

HI2A5-30 Individual, Polis and Society: Philosophical Reflections on History

20/21

Department

History

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Mark Philp

Credit value

30

Module duration

23 weeks

Assessment

60% coursework, 40% exam

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module will introduce students to a range of long-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century primary texts in which there is sustained reflection and commentary on the individual, the polity, and an emerging conception of society. In doing so, this module raises broader philosophical questions about the construction of identity, character and virtue, political realism and idealism, and relativism and individualism. The module also involves students in reflecting on the changes in styles of painting, architecture and fashion and linking this to the core themes.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

The emphasis of the module is on how as historians we should approach some of the major pieces of writing of the period, both the more and the less philosophical. Consequently, a core component of the module is encouraging a close reading of the primary texts, coupling this with raising questions about the importance of historical context in generating and reflecting critically on such readings. The module is structured thematically, taking conceptions of the individual, then the polis, then society; but within those themes it is structured chronologically, allowing students to

have a sense of the increasing interaction of different lines of argument. The module depends on students reading primary texts and the assessment and examination focuses on these texts.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Week 1: Deliberating the Self: Journals/Diaries/Autobiography: John Bunyan; Samuel Pepys; Dudley Ryder; James Boswell, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Benjamin Franklin

Week 2: Female Constructions: Mary Wollstonecraft (A Vindication, Maria) and Mary Hays (Memoirs of Emma Courtney)

Week 3: Black Narratives: The History of Mary Prince

Week 4: The Romantic Self: Leopardi/Stendhal/Hazlitt/Moritz

Week 5: Self (and other) Portraits

Week 6: Reading week

Week 7: Nature and State: Government and the individual: Thomas Hobbes and John Locke

Week 8: Institutions, 'Spirit', Virtues and Vices: B de Mandeville and C.L. Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu

Week 9: Divergent Republics: J J Rousseau / Federalist Papers

Week 10: Improvement and its Critics: William Godwin /Thomas Malthus

Week 11: Constitutionalism: G. W. F. Hegel – Philosophy of Right

Week 12: The architecture of power: reading cities and buildings

Week 13: The Discovery of Society: Kames/Millar

Week 14: The Critique of the Social: J J Rousseau – Discourse on Origin of Inequality/Adam Ferguson - Origins

Week 15: Society's Productivity: Adam Smith Bk V

Week 16: Reading week

Week 17: The Beaux Monde and 'Bon ton': Fashion Clothes/Hair/goods/The Tatler/Spectator

Week 18: The Contribution of Labour: E. Sieyes, What is the Third Estate/Paine, Agrarian Justice/H. St Simon/Robert Owen

Week 19: The Nation as Community: J. G. Herder/ J. G. Fichte Addresses

Week 20: Order and Change: E. Burke – Reflections/ J. S. Mill Spirit of the Age

Week 21: Democratic Society: Alexis de Tocqueville Democracy in America 1835 and 1840

Week 22: Historical Determinism/All that is Solid: Karl Marx

Week 23: Revision

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of theoretical approaches to the writing of history and philosophy.
- Communicate ideas and findings, adapting to a range of situations, audiences and degrees of complexity.
- Generate ideas through the analysis of a range of primary source texts and material.
- Analyse and evaluate the different contributions to an understanding of the period provided by primary sources from across a range of disciplines.

- Act with limited supervision and direction within defined guidelines, accepting responsibility for achieving deadlines.

Indicative reading list

- Dan Edelstein, *The Enlightenment: A Genealogy* (2010)
- M.Fitzpatrick, P. Jones, C. Knellwolf and I. McCalman *The Enlightenment World* ed. (2004)
- Foucault, M. *Society must be Defended* (2003)
- P.Hazard, *European thought in the C18th* (1965)
- Hawthorne, G., *Enlightenment and Despair* (1987)
- Hazard, Paul, *The European Mind, 1680 – 1715* (Meridian, 1963)
- Hont I. and M. Ignatieff, eds., *Wealth and Virtue* (1983)
- Israel, Jonathan, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750* (2002)
- Israel, Jonathan, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity and the Emancipation of Man 1670-1752* (2006)
- Israel, Jonathan, *Democratic Enlightenment: Philosophy, revolution and human rights* (2011)
- Nisbet, R., *A History of the Idea of Progress* (1980)
- D.Outram, *The Enlightenment* (1995)
- Roy Porter, *Enlightenment : Britain and the Making of the Modern World* (2000)
- John Robertson, *The Case for Enlightenment: Scotland and Naples 1680-1760* (2005)
- J Schneewind, *Moral Philosophy from Montaigne to Kant* (1990) vols 1 and 2
- J Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy* (1998)
- Larry Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual: the Origins of Western Liberalism* (2014)
- Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (1989)

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Subject specific skills

See learning outcomes.

Transferable skills

See learning outcomes.

Study

Study time

| Type | Required |
|----------|----------------------------|
| Lectures | 20 sessions of 1 hour (7%) |
| Seminars | 20 sessions of 1 hour (7%) |
| Total | 300 hours |

| Type | Required |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Tutorials | 4 sessions of 1 hour (1%) |
| Other activity | 2 hours (1%) |
| Private study | 254 hours (85%) |
| Total | 300 hours |

Private study description

History modules require students to undertake extensive independent research and reading to prepare for seminars and assessments. As a rough guide, students will be expected to read and prepare to comment on three substantial texts (articles or book chapters) for each seminar taking approximately 3 hours. Each assessment requires independent research, reading around 6-10 texts and writing and presenting the outcomes of this preparation in an essay, review, presentation or other related task.

Other activity description

Revision session

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group D1

| | Weighting | Study time |
|----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Seminar contribution | 10% | |
| 1500 word essay | 10% | |
| 3000 word essay | 40% | |
| 7 day take-home assessment | 40% | |

Feedback on assessment

written feedback on essay and exam cover sheets; student/tutor dialogues in one-to-one tutorials.

[Past exam papers for HI2A5](#)

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History

This module is Option list A for:

- UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
 - Year 2 of V100 History
 - Year 2 of V100 History
- UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
 - Year 2 of VM11 History and Politics
 - Year 2 of VM11 History and Politics
 - Year 2 of VM11 History and Politics
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology

This module is Option list B for:

- UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
 - Year 2 of V100 History
 - Year 2 of V100 History
- UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
 - Year 2 of VM11 History and Politics
 - Year 2 of VM11 History and Politics
 - Year 2 of VM11 History and Politics

This module is Option list C for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology