INTELLECTUAL AND CULTURAL

Please answer one question from Part I and one question from Part II. You are allowed a total of 4 hours to complete this exam (two hours per question.) You are on your honor not to consult any materials, including notes or papers or anything stored in your computer. You are also on your honor not to discuss the exam or its content with any faculty or student until the exam period is over.

PART I

1. Historians often interpret intellectual history in terms of the “national traditions” in which they were forged. To what extent is this approach useful in Early Modern cultural and intellectual history? To what extent does it hide rather than reveal the dynamics of thought and culture in the early modern period? Illustrate your answers by direct reference to the books on the master list.

2. Discuss the development of early modern political theory from Machiavelli to Rousseau, focusing upon the manner in which the thinkers dealt with what J. Pocock called “the time dimension of politics.”

3. Trace the manner in which the languages and images of nature and the methods to investigate nature changed from the Renaissance to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

4. Many historians argue that the seventeenth-century marked a crucial moment in the formation of what is called “modernity.” What arguments do they marshal to support this view and how do they define or conceive of the term modernity? To what extent do you consider this general argument to be compelling?

5. There was a time when historians of the Enlightenment considered the Enlightenment to be centered in France and spread across Europe from France in various tones of major and minor. Its most symbolic figure was Voltaire, who often stood as the embodiment of the Enlightenment. Today, when one looks at major discussions of the Enlightenment, Kant emerges as the central figure. To what do you attribute this shift of emphasis and how has this shift change the way in which the Enlightenment is interpreted? How has this shift helped or hindered the understanding of the Enlightenment?

PART II

7. Define what has been called the “reaction against positivism” and its forms and contexts in at least two examples.

8. Discuss the role of the city as a center of political and cultural change in at least two European nations in the 19th and/or 20th century. How do culture-makers respond to the urban experience?

9. How has the 'linguistic' and 'cultural' turn affected the practice of intellectual and cultural history? Be specific. What is the state of the field today?

10. How did World War One shape the cultural innovations of European intellectuals in two national contexts?