

Philosophy 133

Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud

Fall 2005

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Office Hour: Thursday 2-3 and by appointment
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Tuesday, Thursday, 10-11
(meets in Emerson 210)

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More and more, Karl Max, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Sigmund Freud have come to be discussed collectively as the “school of suspicion.” Each of these thinkers has, to put it in words that Freud applied to himself, “agitated the sleep of mankind.” According to each of them, most of us suffer from some form of “false consciousness” – that is, are being misled by various processes about religious and moral questions and their presuppositions, about the nature of the social world around us, as well as about the nature of our own interior life. According to Marx, material and institutional processes in capitalist society mislead the proletariat, as well as other classes, about the nature of capitalism, giving them a false and hollow sense of happiness in an environment that is hostile to actual human flourishing. Individuals find themselves caught in ideologies. According to Nietzsche, moral judgments and whole moral world-views that many of us adhere to have emerged through historically contingent processes and misguide individuals about what (and also who – this is not meant to be a “nice” philosophy) is truly valuable. Individuals find themselves under the spell of what Nietzsche calls “Idols.” According to Freud, unconscious processes whose nature can be understood through psychoanalytical treatment constantly deceive ourselves about the true nature of our relationship with others and provide us with a conception of ourselves that has been shaped by suppressed experiences. Individuals find themselves caught in a web of illusions about themselves. In this course we will examine the methodological commitments that these three figures share (to wit, that these deceitful processes that create the sort of errors just mentioned can be understood using methods very much like those used in the successful sciences). Our goals will be interpretive as well as philosophical. That is, we want to understand what these thinkers actually said as well as assess what to make of it. Thinking about Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud means thinking about writers whose impact on our culture can hardly be overestimated. At the same time, it means thinking about writers whose messages are intensely personal and have lost none of their illuminating value and often disturbing and shocking effect (when taken seriously, rather than brushed aside in attempt not to engage with them in a manner that goes beyond paying lip-service to fashionable writers). For intellectual balance and coherence, we will also briefly look at Hegel, Feuerbach, Kierkegaard, and Schopenhauer. And, of course, it all starts with Kant.

Requirements

One previous class in philosophy is recommended but not required. There will be one midterm paper (6-8 pages), one paper due at the end of classes (6-8 pages), and one final paper due in January (8-10 pages). A list of possible topics will be provided for each paper. The first paper will count for 20%, the second for 30%, and the third for 40% of the grade (based on the assumption that students will actually learn something about writing philosophy papers in the course of this semester), and attendance/participation in section will count for 10% of the grade.

Required Reading

Available for purchase at the Coop:

Sigmund Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* (Norton)

Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion* (Norton)

Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (Norton)

David McLellan (ed.), *Karl Marx: Selected Readings* (second edition, Oxford University Press)

Walter Kaufmann (ed.), *Nietzsche: The Birth of Tragedy* (Vintage Books)

Walter Kaufmann (ed.), *Nietzsche: The Gay Science* (Vintage Books)

Maudemarie Clark and Alan Swensen (eds.), *Nietzsche: The Genealogy of Morality*. Hackett: Indianapolis (1998)

There is also going to be a course pack. Students who want copies of the readings for Philosophy 133 can go to Gnomon Copy at 1304 Mass Avenue and order a course pack. The telephone number is 617-491-1111. It is probably best to make an order by phone and inquire when it will be ready, as the copy shop will store the master copies and will make reading packs only upon individual request.

Schedule

Tuesday, Sept 20: Introduction: Kant and the Consequences

Reading: Brian Leiter, “The Hermeneutics of Suspicion: Recovering Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud”, in Leiter (ed.), *The Future for Philosophy*; Andrew Bowie, “The Kantian Revolution”, chapter 1 of *Introduction to German Philosophy: From Kant to Habermas*

Recommended: Andrew Bowie, “German Idealism: From Fichte to the Early Schelling”, chapter 3 of *Introduction to German Philosophy*

Thursday, Sept 22: Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*

Reading: Introduction to the *Phenomenology*

Recommended: Frederick Beiser, "Introduction: Hegel and the Problem of Metaphysics" in Beiser (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*

Tuesday, Sept 27: Hegel, *Phenomenology*, Cont.

Reading: *Phenomenology*, "Lordship and Bondage"

Recommended: Michael Forster, "Hegel's Dialectical Method", in Beiser (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*

Thursday, Sept 29: Feuerbach, *Essence of Christianity*

Reading: Chapters II, III, XX, and XXIV.

Recommended: McLellan, section 13 (pp 171-175)

Tuesday, Oct 4: Marx, *On the Jewish Question*

Reading: McLellan, section 6 (pp 46-71)

Recommended: McLellan, sections 1-5 and 7

Thursday, Oct 6: Marx, *1844 Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*

Reading: McLellan, section 8, pp 83-95

Tuesday, Oct 11: Marx, *1844 Manuscripts, Notes on James Mill*

Reading: McLellan, section 8, pp 95-122, and section 10 (pp 124-134)

Recommended: McLellan, section 9, 11, and 12

Thursday, Oct 13: Marx, *The German Ideology*

Reading: McLellan, sections 14 and 15 (pp 175-212)

Recommended: McLellan, section 16 and 17

Tuesday, Oct 18: Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*

Reading: McLellan, section 18 (pp 245-270)

Thursday, Oct 20: Marx, Wage-Labor and Capital

Reading: McLellan, section 19 (pp 273-295)

Recommended: McLellan, sections 20, 23, 25, and 29

Tuesday, Oct 25: Marx, *Capital*

Reading: McLellan, section 32 (pp 452-481)

Thursday, Oct 27: Marx, *Capital*, and Critique of the Gotha Program

Reading: McLellan, section 32 (pp 481-523); section 40 (pp 610-617)

Recommended: as much of McLellan as you can still bear to read

Tuesday, Nov 1: Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Religion

Reading: Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments*, chapter III (pp 37-49); and *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to 'Philosophical Fragments'*, Part I, chapters 1 and 2 (pp 23-59)

Thursday, Nov. 3: Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*

Reading: "The Metaphysics of Sexual Love," Chapter 44 of Volume II of *The World as Will and Representation*

Tuesday, Nov 8: Nietzsche's Early Views on Truth

Reading: "On Truth and Lie in the Extra-Moral Sense," in Daniel Breazeale, *Truth and Philosophy: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the 1870's*

Recommended: Maudemarie Clark, "Language and Truth: Nietzsche's Early Denial of Truth," chapter 3 of *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*

Thursday, Nov 10: Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*

Reading: *Birth of Tragedy*, "Attempt at Self-Criticism", Preface and sections 1-17

Tuesday, Nov 15: Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*

Reading: *Gay Science*, Prelude, Books I and II

Thursday, Nov 17: Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*

Reading: *Gay Science*, Books III and IV

Recommended: Alexander Nehamas, "The Eternal Recurrence," in John Richardson and Brian Leiter (eds.), *Nietzsche*

Tuesday, Nov. 22: Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morality*

Reading: *Genealogy*, Preface and first treatise

Recommended: Rüdiger Bittner, "Ressentiment"

Thursday, Nov. 24 THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS

Tuesday, Nov. 29: Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morality*

Reading: *Genealogy*, second treatise

Recommended: Mathias Risse, "The Second Treatise in 'On the Genealogy of Morality': Nietzsche on the Origin of the Bad Conscience"

Thursday, Dec. 1: Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morality*

Reading: *Genealogy*, third treatise

Recommended: Maudemarie Clark, "The Development of Nietzsche's Later Positions on Truth," chapter 4 of *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*

Tuesday, Dec. 6: Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*

Reading: selected lectures

Recommended: Stephen Mitchell and Margaret Black, "Sigmund Freud and the Classical Psychoanalytic Tradition, chapter 1 of *Freud and Beyond: A History of Modern Psychoanalytic Thought*

Thursday, Dec. 8: Freud, *Introductory Lectures, cont.*

Reading: selected lectures

Tuesday, Dec. 13: Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*

Reading: *The Future of an Illusion*

Recommended: Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Part III ("What is Religious?")

Thursday, Dec. 15: Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*

Reading: first half of *Civilization and Its Discontents*

Recommended: Herbert Marcuse, "The New Forms of Control," chapter 1 of *One-Dimensional Man*

Tuesday, Dec. 20: Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*

Reading: second half of *Civilization and Its Discontents*