Political Philosophy: Marxism

This course will be devoted to a reading of central texts in the Marxist tradition and in contemporary Marxist theory. It is intended for all graduate students preparing for major and minor field examinations in political theory. Special attention to be paid to key concepts, such as power, class, reason, truth, materialism, ideology, reification, fetishism, dialectic, race and gender, and others.

Course Requirements

A term paper of 25-30 pages on a topic of the student’s choosing and with the approval of the instructor.

Required Readings (available at Mary-Jane Books unless otherwise indicated)

Hegel, *Reason in History*
Marx, *Early Writings*
  , *The German Ideology*
  , *The Communist Manifesto*
  , *Capital I*
Lukacs, *History and Class-Consciousness*
Horkheimer, *Essays in Critical Theory*
Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*
Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*
Selected essays by contemporary American, British, and French Marxists (to be chosen by the class with the approval of the instructor).
Weekly Reading Assignments


Week 2. September 1, no class (Labor Day).

Week 3. September 8.
Hegel, Reason and History (all)

Week 4. September 15.
Marx, Early Writings ("On the Jewish Question," “Contribution to Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right")

Week 5. September 22.
Marx, Early Writings, ("Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts" (all))

Marx, The German Ideology (part 1)
Marx, The Communist Manifesto

Week 7. October 6.
Marx, Capital I (chapter 1, “Commodities")

Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness (“What is Orthodox Marxism,” and “Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat”)

Horkheimer, Critical Theory (“Authority and the Family,” “Critical Theory and Traditional Theory,” and “Art and Mass Culture”)

Week 10. October 27.
Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment (“The Concept of Enlightenment,” “Odysseus or Myth and Enlightenment,” “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception”)

Week 11. November 3.
Habermas, Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere (chapters 1-4)

Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (chapters 4-7)


Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communication* (“Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action”)

Habermas, “Three Models of Democracy”


A contemporary American Marxist – perhaps Wendy Brown.

Week 15. December 1.

A post-WWII French Marxist – perhaps Louis Althusser


A contemporary British Marxist – perhaps E.P. Thompson