# History and Texts of Philosophy of Modern Times

## Course Information

| 5.0 credits | 45.0 h | 1q |

### Teacher(s):
- Depré Olivier (coordinator)
- Maesschalck Marc

### Language:
Français

### Place of the course:
Louvain-la-Neuve

### Main themes:
The course is intended as an introduction to the study of texts and doctrines of modern philosophy.

It identifies the main aspects of the history of modern philosophy, its key trends and prominent thinkers, and will develop students' critical reading of the great works of modern philosophy. Authors studied will include Bacon, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Hume, Kant and Hegel.

### Aims:

1. By the end of the course, students will be familiar with the major movements and significant writers of modern philosophy, and will be able to identify its key underlying issues and describe the important ongoing debates. They will be able to comment on, analyse and critique one or more major modern philosophy texts and situate them in the overall context of modern philosophy, from Bacon and Descartes to Hegel.

### Evaluation methods:

Students will be asked to write a 10 page paper to be based off of a reading of one of the proposed texts. After emailing the paper, the student will receive a question on the paper to be prepared for the oral exam. The student will have approximately 15 minutes to present this answer during the oral exam. The paper may be written in French, English, Spanish, or German, with the professor's agreement.

### Content:

**Culture and counter-culture: From Maimon to Fichte**

In one of his most polished works, Characteristics of the Present Age (also known as the Grundzüge), Fichte set out to construct in 1804 a philosophical model of history in order to situate his own era. In the spirit of Erasmus, Molière or La Bruyère, but also incorporating the certain critiques from Maimon and Platner regarding the pretentions of enlightened rationalism, Fichte proposes a minute analysis of the mental distortions that characterize his time, so proud as it was of its modern science and at the same, according to Fichte, so distanced from the wisdom of ancient science. For Fichte, the whole problem lies in his contemporaries' incapacity to think through their relationship with limits. He saw his era as divided between two tendencies, one arbitrarily restricting rational judgment to the domain of sensory perceptions, and the other taking advantage of this lack of reflection on limits inherent to the ambient empiricism as a means of escaping it and seeking out a pathway to the repressed power of imagination and the unconscious. For Fichte, this distension constituted the main roadblock on the way towards a true science, one that manages to give an essential role to its relationship with limits, beyond the constrained space of technical considerations about fallibility and the surplus of consciousness that would be provided by an ethics of values.
Bibliography:


Programmes / formations proposant cette unité d'enseignement (UE)

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