. 1-69]

#### **Week Three: September 9**

- Diderot, *Encyclopedia*
- Condorcet, *Progress of the Human Mind*
- **(No class Thursday)**

#### **Week Four: September 16 & 18**

- Kant, *Idea For a Universal History*
- Kant, *To Perpetual Peace*

### *Section 2: Critical Modernism*

#### **Week Five: September 23 & 25**

- Marx & Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*
- Berman, *All That is Solid Melts Into Air*
- Young, *Post-Colonialism* [pp. 73-157]

#### **Week Six: September 30, October 2**

- Wallerstein, *The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System*

#### **Week Seven: October 7 & 9**

- Wallerstein, *The End of What Modernity?*
- Wallerstein, *Three Ideologies or One?*

### *Section 3: Against Eurocentrism*

#### **Week Eight: October 14 & 16**

- Young, *Post-Colonialism* [pp. 161-334]
- Serequeberhan, *The Critique of Eurocentrism*

#### **Week Nine: October 21 & 23**

- Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas*

#### **Week Ten: October 28 & 30**

- Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*

#### **Week Eleven: November 4 & 6**

- Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*

### *Section 4: Genealogy of Modernity*

#### **Week Twelve: November 11 & 13**

- Young, *Post-Colonialism* [pp. 337-428]
- Foucault, *Discipline & Punish*

#### **Week Thirteen: November 18 & 20**

- Foucault, *Discipline & Punish*

#### **Week Fourteen: November 25**

- Foucault, *Discipline & Punish*
- **(No class Thursday)**

#### **Week Fifteen: December 2 & 4**

- Wallerstein, *Utopistics*

#### **Week Sixteen: December 9**

- Conclusion
- **Study Day: December 11 (No class)**

## ***ASSIGNMENTS***

- **Précis (20 points).** Every Student will be responsible for one précis—an analysis of the primary argument in one reading. These will be delivered in class and serve as the point of origin for our discussions.
- **Section Analyses (4 at 10 points each).** The week following our conclusion of each section, each student will write a 1000 word analysis of a major theme of that section, developed alone or in dialogue with the Instructor. These will be due September 25, October 16, November 13, and December 4.
- **Research Essay (1 at 40 points).** The primary assignment for the course is a Research Essay on a topic of the student's choosing, developed through discussion with the Instructor and utilizing Young's comprehensive bibliography and analysis of post-colonialism. Students will turn in a Rough Draft on or before November 25. The Research Essay is due on December 16, and will be a minimum of 5000 words (about 15 pages).
- **Attendance... *is mandatory.*** In the event that you miss class but do not wish it to count against you, you may provide a 500-word summary and analysis of the reading material for that day, due the following class without exception.

## ***ADDITIONAL INFORMATION***

- The Instructor reserves the right to adjust reading and writing assignments described in this syllabus with notice provided in class to the students.
- Gender-neutral writing in philosophy is the accepted practice recommended by the American Philosophical Association. The words "man" and "mankind" do not refer to humanity; phrases such as "everyone has a right to his own property" contain a faulty pronoun reference (substitute 'abortion' for 'property' to see why). Appropriate language use includes, for example: "humanity", "humankind", "her/his", "his or her", etc. When quoting writers who utilize non-inclusive language, leave their words in the original. Gender specific language is, of course, appropriate when referring to a gender class such as "men" or "women." Contact the instructor if you have additional questions. I strongly encourage you to read *Guidelines for Non-Sexist Use of Language* by Virginia L. Warren, originally published in the *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* in February 1986 (Vol. 59, Number 3, pp. 471-482; it can be found at the APA web site <<http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/publications/texts/nonsexist.html>>.
- From the *Catalog*: "The University expects students to be honest in their academic work. Academic dishonesty is viewed as an ethical issue and a violation of the principles of justice and personal responsibility inherent in the University's ideals as expressed in its Statement of Mission and Goals. In particular, students must refrain from plagiarism [the misuse of published or unpublished works of another by claiming them as one's own], cheating and collusion in connection with examinations and must acknowledge fully all sources and all assistance received in work submitted to the faculty for evaluation. In the event of academic dishonesty in class assignments or examinations, the instructor will normally assign an "F" with no possibility of making up the grade by means of additional work. In serious cases the instructor will normally assign an "F" for the course and will notify the Academic Honesty Committee. Specific information on the policy and procedures regarding Academic Honesty are available in the Offices of the Deans and Vice President for Academic Affairs and in the Policies section of this catalog." *The Instructor reserves the right to require any or all students to turn in electronic copies of their assignments for on-line plagiarism evaluation.*
- I encourage all students concerned about their writing ability to contact the Writing Center in Cowell Hall, Room 227 (422-6713). Additional inquiries and training regarding study habits may be directed to the Learning Center (x6715).
- Students with demonstrated disabilities are encouraged to speak with me as soon as possible in order to identify any ways in which your disability may be accommodated, and to contact Disability Related Services, University Center, Room 310 (x2613).
- Students experiencing any kinds of personal and/or academic difficulties are encouraged to utilize the free services of the Counseling Center, located on the ground floor of Gillson Hall (422-6352), which can assist you with interpersonal relationship problems, family difficulties, depression, stress, sexual concerns, substance abuse, time management, self-esteem, eating problems, anxiety, and acquaintance rape. Individual, couples, and group counseling are available, as well as referrals for longer-term counseling or a more specialized approach.
- After Census Day (September 19), students who withdraw from class will receive a "W" on their transcript. If you expect to withdraw from the class, I encourage you to decide prior to that date. September 19 is also the last day to change to or from the Pass/Fail option. The final date for all withdrawals is November 7.

- **Learning Outcomes:** By the end of the session you will be able to: *Read, interpret and explain* major figures within the enlightenment and critical modernist traditions; *identify* major themes in modern philosophy including progress, colonialism, Eurocentrism, and world-systems; *explain* the importance of contemporary post-colonial analysis.