# Philosophy of History

## Prof. Giacomo Samek Lodovici

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The aim of the course is to provide students with a historiographical and (on various issues) theoretical understanding of certain key philosophical interpretations of history and of human action throughout history.

At the end of the course, students will know and understand certain fundamental discourses on history e.g. Gnosis, Augustine, Joachim of Fiore, Vico, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Jonas and transhumanism.

Armed with the above knowledge, they will be able to understand concepts such as history, regression/progression, human specificity, telos/senselessness of events, historical novelty/repetition and cyclicality, history and freedom, history and the existence/inexistence of God, the end/continuation of history, a catastrophic or perfective ending, etc.

In this way, students will generally be able to be understand, from a philosophical perspective, their own historical action, the history that preceded them (in particular, totalitarianism) and the context in which they currently live.

They will also be able to critically evaluate these concepts and examine their fruitfulness or unfruitfulness. Students will, if and to the extent that they consider the concepts fruitful, be able to modify some of their own choices and actions, applying these concepts in practice in their lives.

At the end of the course, students will have the conceptual tools to strenghten: their independence of judgement and critical skills; their ability to understand philosophical and historical issues; and their communicative abilities in this field.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Part of the course will be historiographical in nature, but cover certain theoretical considerations as well. It will reconstruct a number of fundamental discourses on history (e.g. Gnosis, Augustine, Joachim of Fiore, Vico, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Jonas and transhumanism).

The single-subject section will focus on two texts:

* G.W.F. Hegel, *Lezioni sulla filosofia della storia*;
* M.F. Sciacca, *Lezioni di filosofia della storia* (Sciacca is an exponent, in his own way, of twentieth-century Christian personalism, on whose anthropo-ontological conception of history have influenced, e.g. , Augustine and Vico; he reflected on the history of the philosophy of history and also on Hegel).

***READING LIST***

Mordacci R. (edited by), *Prospettive di filosofia della storia*, Bruno Mondadori, Milan 2009, available on www.bookrepublic.it (some parts of the text, which will be specified in class).

G.W.F. Hegel, *Lezioni sulla filosofia della storia*, Laterza, Roma-Bari 2010, pp. VII-XXXVII, 1-48, 56-71, 90-95, 277-278, 369-370.

M.F. Sciacca, *Lezioni di filosofia della storia*, Leo S. Olschki Editore, Firenze 2007, pp. 15-42.

Benedetto XVI, *Spe salvi*, paragrafi 21-26 (the text will be provided by the lecturer).

N.B.: the reading list is indicative, a final list will be specified during the course

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures and seminars in the classroom.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students will be examined by means of an oral exam (marked out of 30) designed to assess their learning and accurate understanding of course contents.

There will be 6-8 questions on the contents of the syllabus, each worth roughly the same number of marks. Students will be assessed on their knowledge of each topic, their ability to present information effectively and their analytical skills.

The overall mark will (in particular) reflect the accuracy and fullness of their answers, but also (to a lesser degree) the ability to justify statements, evaluations and analyses, and to use specific terminology appropriately.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Although not essential, students will benefit from secondary-school knowledge of the above-mentioned authors.

Students are expected to be interested in philosophical reflection on history and humanity.

The reading list is approximate and will be specified further during the course.

In the event that the health emergency should continue, both teaching activities and any forms of learning monitoring, both in progress and final, will be provided also remotely through our University's BlackBoard platform, the Microsoft Teams platform and any other tools envisaged and notified at the beginning of the course, so as to ensure the full achievement of the formative objectives set out in the study plans and, at the same time, the safety of our students.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.