

VILLANOVA PHI 7340 – 003
PENN GRMN 560-401/COML 559/JWST 560/PHIL 551

Spinoza and the German Enlightenment

Professor Julie R. Klein

Professor Liliane Weissberg

Fall 2009

This course will examine the reception of the philosophy of Baruch [Benedictus] Spinoza and what can be called, after Pierre Bayle and G.W. Leibniz (among others), “Spinozism,” in six German Enlightenment thinkers: Immanuel Kant, Moses Mendelssohn, G.E. Lessing, F.H. Jacobi, F.W. Schelling, and Heinrich Heine. We will work mainly on metaphysics, the philosophy of nature, and radical political thought, as well as on the literary texts that were influenced by Spinoza’s work and “Spinozism.” All texts will be available in English as well as in the original languages (Latin and German).

Our first meeting for the Villanova group will take place in Vasey 208 at Villanova. In order to use Penn’s extensive collection of early editions and manuscripts, this course will meet in the Lea Library Room, six floor, Van Pelt Library. Access to the library for all Villanova participants will be arranged at the first meeting for the Villanova students, August 27.

Primary Texts

Spinoza, *Ethics*, tr. Edwin Curley (Penguin Classics, 2005) ISBN 978-0140435719

Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise*, tr. Jonathan Israel (Cambridge 2007) ISBN 978-0521530972

Pierre Bayle, *Historical and Critical Dictionary: Selections* (on Blackboard)

Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, selections (Third Antinomy) (on Blackboard)

Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason and Other Writings*, ed. & tr. Allen Wood & George Di Giovanni (Cambridge UP 1999) ISBN-13: 9780521599641

G.W. Leibniz, “Comments on Spinoza’s Philosophy” (on Blackboard)

Heinrich Heine. *On the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany*, ed. T. Pinkard & tr. H. Pollack-Milgate (Cambridge 2007) ISBN 978-0521678506

G.E. Lessing. *Philosophical and Theological Writings*, tr. & ed. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge 2005) ISBN 9780521538473

_____. *Nathan the Wise*, tr. & ed. Ronald Schechter (New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2004). ISBN 978-0312442439

M. Mendelssohn, *Philosophical Writings*, tr. & ed. Daniel Dahlstrom (Cambridge 1997) ISBN 9780521574778

F.W. Schelling *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom* (SUNY 2007) ISBN 978-0791468746

Books are on order at the House of Our Own Bookstore, 3920 Spruce Street

Note: Some of our texts are available in German on-line via Project Gutenberg.

Requirements

Class attendance and participation; one research paper. We will also use the Blackboard site to post material and further discussion.

Schedule

First meeting for Villanova students on August 27, 2007 with Professors Klein & Weissberg

Thursday 9/10

Introduction

Spinoza, Letter 19 (to be distributed in class)

Thursday 9/17

Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise* Preface & Ch. 1-6

Thursday 9/24

Spinoza, *TTP* Ch. 7-8, 11-13, 20

(Thursday 10/1 rescheduled to Fri 10/9)

Thursday 10/8

Spinoza, *Ethics* Part 1, Letter 32

Friday 10/9

Spinoza, *Ethics* Part 2 through the “Physical Digression”; Part 3 Preface, Part 5

Thursday 10/15

Leibniz, “Comments on Spinoza’s Philosophy” and other texts; Bayle, *Historical and Critical Dictionary* entry on Spinoza; Kant, “Third Antinomy” from the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant, “Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose” (texts posted on Blackboard)

(Thursday 10/22 rescheduled to Friday 11/6)

Thursday 10/29

Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*

Thursday 11/5

Lessing, “The reality of things outside G’d”; “Spinoza only put Leibniz on the track of pre-established harmony”; “On the origin of revealed religion”

Jacobi, from *On the Doctrine of Spinoza in Letters to Mr. Moses Mendelssohn*

Friday 11/6

Lessing, “A Parable”; *Nathan the Wise*

Thursday 11/12

Guest lecture

Thursday 11/19

Mendelssohn, “On the ability to know, the ability to feel, the ability to desire”; “On evidence in metaphysical sciences”; Preface to the *Morning Hours*

Thanksgiving Break

Thursday 12/3

Schelling, *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom*

Thursday 12/10

Heine, *On the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany*

Select Recommended Secondary Literature

- [Anonymous]. *The Treatise of the Three Impostors*, tr. A. Anderson (Rowman & Littlefield 1997)
- Altmann, A. “Moses Mendelssohn on Leibniz and Spinoza.” In *Studies on Rationalism, Judaism and Universalism*, ed. R. Loewe (London: Routledge Keegan Paul, 1966)
- Beiser, Frederick. *The Fate of Reason. German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte* (Harvard 1987)
- Bloch, Olivier, ed. *Spinoza au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Méridiens Klincksieck, 1989)
- Goetschel, Willi. *Spinoza’s Modernity. Mendelssohn, Lessing, and Heine* (Wisconsin 2004)
- Henrich, Dieter. *Between Kant and Hegel. Lectures on German Idealism* (Harvard 2003)
- Israel, Jonathan. *Radical Enlightenment. Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750* (Oxford 2001)
- Moreau, Pierre-François. “Spinoza’s Reception and Influence.” In *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza*, ed. Don Garrett (Cambridge UP 1996), 408-433
- Pinkard, Terry. *German Philosophy 1760-1860: The Legacy of Idealism* (Cambridge 2002)
- Schürmann, Eva et al., ed. *Spinoza im Deutschland de 18. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: frommann-holzboog 2002)
- Smith, Steven B. *Spinoza, Liberalism and the Question of Jewish Identity* (Yale 1997)
- Tosel, André. et al., ed. *Spinoza au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2007)
- Vallée, Gerard. *The Spinoza Conversations between Lessing and Jacobi: Text with Excerpts from the Ensuing Controversy* (University Press of America, 1988)
- Zac, Sylvain. *Spinoza en Allemagne: Mendelsson, Lessing, et Jacobi* (Paris: Méridiens Klincksieck, 1989)

Contact Information

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