PP454 Seminar: Contemporary Figures in Political Philosophy—
Hannah Arendt & José Ortega Y Gasset

Professor Sharon Snowiss
Fall 2011
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Course Schedule :  Mondays 1-3 :50 p.m.  in Stauffer 106 , CGU
Office Hours:  M. 4:15-5:30 p.m.; Thurs. 2:45-4 p.m. and by appointment

Course Description

This course examines key twentieth century philosophical issues by taking an in depth look at the works of Hannah Arendt and José Ortega Y Gasset. Both theorists argue that the "modern world" that emerged in 15th century philosophy and science has ended in the 20th century. They stand as formidable critics of the ideas of modernity and reevaluate our understandings of knowledge, objectivity, reason, history, freedom, power and action. Yet, they both write from an experience and standpoint based in the Western, modern tradition. It is almost as if they had one foot in the past and another stepping toward the future—a world which they see dimly and partially. From that perspective they highlight and analyze concepts that have become the basis for revolutionary change in an orientation to nature and philosophy and hence reality as we know it.

Their philosophies are grounded in the crucible of experience and reflection on actual events from the rise of totalitarianism to the splitting of the atom. We will look at momentous events such as these in the context of their lives, their actions and their more reflective observations. The roots of environmentalism, feminist themes, multicultural perspectives, revolution, evil and judgment are all explored in their writings.

Prerequisites: Students are expected to have completed PP 450 or other courses on the History of Political Philosophy.

Course Learning Outcomes:
1. Students will gain an understanding of major philosophical debates of the first half of the twentieth century.
2. Students will develop an in-depth understanding of H. Arendt’s and J. Ortega y Gasset’s life
circumstances and philosophies.
3. Students will reflect on the relationship between politics and philosophy.

The required texts are as follows: (available at Huntley Bookstore and/or at Honnold Library Reserve) Additional articles are available on Sakai.

Hannah Arendt,
- Rachel Varnhagen
- Between Past and Future
- On Revolution
- The Origins of Totalitarianism
- The Life of the Mind
- Eichmann in Jerusalem
- The Human Condition

José Ortega Y Gasset,
- Some Lessons in Metaphysics
- The Revolt of the Masses
- An Interpretation of Universal History
- Historical Reason
- What Is Philosophy?
- History as a System
- Man and People
- The Origin of Philosophy
- Man and Crisis

Rockwell Gray,
- The Imperative of Modernity: An Intellectual Biography of Ortega Y Gasset

Elizabeth Young-Bruehl,
- Hannah Arendt, For the Love of the World

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

In addition to weekly seminar readings and discussions, students will be asked to write weekly short critiques (1-2 pages) and a major research paper (15 pages) on an issue or topic of their choice.
**Attendance**
Students are expected to attend all classes. Students who are unable to attend class must seek permission for an excused absence from the course director or teaching assistant. Unapproved absences or late attendance for three or more classes may result in a lower grade or an “incomplete” for the course. If a student has to miss a class, he or she should arrange to get notes from a fellow student and is strongly encouraged to meet with the teaching assistant to obtain the missed material. Missed extra-credit quizzes and papers will not be available for re-taking.

**Scientific and Professional Ethics**
The work you do in this course must be your own. Feel free to build on, react to, criticize, and analyze the ideas of others but, when you do, make it known whose ideas you are working with. You must explicitly acknowledge when your work builds on someone else's ideas, including ideas of classmates, professors, and authors you read. If you ever have questions about drawing the line between others' work and your own, ask the course professor who will give you guidance. Exams must be completed independently. Any collaboration on answers to exams, unless expressly permitted, may result in an automatic failing grade and possible expulsion from the Program.

**Grading**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Complete mastery of course material and additional insight beyond course material</td>
<td>Insightful</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Complete mastery of course material</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Gaps in mastery of the course material; not at level expected by the program</td>
<td>Developing</td>
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<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>Ineffective</td>
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**Important Dates:**
Weekly critiques due in class.
Final Research Paper due on Dec. 12, 2011, 5 p.m.
READING ASSIGNMENTS

August 29       Introduction.

September 5    Labor Day, no class

I      Personal Identity and Confrontation of Evil in the World

September 12   E. Young-Bruehl, Hannah Arendt, For the Love of the World, Part I
                       Hannah Arendt, Rachel Varnhagen

September 19   Young-Bruehl, Part II
                       Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, Part I

September 26   Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, Part II

October 3      Young-Bruehl, Part III
                       Arendt, Origins of Totalitarianism, Part III
                       Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem

October 10     Rockwell Gray, The Imperative of Modernity, An Intellectual Biography of José Ortega Y Gasset, Intro., chps. 1, 2, 3
                       José Ortega Y Gasset, Meditations on Quixote (Sakai),  
                       Revolt of the Masses
                       ______, “In Search of Goethe from Within" in The  
                       Dehumanization of Art (Sakai)

II.   Human Condition and Circumstance

October 17     R. Gray, chps. 4, 5
                       Ortega Y Gasset, Man & Crisis
                       ______, Man and People

October 24     Arendt, The Human Condition
                       ______, Between Past and Future (selections)
                       Preface, chps. 1, 2, 8
III  **Freedom, Politics and Power**

October 31  Young-Bruehl, Part IV, chp. 9
Arendt, *On Revolution*,
“Truth and Politics”, and
“What is Freedom?” in *Between Past and Future*

November 7  R. Gray, chps. 6, 7
Ortega Y Gasset, *Concord and Liberty* (Sakai)
________, *Origin of Philosophy*
________, *History as a System*

November 14  Ortega Y Gasset, *An Interpretation of Universal History*
________, *Historical Reason*

IV  **Thought and Reality**

November 21  R. Gray, chp. 8, Epilogue
Ortega Y Gasset, *What is Philosophy?*
________, *Some Lessons in Metaphysics*
________, *The Modern Theme* (Sakai)

November 28  Young-Bruehl, Part 4, chp. 10
Arendt, *The Life of the Mind*

December 1  **Draft of Paper due.**  
*Email copies to members of class.*

December 5  Presentation and discussion papers

December 12  Final draft of paper due in Politics and Policy Office by 5 p.m.
**Additional works by Arendt and Ortega Y Gasset**
A more complete bibliography can be found in their respective biographies.

Hannah Arendt,
- *Love in St. Augustine*
- *Crises of the Republic*
- *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*
- *The Jew as Pariah* (letters edited by R. Feldman)
- *Men in Dark Times*
- *On Violence*
- (with Karl Jaspers) *Correspondence 1926-1969*
- *Between friends, Correspondences of H. Arendt and Mary McCarthy*, 1949-1975
- *Essays in Understanding*, 1930-1954 (uncollected and unpublished works)
- *Responsibility and Judgement*
- *The Promise of Politics*

See also the Hannah Arendt papers at the Library of Congress
[http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/arendthtm/arendthom.html](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/arendthtm/arendthom.html)

José Ortega Y Gasset,
- *On Love*
- *Velazquez Goya, The Dehumanization of Art and Other Essays*
- *The Idea of Principle in Leibnitz and the Evolution of Deductive Theory*
- *The Modern Theme*
- *Meditations on Quixote*
- *Concord and Liberty*
- *Mission of the University*
- *Invertebrate Spain*
- *Psychological Investigations*
- *The Dehumanization of Art*
- *Meditations on Hunting*
Selected secondary sources:

Hannah Arendt:

Benhabib, Seyla, ed. Politics in Dark Times: Encounters with H. Arendt
Kateb, George, Hannah Arendt: Politics Conscience, Evil
Bowen-Moore, Patricia, Hannah Arendt's Philosophy of Natality
Hill, Melvyn (ed.), Hannah Arendt: The Recovery of the Public World
Dossa, Shiraz, The Public Realm and the Public Self; The Political Theory of H. Arendt
Benhabib, Seyla, The Reluctant Modernism of H. Arendt,
_______, (ed.), Feminist Interpretations of H. Arendt
_______ (eds). H. Arendt, Critical Essays
Social Research, Vol. 44, No. 1, Spring 1977, issue on H. Arendt
Canovan, Margaret, Hannah Arendt A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought (1992)
Parckeh Blikhu, Hannah Arendt and the Search for a New Political Philosophy
Villa Dana, Arendt and Heidegger, The Fate of the Political
_______, Politics, Philosophy & Terror, Essays on the Thought of H. Arendt
Isaac, Jeffery, Arendt, Camus, and Modern Rebellion
Gohsegen, M., The Political Thought of H. Arendt
Nye, Andrea, Phdsonhia, the Thought of R. Luxemburg, S. Weil and H. Arendt
Kielmanseggm Mewes, Glasser-Schmidt,(eds.), H. Arendt and Leo Strauss
Disch, Lisa, H. Arendt and the Limits of Philosophy
Bernstein, R., H. Arendt and the Jewish Question
Ring, J, The Political Consequences of Thinking, Gender and Judaism in the Work of H. Arendt
Taminiaux, J., The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker Arendt and Heidegger
May and Kohn (eds.), H. Arendt Twenty Years Later
Osie, Mark, Mass Atrocity, Ordinary Evil and Hannah Arendt
Kristeva, Julia, Hannah Arendt
Aschheim, Steven, H. Arendt in Journalism
Courtine-Denamy, Three Women in Dark Times: Edith Stein, H. Arendt, Simone Weil
Dietz, Mary, Turning Questions: Feminism, Arendt, and Politics

José Ortega Y Gasset:
Silver, Philip, Ortega as Phenomenologist The Genesis of Mediations on Quixote
Ceplecha, Christian, The Historical Thought of José Ortega Y Gasset
Marias, Julian, J. Ortega Y Gasset: Circumstance and Vocation
Mora Jose Ferrater, Ortega Y Gasset, An Outline of His Philosophy
Sanchez, Villasenor, Ortega Y Gasset, Existentialist: A Critical Study of His Thought
Holmes, Oliver, Human Reality and the Social World, Ortega’s Philosophy of History
Symposium: Ortega Y Gasset Centennial, University of New Mexico
Dobson, Andrew, An Introduction to the Politics and Philosophy of José Ortega Y Gasset.