

**HISTORY 6230-301: European Thought and Culture from the French Revolution to World War One**

**Fall 2023**

**McNeil Center room 105**

**Wed. 3:30-6:30**

**WARREN BRECKMAN**

**College Hall 206E**

**Office Hours: Monday 2:00-3:00**

Or by Appointment

898-8518

breckman@ sas.upenn.edu

This course examines selected movements and figures in nineteenth-century European intellectual and cultural history. Through a mix of primary and secondary readings, our goal will be twofold: to deepen your knowledge of some major currents of thought during this pivotal period and to introduce you to some recent methodological approaches and interpretive debates that are presently animating the field of intellectual history. Each week, a student or two (depending on our numbers) will be responsible for introducing the work to be discussed and initiating the discussion.



**Course Requirements:**

\* Review of a recent book in nineteenth-century European intellectual and/or cultural history (1000 words, due Oct 6). Please discuss your selection with me.

\* Presentation(s) in class

\* Essay (5000 words maximum, due Dec. 18). You have two options:

1. You may write a critical historiographical review essay (5000 words). Select an array of books and articles on a specific theme. Discuss the problem that unifies these historical

works and the approaches and arguments that your authors make in order to address this problem. How successful are they (individually and as a group) in their treatment? Remember that a scholarly discussion does not happen in a vacuum. How do these texts 'speak' to each other? And are there larger contextual issues that might help explain the emergence of this historiographical problem and/or shifts in the way historians have approached it? Based on this exploration of existing literature, do you see unanswered questions and/or new points of departure that future scholarship might take? You can build on one of the topics covered in our syllabus. Conversely, our syllabus is VERY far from exhaustive, either topically or geographically; so feel free to take this essay in a direction that opens onto your own interest. But please consult with me.

2. You may write a research paper on a subject of your choice. Again, you can either build on the course readings or explore a topic or region that is not covered in the syllabus. Please consult with me.

**The following books are available for purchase at the Penn Bookstore:**

Peter Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History*  
Warren Breckman, ed. *European Romanticism: A Brief History with Documents*  
Hegel, *Introduction to The Philosophy of History*  
Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Marx-Engels Reader*  
Joan Scott, *Only Paradoxes to Offer: French Feminists and the Rights of Men*  
Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*  
Steven E. Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany, 1890-1990*

**Not ordered at the bookstore, but readily available through BorrowDirect, Interlibrary Loan and online used book vendors:**

Helena Rosenblatt, *The Lost History of Liberalism: From Ancient Rome to the Twenty-First Century*  
Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration*  
H. Glenn Penny and Matti Bunzel, eds. *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire*  
George Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*  
Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Against Nature* (either the Penguin or the Dover editions)

**All books are on reserve at Van Pelt Library**

**All selections from *The Cambridge History of Modern European Thought* are available in e-book form through Van Pelt Library:**

[www-cambridge-org.proxy.library.upenn.edu/core/books/cambridge-history-of-modern-european-thought/BA66987D51FE2C4868D3553BAF329FBA](http://www-cambridge-org.proxy.library.upenn.edu/core/books/cambridge-history-of-modern-european-thought/BA66987D51FE2C4868D3553BAF329FBA)

**Other readings will be posted in Canvas in the relevant weekly module.** If possible, print these out and read them in hard copy. Have them readily available for use during our meetings. My experience, for what it's worth, is that students get more out of a text when they have it "in hand" and can annotate it.

**Aug 30 Introduction**

Warren Breckman and Peter E. Gordon, "Introduction," *Cambridge History of Modern European Thought, Vol I: The Nineteenth Century*, 1-16. Please read prior to our meeting.

### **Sept 6 Intellectual History**

Anthony Grafton, "The History of Ideas: Precept and Practice, 1950-2000 and Beyond"; Dominick LaCapra, "Rethinking Intellectual History and Reading Texts"; Warren Breckman, "Intellectual History and the Interdisciplinary Ideal"; Warren Breckman, "Two Cheers for Context," *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, 97, Heft 1 (March 2023), 13-21

### **Sept 13 The French Revolution and Historical Consciousness**

Melvin Richter, "Introduction to JHI Translation of 'Krise'"; Reinhard Koselleck, "Krise"; Koselleck, "Begriffsgeschichte and Social History"; Peter Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History*

### **Sept 20 Romanticism: Aesthetic Self-Definitions**

Breckman, "Introduction: A Revolution in Culture," *European Romanticism: A Brief History with Documents*; August Wilhelm Schlegel, "Lectures on Dramatic Arts and Letters," in Breckman; William Wordsworth, "Preface to 'Lyrical Ballads'," in Breckman; Friedrich Schlegel, "Athenaeum Fragment # 116" and "On Incomprehensibility," in Breckman; M.H. Abrams, "Apocalypse: Theme and Romantic Variations"

### **Sept 27 Extending the Public Sphere Model: English Romanticism as Example**

Anthony LaVopa, "Conceiving a Public: Ideas and Society in Eighteenth-Century Europe"; Reinhard Wittmann, "Was there a Reading Revolution at the End of the Eighteenth Century?"; Andrew Franta, *Romanticism and the Rise of the Mass Public*, 1-75; Marilyn Butler, "Culture's Medium: the role of the review"

### **Oct 4 German Idealism: Visions of History from Kant to Hegel**

Kant, "What is Enlightenment?"; Kant "Idea for a Universal History with Cosmopolitan Intent," 128-144; Terry Pinkard, "German Idealism: The Thought of Modernity," in Breckman and Gordon, *Cambridge History of Modern European Thought*; Hegel, *Introduction to The Philosophy of History*, 12-82

### **Oct 6 Your book review is due. Please submit as a Word document in an email attachment**

### **Oct 11 Politics and Religion in the Formation of Radicalism**

J.G.A. Pocock, "The Concept of a Language and the métier d'historien: some considerations on practice"; Breckman, "The Young Hegelians: Philosophy as Critical Praxis," in *Cambridge History of Modern European Thought*; Breckman, "Politics, Religion, and Personhood: The Left Hegelians and the Christian German State," in *Politics, Religion and Art: Divisions and Debate in the Hegelian School*; Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*, xxxiii-xliv, 1-32; Breckman, "Diagnosing the 'German Misery': Radicalism and the Problem of National Character, 1830 to 1848"

### **Oct 18 Marx and Socialism**

Gareth Stedman Jones, "European Socialism from the 1790s to the 1890s," in *Cambridge History of Modern European Thought*; Karl Marx, *Marx-Engels Reader* ("Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy," 3-7; Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right: Introduction*," 53-65; and *The German Ideology*, 146-202); Breckman, "Man and Animal in the Young Marx"; Breckman, "Marx and Romanticism"

### **Oct 25 Varieties of Feminism**

Naomi Andrews, "The Woman Question: Liberal and Socialist Critiques of the Status of Women," in *Cambridge History of Modern European Thought*; Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Ch 2-3; Claire Demar, "My Law of the Future"; John Stuart Mill, *The Subjection of Women*, Ch. 1; Joan Scott, *Only Paradoxes to Offer: French Feminists and the Rights of Men*

### **Nov 1 Race, Imperialism, Anthropology**

Adam Kuper, "Civilization, Culture, and Race: Anthropology in the Nineteenth Century," in *Cambridge History of Modern European Thought*; George Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, Ch. 4-5; H. Glenn Penny, "Bastian's Museum: On the Limits of Empiricism and the Transformation of German Ethnology," in *Worldly Provincialism. German Anthropology in the Age of Empire*; Andrew Zimmerman, "Adventures in the Skin Trade: German Anthropology and Colonial Corporeality," in *Worldly Provincialism. German Anthropology in the Age of Empire*

### **Nov 8 Liberalism and Empire**

Jerrold Seigel, "European Liberalism in the Nineteenth Century," in *Cambridge History of Modern European Thought*; Helena Rosenblatt, *The Lost History of Liberalism: From Ancient Rome to the Twenty-First Century*, Ch 2-4; Breckman, Review of Rosenblatt, *The Lost History of Liberalism*, in *The New Republic*; Jennifer Pitts, "Ideas of Empire: Civilization, Race, and Global Hierarchy," in *Cambridge History of Modern European Thought*; Duncan Bell, "The Dream Machine: On Liberalism and Empire," *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire*, 19-61

### **Nov 15 Urbanism, Decadence and Degeneration**

Mary Gluck, "Decadence and the 'Second Modernity'," in *Cambridge History of Modern European Thought*; Charles Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life"; Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Against Nature*, prologue, Ch. 1-2; Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, c. 1848-1918*, pp. 1-73, 109-152, 222-240; Max Nordau, *Degeneration*, pp. 1-44; William James, "Review of *Degeneration* by Max Nordau (1895), 19-20; George Bernard Shaw, "The Sanity of Art: An Exposure of the Current Nonsense about Artists being Degenerate," pp. 20-24

### **Nov 22 No Class – Thanksgiving**

### **Nov 29 Nietzsche**

Christian Emden, "Nihilism, Pessimism, and the Conditions of Modernity," in *Cambridge History of Modern European Thought*; Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense"; Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, Book I, Book III, Book IV, §283, §285, §434, §354, §355

### **Dec 6 Legacies: Nietzsche as Example of Reception History**

Martyn P. Thompson, "Reception Theory and the Interpretation of Historical Meaning"; Steven E. Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany 1890-1990*

## **Bibliography<sup>1</sup>**

Anthony Grafton, "The History of Ideas: Precept and Practice, 1950-2000 and Beyond," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67, 1 (2006), 1-32.

Dominick LaCapra, "Rethinking Intellectual History and Reading Texts," in *Modern European Intellectual History: Reappraisals and New Perspectives*, ed. Dominick LaCapra and Steven L. Kaplan (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982).

Warren Breckman, "Intellectual History and the Interdisciplinary Ideal," in *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History*, eds. Darrin McMahon and Samuel Moyn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

"Two Cheers for Context," *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, special issue to celebrate 100 years of the DVjs, 97, Heft 1 (March 2023), 13-21.

Melvin Richter and Michaela Richter, "Introduction: Translation of Reinhart Koselleck's 'Krise'," in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67, 2 (April 2006), 343-356.

Reinhard Koselleck, "Crisis," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67, 2 (April 2006), 357-400.

M.H. Abrams, "Apocalypse: Theme and Variations," *The Correspondent Breeze. Essays on English Romanticism* (New York: Norton, 1984).

Anthony LaVopa, "Conceiving a Public: Ideas and Society in Eighteenth-Century Europe," *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 64, 1 (March 1992), 79-116.

Reinhard Wittmann, "Was there a Reading Revolution at the End of the Eighteenth Century?," in ed. Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier, *A History of Reading in the West* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999).

Marilyn Butler, "Culture's Medium: the role of the review," *The Cambridge Companion to British Romanticism*, ed. Stuart Curran (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

J.G.A. Pocock, "The concept of a language and the *métier d'historien*: some considerations on practice," in *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. Anthony Pagden (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

---

<sup>1</sup> Excludes all assigned books and chapters from *The Cambridge History of Modern European Thought*

Warren Breckman, "Politics, Religion, and Personhood: The Left Hegelians and the Christian German State," in *Politics, Religion and Art: Divisions and Debate in the Hegelian School*, ed. Douglas Moggach (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2011).

Warren Breckman, "Diagnosing the 'German Misery': Radicalism and the Problem of National Character, 1830-1848," *Between Reform and Revolution: Studies in the History of German Socialism and Communism*, ed. by D.E. Barclay and E.D. Weitz (Oxford: Berghahn, 1998).

Warren Breckman, "Man and Animal in the Young Marx", published as "Marx, Mensch und Tier. Über die Evolution vom Junghegelianer zum Sozialisten und Kommunisten," *Karl Marx im 21. Jahrhundert: Bilanz und Perspektiven*, eds. Martin Endreß and Christian Jansen. Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2020, 69-81

Warren Breckman, "Marx and Romanticism," *Critical Review*, vol. 34, 1 (2022), 28-52

Martyn P. Thompson, "Reception Theory and the Interpretation of Historical Meaning," *History and Theory*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Oct. 1993), 248-272.