

Marx and Western Marxism

History 362G (39550), EUS 346 (36415), CTI (33946)

Autumn 2012

Meeting Place: Garrison 2.128

Meeting Time: T 5-8

Instructor: Prof. Tracie Matysik

Office: Garrison 3.402

Office Hours: TH 12:00-2:00

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This course introduces students to the writings of Karl Marx as well as to those of his western intellectual successors in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It will treat the nineteenth-century context of industrialization and democratization in Europe in which Marx formulated his social, political, and philosophical critique, as well as the theoretical and philosophical legacy that followed through the twentieth century. The course will not focus on Soviet Marxism, but will examine how western Marxism's critique of capital evolved in complex relationship to the existence of Soviet Marxism. We will spend roughly eight weeks reading Marx's writings, and then seven weeks reading his western intellectual successors (including writings from Rosa Luxemburg, Georg Lukács, Walther Benjamin, Theodor Adorno, Antonio Gramsci, Jean-Paul Sartre, Louis Althusser, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, and Slavoj Žižek). Students should expect to read significant amounts of philosophy and social theory.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Reading: Students are expected to complete and to be prepared to discuss the assigned readings as indicated in the Course Schedule and prior to each class session. Assigned books are available at the University Co-Op. In addition, select readings will be available on Blackboard.

Books for purchase at the University Co-Op include:

- Robert C. Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd edition (New York: Norton, 1978).
- Vincent Barnett, *Marx* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

Presentations: All students will give one in-class presentation of roughly fifteen minutes on one of our selected inheritors of the Marxist tradition. The primary task of these presentations will be to educate your peers about the thinker in question and prepare the class for discussion. Students will likely have to pair up for the presentations.

Essays:

Option I: Each student will be expected to write two 5- to 6-page papers. One of these papers will be due Thursday, March 10 and will pertain to Marx's writings. Students will define their own topics. The second paper will be based on the class presentation and will be due one week after the corresponding class presentation.

Option II: Each student choosing this option will write just one longer (10- to 12-page) paper based primarily on the topic of the selected class presentation. The presentation will still be confined to fifteen minutes, but the paper will be longer and more argument oriented. This is a good option if there is a topic you want to explore in more detail. These final papers will be due the last day of class.

Option III: You may write just one longer (10- to 12-page) paper on a topic of your choosing and related to our course material.

Final Journal, due Tuesday, December 4, in class, but you may have an automatic extension without penalty until Friday, December 7, 2:00 p.m.: Students are responsible to write at least one page (and no more than two pages) for ten reading assignments, all of which are to be included in a final journal. Five of these should be based on readings from Marx or Engels and five from after spring break. Because this course qualifies for an “Ethics” flag, two additional responses must address practical ethical questions. These two should be tied to one or more readings from the course. The final journal will thus consist of **12 entries**. This final journal serves as a final exam, i.e., it is a demonstration at the end of the semester of each student’s composite learning. The entries should thus not be personal reaction papers (i.e., what one likes or dislikes about an author or a text), but rather an analytical engagement with the material. Students are encouraged to write their entries before class discussion, return to them after discussion, and return to them again throughout the semester as new ideas and understanding emerge. All students should submit to me two sample entries for review and feedback no later than September 25. If necessary, I reserve the right to require an additional round of submissions by mid-semester.

Note: Students are responsible for writing a response paper for any missed session, regardless whether the absence is excused or unexcused. Response papers written for a missed session must be submitted within two weeks of the missed session and may be included in the final journal as part of or in addition to the twelve entries.

A Note on Writing Format: All writing assignments should be typed, paginated, double-spaced and printed in 12-point font with one-inch margins. They should be well-written, spell-checked, and proofread for grammar and content. They should be stapled and should include your names. (And no, I do not carry a stapler to class with me.)

Participation Regular attendance and participation in class discussions is required. Absences will be excused only for **documented** family and medical emergency (doctor’s note, obituary, etc.), or religious holiday. One unexcused absence will be overlooked. Each subsequent unexcused absence will result in a full-grade deduction to the participation grade. **No student attending less than ten sessions *without documented excuse* will pass the class.** Ideally each participant comes to class as if prepared to lead discussion. At a minimum, each participant should come to every class session prepared to pose at least one analytical question for the purposes of class discussion.

FLAGS: This course carries Ethics, Global Cultures, and Writing Flags. For information on these three flags and their requirements, please see: <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/ccc/flags>

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS: Absences for religious holidays are excused. I would be grateful, however, if you would alert me in advance in these cases.

ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students who need special accommodations should notify me at the beginning of the semester (or as soon as possible), and such accommodations will be made. Students with such requests should secure a letter from the Services for Students with Disabilities Office. To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided, students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641 TTY.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Academic integrity will be taken very seriously in this course. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. For an overview of University policy regarding scholastic dishonesty, see the website of Student Judicial Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>

GRADING (using the +/- system)

- **First paper: 25%**
- **Second paper: 25%**
- **Option II or III: 10- to 12-page paper: 50%**
- **Final Journal: 30%**
- **Class Presentation: 10%**
- **Participation (including attendance and also sustained constructive contribution to class discussion): 10%**

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change depending on pace of class discussion):

Week 1

Sept. 4: Introduction

Week 2

Sept. 11: Hegel excerpt (on Blackboard)(just pp. 22-49)
Tucker, 66-93
Barnett, 1-13

Week 3

Sept. 18: Tucker, 26-52, 143-175
Barnett, 14-52

Week 4

Sept. 25: Tucker, 176-200
Engels excerpt (on Blackboard)
Barnett, 53-71
Submit two sample journal entries

Week 5

October 2: Tucker, 469-500
Tucker, 294-329
Barnett, 72-145 (note: you may want to keep reading through 164 this week, if you can....)

Week 6

October 9: Tucker, 329-384
Barnett, 146-164

Week 7

October 16: Tucker, 384-442
Barnett, 165-215

Week 8

October 23: Bernstein (on Blackboard)
Luxemburg (on Blackboard)
PAPERS DUE IN CLASS

Week 9

October 30: Lukács (on Blackboard)
Benjamin (on Blackboard)

Week 10

November 6: Gramsci (on Blackboard)
Marcuse (on Blackboard)

Week 11

November 13: Sartre (on Blackboard)
Bloch (on Blackboard)

Week 12

November 20: Althusser (on Blackboard)
Hardt and Negri (on Blackboard)

Week 13

November 27: Chakrabarty (on Blackboard)
Žižek (on Blackboard)

Week 14

December 4: **Final Papers Due in Class**
Reading: to be determined (Derrida? Agamben?)

Suggested Supplementary Reading:

Shlomo Avineri, *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx*
Harold Mah, *The Origins of Ideology*
David McLellan, *Karl Marx: His Life and Thought*
David McLellan, *Marxism after Marx: An Introduction*
Martin Jay, *Marxism and Totality*
—, *Dialectical Imagination*
Perry Anderson, *Considerations on Western Marxism*
—, *In the Tracks of Historical Materialism*
Francis Wheen, *Karl Marx: A Life*
Frederic Jameson, *Marxism and Form*
Michele Barrett, *Women's Oppression Today: The Marxist/Feminist Encounter*
Juliet Mitchell, *Woman's Estate*
Anthony Brewer, *Marxist Theories of Imperialism: A Critical Survey*
Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Empire; Multitude; Commonwealth*
John Toews, *Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism, 1805-1841*
Jerrold Seigel, *Marx's Fate: The Shape of a Life*
David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City*
—, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*
Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*

Suggested Supplementary Viewing:

David Harvey's lectures on *Capital* (at <http://davidharvey.org/>)
Irena Selena, *Flow*
Josh Fox, *Gasland*
Alexandra Wetz and Andreas Pichler, *Antonio Negri: A Revolt that Never Ends* (at <http://vimeo.com/46062858>)
Jill Friedberg and Rick Rowley, *This is what democracy looks like* (at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yBUZH2vCD_k)