**Modern Philosophy Class Notes 2019**

**By Nous Monkey**

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**Advice**

Important, read the text in advance. The professor assumes that you read the text.

How is this philosopher reacting to the previous points in the course?

What does the terminology used by the philosopher means?

**Introduction:**

Modernity—temporal category: renaissance, Galileo, Descartes.

—evaluative category: newness.

—in modernity it is inherently the break from the middle age scholasticism.

**Middle age scholasticism**

—bring together religion and philosophy, debates about this scholasticism. The powers of the sole, the relation between man and god. The Aristotelian idea of four elements.

—Ontology, categories of being, causality (Aristotle four types). How many angels can rest on a pin? It is possible for Angels to be completely immaterial?

—Modernity rejects scholasticism and starts something new. This happens in Descartes’s meditation. Descartes recounts how he decides to doubt everything that is considered true, including all the authority of his teachers. Descartes thinks…. That there is an I who needs to think therefore is an I—this we cannot doubt.

—Descartes reproves what was thought before through his proof. Is not all a dream. Descartes reconstructs the framework of theological thinking based on the “think therefore I am”. The world is still out there. It is not based on authority from out there but on thinking.

The origin myth of modern philosophy. Why it was modern and why the previous debates were not modern? Descartes birthed modernism. The myth is too simplistic. Descartes included things from the scholastic debates.

—The origin myth is important because defines modern philosophy, the idea of break from what it was before. It conceives itself that it broke away from the authority of the past figures. Philosophy itself, not people, is the authority. Reason is the authority.

**The course is looking at later modern philosophy, Kant.**

Kant, in his notion of critique of pure reason. The idea of the power of reason and the idea of securing its own place in its proper limits.

—After looking at the critique of pure reason, we look at Kant’s practical philosophy. We look to responds to Kant: Fichte and Hegel.

—We look at reactions of both Kant and Hegel. The idea of reason as a reliable faculty starts to crumble (Nietzsche). The confidence in reason disappears.

**4 themes looking at:**

—The nature and power of reason.

Is everything ration? Are the movements of the planet rational? Cannot be put in a sensible order. Are humans the only rational animals? Or are humans not rational at all? In Marx, struggles in society reason subsides. Kierkegaard.

—What is the thinking acting subject? Can we create the world as we wish in our minds or is all given to us? The problem of authority can the I give the law to itself. The problem of the I.

—Reason itself has an history.

—Nature of philosophy. They try to redefine what philosophy is. Kant rejects metaphysics as it is and searches for a new philosophy. Philosophers repeatedly redefine philosophy.

**“What is Enlightenment?”—Kant text.**

The escape of humanity from its own self-incurred immaturity.

—emerging from immaturity.

—Enlightenment is a certain part of modern, early to mid 18th century.

—Scotland

—Germany

—France ‚ 1751-1772 Encyclopaedia

—Kant plays on the enlightenment as a process and as a period. The process of learning, Kant emphasize the meaning of it as a process of learning. “Immaturity is the inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another”. Having a spiritual adviser, a doctor to judge my diet, not use your own understanding (this is immaturity).

—In this text, tension between freedom and authority. Find out the truth yourself. At the end of the text “do all that you want but obey”.   
—The public use of reason. During the free time one is free to criticize all we want but, in the worktime, one is not allowed to criticism. We are puppeteers in the machine during doing our job, but free in the leisure time. Enlightenment remains if one is able to criticize during its free time.

—Think about. The relation of the text to Frederik the Great. Kant makes a sort of contract with the future ruler, to let one express in free time, and then people can obey.

**Session 2:**

-next two weeks, critical philosophy—Kant.

-third week, Kant’s moral philosophy.

—Because one of the reviews of the critique of pure reason was not so good, Kant wrote prolegomena. Preliminary exercise=prolegomena. This text can be used by teachers of his critical philosophy. Kant thought, teachers could use the prolegomena, and provides a more accessible version.

—General sketch of the ideas of pure reason: Starting point is the different capacities of our minds. He splits up the different activities of the mind into three: sensibility (the capacity of the mind to be affected by objects around us. Kant thinks that there are elements of sensibility which are objective. It has to do with what Kant calls intuitions. Sensibility has a particular type of representation), understanding (If we only have sensibility, we would have just a mass of intuition, a confuse flux hitting us. Blackboard just a mass of green with. Understanding is a faculty which combines and interprets our intuition. Order this mass impression into a set of concepts), reason (concerned with pure thinking, speculative thinking. Concerned with ideas, e.g. the immortality of the sole. Reason has its own particular types of representations; Kant calls them ideas).

Each of these faculties has its own object. Kant treats this different concept in three different chapter.

**Chapters of CPR:**

* “Aesthetic”—sensibility and intuition.
* “Analytic”—the understanding and its concept.
* “The dialectic”—treats the ideas of reason.

Brief introduction: Kant makes a distinction between knowledge=what comes out of a combination of concepts and intuition. Kant distinguishes this from thought. One can think about unicorns regardless they exist.

How can we have legitimate thought and not merely imaginative ones. (How do we avoid the mistake of thinking that unicorns are real) The dialectic chapter and its concern with the ideas of reason is the perfect starting point to see how Kant relates to the previous metaphysical tradition. Kant speaks about the boundaries, the legitimate space of metaphysics.

Focus on the concept of reason. Reason has to do with rationality and the idea of a logical connection between things out there. Reason is a central term in enlightenment.

—It has question which it cannot dismiss. These questions emerge from the very nature of reason. At the same time, it cannot answer them. Reason as a faculty produces questions it cannot answer. Reason, the faculty of the intellect which always asks why without leading to endless questions.

—Reason due to its very nature to ask infinite questions. Reason has this tendency to over-step its boundary and come with certain ideas which are illegitimate.

—**The notion of experience:** Reasons starts by concepts in experience. Reason is legitimate to use certain concepts. Experience=empirical, it can be proved by something out there in the world. Experience is everyday life. What is important is that there is a sensory element, not just pure thought.

—**Kant thinks that all of us have a shared experience**. There is no worry in Kant for solipsism. Objective experience, the same for everybody.

—**Kant believes that there is an objective world out there.** People partake in the same experience.

—**Reason is using this principle’s legitimately in experience, but the problem comes when it goes beyond that.** E.g. Why is the moon moving around the earth. Gravity. Then if reasons state that all things are so because of God, reason goes beyond its boundary. If we keep asking why it is a problem. Reason sees itself to take refuge in principles which are beyond experience. What it goes towards is speculative thought. It is necessary, peculate fate, of reason to dive into this type of questions.

**Nothing I can draw from everyday life which can disprove what I am talking about. The battlefield which rise out of metaphysis.**

Why Kant speaks of hidden errors? If I fall into contradiction, it must be a contradiction. Kant talks about the different parties. Dogmatism tries to set by definition the concepts like soul, causality etc. The different camp, empiricism, what is most important is what lied within the senses. Empiricism thinks of what is out there, what can be proved.

The key proposition of the empiricist: all which is in the mind was first in the senses. This is still a metaphysical claim, the claim about the nature of the mind.

**Words Used by Kant**

A priori=prior to experience. Before sensory impression.

A posteriori=based on experience. First, I sense things, observe, and that determines what I say about the nature of the cosmos.

Skepticism. There are certain metaphysical claims which we cannot know about at all. This is a big problem for metaphysics.

Indifferentism=metaphysics is a worthless pursuit; we do not need to think about any of this issues. We cannot be indifferent because it has to do with the nature of reason itself.

Reason needs to know itself and to judge which claims to be kept or not. The distinction between reasons rightful claims and groundless pretentions. The court of reason, to choose what is not ok. The court is this work, the Critique of Pure Reason. Reason is once the judge and the one accused. Reason itself is the

**Dialectic chapter:**

Term used by Plato. To opposed opinions. Kant thinks that two opposite problems without solution appears in the. Kant wants to di

\*Pure, affectively a priori   
There are three types of ideas Kant talks about in the dialectical chapter of the critique.

These types are: psychological, cosmological and theological ideas. Psychological ideas: about the sole. The claim that the soul is immortal, or a substance. Cosmological ideas, about the whole world, the entire ideas. Theological ideas are about God. These are the most fundamental products of reason, transcendental ideas.

These ideas are transcendent, beyond any possible experience.

e.g. A transcendent idea about the chalk, about chalkiness.

Cosmological ideas about the world.

This cosmological ideas are strange. Particularly the cosmological ideas which pushes reason from dogmatism. The problems which are seen here is gone do that. He split the cosmological ideas into four:

1. Is the world finite or infinite in time and space?
2. Is matter infinite divisible?
3. Is everything determined or is there free will?
4. Is there a first cause (god)?

It is always to undermine what one says in the case of all the four types of questions. These are the type of things which brings reason. These questions cannot be actually asked about reason. I Know that I have the tendency to ask question which run to far.

You identify the erroneous aspect of reason. The a priori aspect of reason lead

**Session 3:**

**Knowledge/thought**

—ideas—soul/world-whole/God

—thing in itself

Claiming knowledge about is mistaken. It does not mean that whole thinking is wrong. We can think in this domain. Ethics is about God, is about thought,

The error is mixing the two. Kant want to create the conditions for a new system of metaphysics.

David Hume, famous for his skepticism. One of the positions on the battlefield of metaphysics is skepticism. What, according to Kant, is Hume skeptical about? Causality. The billiard board analogy. Ball A hits B, and B moves in the same direction. A causes the movement of B. Necessary, when ball A hits ball B moves. Hume is skeptical of this connection. Hume is an empiricist. He thinks that all of our concepts in our mind come from experience. Everything, ultimately, is posteriori. For empiricist, all concepts in the mind can be traced back to the senses. Hume, as an empiricist, asks which is the sensory impression of causality. There is a sensory impression: Of ball A moving, of ball B moving, but not of the link. Just a movement of A and a movement of B. This is the source of skepticism of Hume.

Causality is just a bastard of imagination. The subjective necessity, i.e. habit is transferred as objective necessity. For Hume is no a priori, metaphysical concept of causality, all there is ‘is habit’.

Hume does not think that it is no causality, but that is not a priori, according to Kant.

Kant becomes assured that these set of a priori concepts do not come from experience. The mistake of Hume is that Hume is an empiricist and thinks that concepts come only from experience. Kant wants to determine the pure concepts of understanding. These concepts are part of the new metaphysics, the a priori principles. These are principles not found in experience make experience possible. If you lose causality, you lose everything, you do not understand at all.

**Kant’s solution of Humean problem:**

A judgement=combining different representations, ideas, in our thought. The water bottle is grey. Water bottle and gray, to concepts put together. Judgements can be knowledge or thought.

Four different kind of judgement: a priori and a posterior

Analytic=predicate already contained in the subject. All bachelors are unmarried man. All mammals are animals. By definition mammals are animals. Already in the definition of mammals. Analytic judgment is merely explicative, they merely explain something is already there, just extract something it is in the concept.

Synthetic concept=amplify, add new knowledge. In the concept of yesterday is not contained sunny. Things in mathematics are synthetic. 2+2 does not contain 4.

“substance persist”. Metaphysical concept, substance, and the idea is that is something which stays in time. The persisting is not contained in the nature of the substance. Yesterday it was sunny, synthetic.

**Synthetic a priori, synthetic a posterior.**

Analytic a priori, ------------‘’-----------------

You do not need to look into nature to search whether bachelors are married.

Are Synthetic a prior judgement possible? This is the main problem for Kant. Kant clarifies the Humean problem in terms of the sources of knowledge, if synthetic a priori is possible.

Is Kant’s project entirely synthetic a priori? Yes, but on a different level. Kant’s response would be that he does a different type of thinking.

**How are they possible, synthetic a prioir concept?**

Transcendental table of the concept of the understanding.

There are a priori concepts, things which we have prior to any experience. Kant derives the table from the table of judgement. These 12 concepts are the only 12 logical functions possible, according to Kant.

**Transcendental Aesthetic:**

* Sensibility—forms of intuition, space and time.
* Understanding—12 categories
* Reason—dialectical ideas, soul, god and world.

Knowledge=sensibility + understanding.

Kant’s solution to the Humean problem is a non-empirical solution. Is not that these categories are derived from experience, but that experience is derived from them.

**Session 4**

When talking about theoretical thinking one should not engage in the realm of reason, but in practical reason yes.

**Knowledge / Thought**

S&T (sensibility) Things in themselves

Categories (understanding) ideas (Reason).

**Practical philosophy is not about what we can know, but what we can do.**

What are the principles of morality? What are the things we should live by? Kant wants to find a fix rule for all society, to find rules for everybody. Kant does not want to find more principles, Kant want’s just one principle.

1. (section I and II) Search for and 2.(section III) establish the supreme principle of morality.

**Kant starts with the opinion of normal people** and then he searches for the supreme principles.

**For human, the will and reason are not one and the same**, are separated. For God, will is one with reason**,** god does not need rules, god automatically follows the rules.

**Desire makes will not obey reason**, in case of humans.

The command of reason, which imposes on the will, is an imperative. This command is not always respected by the will because of desire.

**Hypothetical/Categorical imperatives.**

Imperative=ought phrase.

Hypothetical: Because I want to protect animals, I ought to be a vegetarian.

What is the problem with hypothetical?

One might not be interested in protecting animals, not everybody aims the same thing. It is empirical, depends on what one is interested to. If one has different interests, one is not affected by the hypothetical. The hypothetical aims only for the people which care about (the aim) protecting animals.

—do x for y, and y is empirical. The problem with any empirical y is that people might disagree with it. It depends on your empirical circumstances, i.e. you could be bitten by dogs when young and hate animals, you could be a butcher. (It is subjective)

—hypothetical depends in interest. Interest is linked with desire, and desire for Kant is pathological, is not done out of rational rules.

**Categorical Imperative:**

—good in itself.

—law, ought to do.

—Maxime, subjective principle of acting, different than the law.

—form has no content. No determined content is not hypothetic. It does not have a for structure. It does not tell you to do something specific.

The maxims need to be such that they can be extend to the status of a law. They need to respect the moral law. What if this maxim is made into a law for anybody? The categorical imperative commands lawfulness in general.

The moral law: My maxims, I need to be able to will they are a moral law for everybody.

The categorical imperative: will such that your maxim becomes universal law.

—what is my person principle. If everybody acted like that, the world would be like this. Can I coherently will that it becomes a universal principle. Is it logically consistent to will that?

Will to be murdered cannot be universal law because murder would lead to lack of people which murder, inner contradiction.

**Section III. Freedom**

—The notion of freedom of the will is at the basis of Kant’s thinking.

“The concept of freedom is key to explaining the autonomy of the will”.

—The will is not necessitated by reason, there is a gap between what reason says and what the will does. The will does not have to precisely follow what is being told.

—Negative freedom: freedom from

—positive freedom: autonomy, freedom to—the will can cause things.

—autonomy=giving the law to yourself, the type of causality the will has, it is able to give itself its own law.

—A free will and a will under moral law is one and the same. The particular freedom of the will is the fact that has the capacity to give its own law.

**How is the categorical imperative possible?**

This is possible because one is both part of thought and sense. Kant talks about two worlds. In the world of the senses man is just part of the system. In the world of though man is free. Both views are true from different perspectives. (Look at the antinomy about freedom).

**Session 5**

Transcendental philosophy=conditions of possibility. Deals with the faculties of the mind which make objects possible. Conditions of possibility of experience—space and time, 12 categories. Conditions of possibility of metaphysics—ideas. Conditions of possibility of morals, freedom.

—important for German idealism

—Kantian, anit-kantianns, post-kantians.

Fichte

**Context of paper**

—at the start of the text, he says that he is Kantian. But later we’ll see that he is different.

—Reinhold, a popularizer of Kant’s philosophy. Kant’s philosophy is attacked by skepticism. Skeptical about the possibility to the 12 categories. Reinhold thinks that Kant’s philosophy needs a firmer foundation.

—Reinhold, first principle which everybody agrees. Reinhold calls it the principle of consciousness. Subject (me), object (this book) and representation (how we perceive this book)—this is a fact. Based on this fact, he reconstructs Kant’s philosophy.

—Fichte is not convinced with Reinhold’s philosophy, but with his direction, of finding the principle. Fichte tries to build his own system.

—this doctrine of science is not only about physics the empirical exploration of what is around us, but about all arias of knowledge.

—Kant’s philosophy needs to be a system.

—About the concept of The Doctrine of Science. He is responding to the skeptical attacks and to Reinhold.

**What is a science?—a systematic whole**

—what is a science? A science possesses systematic whole. By systematic he means that there is this single principle which unites the whole of science. There is one certain proposition, first principle, which makes the rest certain. First principle: unity, wholeness and certainty

—The first principle in sciences: Logic (non-contradiction), biology (something to do with life), physics (physical matter and motion).

—The first principle needs to be certain in advance. The science cannot be proved in that science, because that science is based on the first principle. (F principle🡪science).

—content and form

—**how is science possible?**

—the science of science answers the question how science is possible.

—We need a science of science to explain the first principle of all other sciences.

—Science of science=doctrine of science.

—The science of science has its own first principle which is unprovable at all.

—The experiment: create the doctrine of science and afterwards see which is the first principle. Through the experiment one discovers the first principles.

**Acts of the mind and self-reflection**

—acts of the mind-everything that exists in the mind is due to acts of the mind=all my knowledge is the result of different acts in my mind.

—this everyday acts which create my knowledge, my thought-these are not the acts which produce the first principle. An additional act is required, self-reflection.

—free act of the mind=the first principle of all the sciences? This is similar to Kant’s practical philosophy but uses it in theoretical philosophy.

**What is the first principle (look at text):**

A=A, tautological expression of identity—indisputable fact.

—necessary connection between A and A.

—positing=assuming the existence of something. Assuming the necessary connection between A is A.

—there needs to be a thinking subject which thinks A is A.

—I=I

—I am I. 🡪 Self-positing

—I am thinking myself. I am the subject and the object of thought.

—the first principle of science is: the posits itself absolutely. One thinks oneself as a subject and an object. —the I also posits a not-I.

**Session 7 Hegel-Phenomenology of spirit**

**Introduction**

—Hegel ‘Dialectic’: progression through negation,

—what is negated is not completely destroyed, it is maintained.

—the movement of spirit towards absolute spirit.

—the movement of the concept.

—Sublation is the heart of the dialectic. Sublation=negation, preservation, raising up.

Spirit, the knower, reason -----------------🡪Spirit and concept come together=Absolute

Concept, the known

**Absolute/absolute knowing**

Phenomenology=to Hegel coming to be of science as such or knowledge. Process of appearance (refers to appearing). Science of appearing. What appears in the form of consciousness. Science of experience of consciousness.

1. **Before knowing about things, we need to think about our cognition**—Kant. This seems justified because there are more types of cognition. We need to think of the limits of reason. Hegel states that Kant’s idea leads to the idea that you do not know about the think in itself.—it is natural to think that you do not know things as they are in themselves. (absolute-in itself

🡪Either cognition is passive medium, or it is an active instrument—either way this differs from objects (i.e. what we know differs from what is)🡪one cannot know the absolute. Kant arrives at this wrong conclusion because he presupposes that cognition works as a medium or an instrument.

**Kant makes presuppositions due to fear of error**—Kant’s error—the worry that there is a distinction between things in themselves and things we actually cognize.

1. **cognition-knowledge** is truthful of Hegel-the problem to Hegel is that Kantians think we can still talk about truth (even though we are separated from it).

—the absolute is true and the true is the absolute. We do not yet understand because we do not understand what the words mean.

—speculative proposition—a proposition of identity which you accept for the moment but needs to be proved later. Only at the end of the phenomenology one can prove it.

—subject=substance

—truth=system

—God=being.

3.**We cannot assume that we know what the absolute, cognition, objective, subjective means**. We need to discover through inquiry which these are.

—Natural consciousness—evolves in time by changing and adapting its views, education itself.

—consciousness and the concept it knows have to change

—negation towards a particular shape is necessary.

—Goal, self-knowledge, absolute knowledge.

—paragraph 81. Me as an individual will naturally go through the development which the history of philosophy went through.

—paragraph 82.Knowing is our object. We want to know cognition in itself but because of the Kantian starting point we can only our cognition as it is for us.

—paragraph 84. Correspondence.—either knowing corresponds to the object (object forms the criterion of knowledge) or cognition is the stable thing and we judge what we know about objects based on whether they measure up to the criterion.

—Tries to argue that the very separation between our concepts and objects keeps leading to contradictions and in this discussion all we talk is about knowing.

—truth is revealed to us through the dialectical process.

**Session 6**

**One of the courses themes: How the notion of philosophy changes**

The modern philosophers redefine what philosophy is:

* Kant—Philosophy as transcendental philosophy
* Hegel—dialectics
* Marx is writing in the immediate aftermath of Hegel. A split between politically right Hegelians and young/left Hegelians. Young Hegelians: Bruere, Stirner, Feuerbach, Marx. Marx breaks later from the young Hegelians.
* Right Hegelian political consequences of Hegel’s theory.
* In *Philosophy of Right*, the idea that the historical development culminates in the Prussian state—absolutist Monarchy—according to right Hegelians
* —Kant was writing to the absolute monarch proposing a contract (in the reader—What is Enlightenment)
* —Left Hegelians are critical of the present state.
* Engels (The text—48, 8.)—They insist on continuous progress.

**What is held on and what is discarded from Hegel’s thought?**

A rejection of Hegelian idealism in favor of a materialist understanding of the world. Retained: That everything can be historicized.

Dogmatic content and dialectical method. Left Hegelians accepts the method but reject the content—p.46.

Engels says that Hegel shows that only the whole humanity can fulfill the task of philosophy.

**Feuerbach:**

Marx criticizes his peers, the left Hegelians, including Feuerbach.

His major work. The essence of Christianity.

The thought that the movement of spirit was too idealists. A to purely abstract theory. The logical, idealist, emphases he criticizes. (Idealism: things appear in thought and the rest of the thought follows). F emphasized materialism. —material reality, F states that material reality is just as real as spiritual reality.

“Atheism is the secrete of religion”. “The secret of theology is anthropology. He thinks religion should be studies as a form of anthropology since it will show something about human society. In other words, he looks at the material side of religion (everyday reality).

“The secret of theology is anthropology”. We can do anthropology by looking at religion. We have created this concept of God. This means that characteristics of divinity are actually projections of the human essence.

Engels does not agree that Feuerbach’s contribution is enormous, they think that Feuerbach does not do something so great.

— “compared with the encyclopedic wealth of the Hegelian system, achieved nothing positive beyond a turgid religion of love and a meagre, impotent morality”—p. 47.

— Feuerbach wants to find the essence of humans while Marx emphasize the dynamic aspect. The essence of humans remains an abstract idea, Platonic.

**Marx critique of Hegel**

Des Kapital: With Hegel the dialectic is standing on its head… if you want to discover the rational kernel within the mystics of its hell.

**What it means to invert Hegel**: A question of emphasis. Marx, contradiction is in the material circumstances of the people (work, money and economics).

**Marx’s context**

Europe is covered by left-wing movements socialists, anarchists, communism. These were movements that were prior to Marx. Marx was to become the theorist for these movements. A new form of discourse: A journalistic philosophy.

The notion of alienation (Already in Feuerbach) is central to Marx.

—in Feuerbach man is alienated through God.

—in Marx, it is about the alienation of the worker.

Means of production=factory and machines

The worker puts efforts in the work, but the object produced does not belong to it. The worker becomes another object in the factory.

Working could be a joyful, creative, act, work is limited, joyless. The only space where the worker can have freedom to change things is in his/her spare time. But this freedom is just of doing animal acts—sleeping, eating. (1800 industrial capitalism)

Behind all of this is the broad economic situation:

The contradiction between classes: Due to contingent social situation with owners and workers, means the worker do not yield all the profits of his/her work.

(Marx talks about the middle class and the working class).

There is a contradiction in material reality between workers and owners. This contradiction will be sublated, according to the dialectics, and will reach a higher form.

In Hegel is about contradiction between ideas, in Marx is about contradiction between classes.

**Marx—Letters to Ruge (September 1843)**

* Marx leaves Germany due to the oppressive monarchic system.
* A general discussion about the transformation of philosophy at this moment.
* Philosophy is too abstract and too academic, talking about riddles which are held just by the philosopher. Philosophy is too passive, just waiting for the absolute truth. Philosophers should criticize the social political order.
* Marx, like Kant, wants to clarify dogmatism. The communists are too dogmatic because they are too materialistic, too focused on reality. The Hegelians are too idealistic. According to Marx, it is not about just acting in political debates, is about engaging with man’s ideas—e.g. Marx’s journal is a way of combining materialism with idealism.
* Reason has always existed, but not always in a rational form—reference to Hegelian idea that rationality evolves through different stages.
* From understanding the contradiction in political reality one can understand the solution.
* Political manifestation of a deeper contradiction.

—The proletariat class does not exist as a class; it needs to be created. The workers need to be united. The proletariat are excluded from society.

—It is inside society in so far that it is outside society.

—The task according to Marx is to form the class.

—Reform of consciousness, making people aware of the exclusion of the working class.

—The proletariat become aware of themselves and sublates themselves. As soon as it is formed (as alienated) it will want to escape. Once it transforms and is no longer defined by internal contradiction it will become something else than what is now, will not be the proletariat class anymore.

**Session 7—Kierkegaard Fear and Trembling (1843)**

—One cannot judge the case of Abraham as unproblematic from the start by the final outcome (63).

—Kierkegaard criticizes college professors for being too abstract and discuss Abraham’s case as an abstract case of greatness without reflecting on the paradoxical nature of it.

—Kierkegaard wants to be with Abraham in his 3 days journey—it’s the shudder of the thought

—Linger with moment of decision—critique of Hegel—*notion of speculative proposition*=spirit is the absolute truth, you do not fully know it, but you know it’s in sight. First is affirmed, at the end of the Phenomenology of Spirit it is confirmed. Kierkegaard rejects the idea X can be first affirmed and afterwards retrospectively justified based on the result.

—Kierkegaard considers the academic philosophers, Hegelian especially, are too abstract

—In preface K criticizes Danish Hegelians— the criticism is that they go further beyond faith and try to reach philosophy. In the Hegelian conception religion and art is an inferior form of understanding of the concept than philosophy. They think that religion is something simple. There exists something which resists this idea, that religion is simple, there is something unthinkable about faith (58 and 60)

—Hegel according to K is comprehensible, but Abraham perplexes him. The case of Abraham is paradoxical.

—the paradox of Abraham: the conflict between ethical and the religious=page 60. From the ethical side, Abraham is a potential murderer. Religiously Abraham sacrifices his life.

—What is the ethical for K? Problema I—ethical as such is the universal (similar to Kant’s universal law)

—Philosophy of Right-Hegel’s social and political philosophy is expressed in this text. Here he moving to higher and higher developments. Morality organizes social activity. There are two types of morality, concepts of will—universal, duty, individual will—particular, right. (In Hegel there is a contradiction between two element, concepts of will and individual will. The conflict between concepts of will and individual will be sublated in the notion of ‘ought’ ). For Hegel morality needs to be sublated and replaced with Ethical Life-family🡪civil society🡪State.

Hegel Dialectics is based on the movement of Sublation: —preservation, —negation, —raising up.

—Kierkegaard agrees with the sublation of the moral with the ethical in Hegel, universal. However, Kierkegaard disagrees with Hegel when it comes to faith—the particular is superior than the universal.

—Read mediated in Kierkegaard’s text as Mediated.

—Why is this superiority of the particular a paradox? —The notion of a tragic here=Agamemnon of the Greek myths. Agamemnon kills D for greater good. With Abraham is different because he does not do it for the universal (nobody besides him benefits). Abraham’s actions are purely private understanding It’s a purely personal virtue— tragic hero does not enter into private relationship with God. So, Abraham cannot be mediated- he cannot speak- and when he speaks then he is speaking the universal- and is not understood=paradox

—Extreme individuality in K’s position-stay fixed in level of individual. Faith resists thinking (end of page 64)

—K is concerned with individual existence-this is richer and more complicated than later Hegelian states of society.

—K speaks of an absolute relation to the absolute=private relationship to god. (since it cannot be communicated, it is not rational, it cannot be mediated in Hegelian terms).

—Rephrased as acting on the strength of the absurd-pg. 62. The hope that he can sacrifice Isaac and also keep him—leap of faith, but it’s a constant struggle of this faith.

—Biographical one: not usually helpful to do this to philosophers. But in K’s case is relevant—Breaking up with Regina because ‘God would see that he has too much darkness to marry her’. The idea of killing the one you love for setting them free.

—K and Marx-both attended probably same lectures by Schelling-compare them as two different inversions of Hegel. **In Marx**: Instead of idea first and material second, the material struggle is first and the idea is second, the source of the idea is the material struggle. **In Kierkegaard**: Instead of from the universal to the particular, In Kierkegaard (in a way) is from the particular to the universal (You cannot go beyond religion and faith—dialectics does not work).

**Session 8—Schopenhauer**

—History: wealthy merchant his father🡪killed himself. Schopenhauer is happy that he can study, has a lot of money. 🡪extreme pessimism was conflicting also with his mother. Liked Kant but thought it should be improved. He got recognition only at the end of his life by Nietzsche and Wagner.

—Marx and Kierkegaard are against Hegel.

Book (World as Will and Representation)—4 sections

1. World as representation (1st aspect)—Representation according to PSR-epistemology.
2. World as will (1st aspect)—metaphysics.
3. World as representation (2nd aspect)—aesthetics.
4. World as Will (2nd aspect)—ethics.

—For Schopenhauer all for 4 parts are interconnected, they are part of his single though of the world as will and representation.

World as representation:

—Kant’s transcendental philosophy

—‘conditions of possibility’—the subject establishes how it interprets the world. The fact that what we know is just a representation of the world, not a world in itself. (Kant’s condition of knowledge are: S & T, 12 Categories. (ideas of reason—soul, world as a whole, god; things in themselves (inner essence of that thing)

— Schopenhauer addresses what we can think about things in themselves:

Schopenhauer in *On the Principle of Sufficient Reason*

A priori forms of the object (12 categories) in PSF (Principle of Sufficient Reason=every X that exists needs to have a reason for its existence).

PSR has 4 aspects—becoming: cause🡪effect

—judgement: ground🡪consequent

—being: one position/moment🡪next

—actions: motivation🡪action.

—any representation in the world can be understood according to these for 4 aspects.

—Like Hegel, Schopenhauer sustains that is insufficient to know the world just as representation. Schopenhauer asks what is the world in itself? Schopenhauer argues that he can know things in themselves.

—we are an object like any other object (we perceive our body). This means that we know our bodies from too perspectives: as objects out there in the world, as expressions of our will

—no diff between active will and my body moving. (it is not first that I think to raise my head and then the body acts).

—will gives a priori knowledge about the body.

—body gives a posteriori knowledge about his will.

—We know our bodies both as representation and will—immediate knowledge—it gives information about what the body which is beyond representation. (A body in itself is will🡪all other objects are in themselves will).

—We know objectifications of the will

—Grades of objectification of will:

* Gravity
* Magnetism
* Plants
* Animals
* Humans.

All will be lack and desire to overcome something.

Will is a blind impulse.

The will has an absence of all aim, limits and is an endless striving.

Why we cannot explain the aim of will? The world as will is not governed by the principle of sufficient reason.

Particular acts of the will are explainable because these are acts of a particular objectification of the will. Objectifications of will are fighting against each other.

**What to do against the will? (Books 3 and 4)**

* Art—Platonic idea (archetype of
* When looking at a nice plant we do not think of why it grows, of what it does, but we reflect how close it is to the platonic idea of the perfect flower.
* Is not knowing for X purpose, this frees me from my nature as will.
* This effect of being disconnected from the will is just temporarily.
* Section 4:

Will to life. (Suicide is not the answer) Turn us to a monastic/ascetic 🡪suppress desire.

—Knowledge of the whole, of the thing in itself, then we are able to identify our desires, and what we want to perform and then tranquilize our desires.

—For Schopenhauer ethics is not about virtuous acts, but withdrawal of desire.

—You need to act in such a way that you contradict what your body wants.

—What you need to do is to renounce your essence, because is the will.

**Session 9 Nietzsche**

Kant: redefined Phil as transcendental philosophy

Hegel: in terms of the dialectic

Marx: material dialectic (class struggle, then thought)

Kierkegaard: concerned with individual and religious experience

Schopenhauer: Kant’s thing in itself as the will

Nietzsche

—trained in classic philology—language, historical approach, interpretation of texts

Birth of Tragedy—critiqued by his collogues because it had a broad argument without footnotes (the distinction between Apollyonic (structure, order, rigor) vs the Dionysian (uncontrolled, passionate, music/dance)

**Read Nietzsche carefully.**

Genealogy of Morals—lays down problem with morality🡪What is the origin of the terms good and evil. Initial childhood answers, God is the source of evil. Later, he does not search for the origin of evil beyond the world.

Question in the Genealogy: Under what conditions did man invent the value judgements good and evil and what value they do themselves have.

God is dead—authority of religion had disappeared in Nietzsche’s time. The world is secularized. Without the invented notion of God, the world is meaningless, cold, impersonal.

The human race invented good and evil, in which context, with what purpose?

When we judge the value of values: the criterion is the effect of X actions on our flourishing (is humanity flourishing or not) (good and bad are labels for evaluating) (is not that flourishing is the good and the opposite the bad).

Nietzsche—agrees with Kant with the problem of docility, of authority, but disagrees with Kant by placing authority in rationality. (no transcendental authority, God or reason)

**Value of values should be examined:**

We can understand morality as a mask, symptom etc.

Usually, people think that the good person is better. But if it is the opposite?

Maybe morality as a whole is a problem for us?

Three parts in the genealogy:

1. history of the value of ‘good’/’bad’
2. history of the value of ‘guilty’
3. history of the value of ‘asceticism’ (denial of self, retreat from will, repression of desire)

—Schopenhauer’s idea of ascetism—Nietzsche does not agree with this and thinks we need to reaffirm the will to life, wants to fight against nihilism and manifest our desires.

What is genealogy—concerned with the historical development of ideas.

**Origins of morality—Lock/Hume look at morality unhistorical—utility.**

—good as placed in the recipient of the act.

—the good is placed in the one doing the action, define their actions as good.

—The noble define their actions as good.

—paragraph 4 of the first essay: Bad in germen is similar with the word for simple. There is a connection between good and God.

–paragraph 10: the slave’s revolt in morality. “Creative deed”—weak members of society gang up against the powerful, began with priest. (religious morality—introduction of Christian values which the weak is valorized—slave morality)

—this type of “slave” morality is reactive, resentment, and does not affirm themselves. (Noble morality affirms itself, says yes to itself. Slave morality says no to everything outside, new religious morality to reactive, based on hatred for the powerful, resentment)

—the lambs believe that the birds of prey can be lambs—freedom to be weak.

—a good person in slave morality is one which avoids strength, patient, humble.

**Second essay:** **Guild and bad consciousness**

—Guilt, in a Christian morality, is seen as a good thing.

—paragraph 16—theory of bad consciousness is linked to the transition from wilderness to society/peace. Once we move into social organization our animalistic instincts must be repressed. All instincts not discharged outwardly turn inwardly. (Because you cannot be aggressive to others you are aggressive to yourself!!!)

—guilt starts once with civilized society.

—The powerful force *others* to function in a society (causing guilt).

—Whole of organized religion about powerful vs. weak.

—We should be able to undo the three sets of values, but it won’t be easy.

—Connects to the Ubermensch-the posthuman

—Conqueror of God and nothingness will come one day—we need a new humanity—if we want to reaffirm the value of our values. Nietzsche interprets this as great powerful figures in history, but it could also be necessity to reach a state of wrestling back control of values—return to will to life-confronts Schopenhauer.

**Questions:**

Do you agree with N?

If you not agree, how would you argue? (What is the origin of this/these values?)

What is the value of these values?

Final exam: —3 h

—8-10 questions, all the philosophers from the course will be covered.

—1 question treats two philosophers.

—you should right half-a-page of standard handwriting per answer. (Concise, direct, to the point)