

# Free University London

## Foundations of Modern Thought

### Details

4<sup>th</sup> Feb — 28<sup>th</sup> March

Weekly, Tuesday evening.

8 weeks

### Course description

This course introduces students to important shifts in the ways in which history, society and politics have been thought about from the Renaissance to the twentieth century. The course will cover key figures in the history of political thought and philosophy, including Machiavelli, Rousseau, Wollstonecraft and Marx, and will address influential debates about such issues as the relationship between politics and morality, the justification for violence, the nature and causes of inequality, the rise of capitalism, and the rights of women.

### Convenor biography

Katie Ebner-Landy is doing a PhD in History at Queen Mary. She is researching the Renaissance reception of the ‘Characters’: an ancient Greek text which is one of the earliest proposals of how to divide people into types.

### Text breakdown

- 1 — Quentin Skinner, 'The Practice of History and the Cult of the Fact'
- 2 — Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Bondanella (Oxford University Press)
- 3 — Thomas Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, Chapters I–X (Cambridge University Press)
- 4 — Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (Hackett)
- 5 — Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (Dedication, Introduction, Chapters 1-5 and 9) (Cambridge University Press)
- 6 — Germaine de Staël, ‘Of Public Opinion’ in *The Current Circumstances that Could Bring the Revolution to an End*, Lucia Omancini (ed.), (Librairie Droz)
- 7 — Benjamin Constant, ‘The Liberty of Ancients Compared with that of Moderns’ (Online Library of Liberty): <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/constant-the-liberty-of-ancients-compared-with-that-of-moderns-1819>
- 8 — Karl Marx, *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* (Yale University Press)