

POLS 327, Spring 2012  
**Marx After Marx**  
LIE-01, Mondays 3:30-6:15pm

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Office hours: T, 8:30-9:30 am; W, 1:30-3:30 pm & by appt.

This course is devoted to close readings of Karl Marx and two Marxists. In its previous iteration (Fall 2007), Georg Lukacs and Walter Benjamin were featured as key 20th century Western Marxists. This time, the featured Marxists will be V.I. Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg. The course turns to explicit treatments of imperialism, colonialism, and reactionary politics broadly understood, to map the terrain of Marx's turn to politics, asking whether and how it was a turn "away" from philosophy, conventionally understood. We will assess him as a political analyst, revolutionary, historian, economist, and philosopher, highlighting the questions of goal, strategy, tactic, and political organization. This will involve a serious familiarization with the history of the political battles waging in roughly the century between the failed revolutions in Europe and the first world war (as presaging Europe's fascist turn). The writings of Lenin and Luxemburg will testify to two different legacies of Marx in relation to political philosophy and strategy, different from and predating the turn to an emphasis on culture and critique as issues of political strategy receded. The course will attempt to take the rich lessons of critique and a nuanced understanding of politics into the realm of grand political action in history to see what lessons can be derived for political possibility in the current moment. Other key political thinkers and actors of the late 19th and early 20th century will be featured as well.

### **Core Texts**

Karl Marx. *The Revolutions of 1848: Political Writings* (Vol. 1). Verso, 2010 [MPW1]  
\_\_\_\_\_. *Surveys from Exile: Political Writings* (Vol. 2). Verso, 2010 [MPW2]  
\_\_\_\_\_. *The First International and After: Political Writings* (Vol. 3). Verso, 2010 [MPW3]  
\_\_\_\_\_. *The Portable Karl Marx* (from Sophomore Seminar) [PKM]  
V.I. Lenin/Robert Tucker. *The Lenin Anthology*. W. W. Norton & Company, 1975 [TLA]  
Hudis/Anderson/Luxemburg. *The Rosa Luxemburg Reader*. Monthly Review Press, 2004 [RLR]  
Eric Hobsbawm. *The Age of Empire*. Vintage, 1995  
Eric Hobsbawm. *The Age of Capital*. Vintage, 1996  
Access to [www.marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org) (Marx/ian texts in public domain)  
Other required selections are accessible through electronic reserves (password abb-327)

### **Some Reference Texts (entire or selections)**

Dennis Fischmann, *Political Discourse in Exile*  
Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*  
Jason Read, *The Micropolitics of Capital*  
Bertell Ollman, *Dance of the Dialectic*  
Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World-System*  
David Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital: and the Crises of Capitalism*  
Kevin Anderson, *Marx at the Margins: On Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Non-Western Societies*  
Leela Gandhi, *Affective Communities*  
Daniel Brudney, *Marx's Attempt to Leave Philosophy*  
Lenin and Zizek, *Revolution at the Gates: Zizek on Lenin, the 1917 Writings*  
Robin Blackburn, *An Unfinished Revolution: Karl Marx and Abraham Lincoln*  
Some supplementary selections may be accessed through electronic reserves (password abb-327)

## Course Requirements

Active class participation is expected and required. You must have done the reading assignments in advance of the class, and all assigned texts must be read by everyone. Every week, we will do a read-around of every student's one paragraph (extended, thoughtful, question or observation) prepared for class. Handing me this paragraph will be your only way to be marked present!

You will write a short (3-4 page) exegetical paper each on Marx's philosophy and method, on political strategy in Marx, on Lenin, and on Luxemburg, for a total of 4 short papers and 48 percent of the grade. You will also prepare a presentation/short paper on one 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century Marxist thinker who takes further a strand in Marx you find appealing and worth developing. A final paper or project (10 pages) will be more thematic rather than centred on any one thinker. Proposals for these must be discussed with the instructor and approved accordingly (just before the Spring Break). Imaginative proposals are encouraged. Along the way, there may be in-class and out-of-class assignments that will require group work.

Four Short (3-4 page) Exegetical Papers	50%
Final Paper/Project/Presentation (10 pages)	25%
Participation/Auxiliary Projects	25%

### *Computer Use Policy*

Although computers with access to the internet can be useful for acquiring facts that can helpfully inform our discussions, computers with access to the internet are too often a distraction, which both diminishes the quality of our discussion and makes it difficult for me to assess and evaluate students' understanding the material being discussed.

Therefore, the use of computers in the classroom is prohibited, with the following exceptions:

1. On occasion, the instructor may deem it useful to check some matter of fact upon which our discussion depends. The instructor will then invite students who have their computers to do a quick search online to see if the relevant information is available. After the relevant material has been acquired and reported, the computers will then be put away.
2. I recognize that some students might have a learning or physical disability that prevents them from taking notes in the conventional manner (pen and paper) and that a laptop computer facilitates their capacity to take notes. Computer use in such circumstance is permitted, but if and only if such learning or physical disability is documented and reported to Sue Lyon, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, who will then inform me of the student's documented need to make use of this tool for notetaking. Computer use in the classroom will remain prohibited for this purpose unless and until this requirement is fulfilled.

Apart from these two exceptions, computers will otherwise be closed, off the table, and otherwise not accessed by students during our class meetings. Please print out your readings in advance, and please take notes the old-fashioned way. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### **Week One—23 January**

Introductions and Setting Agenda; Discussion of Hobsbawm's *The Age of Capital*

### **Week Two—30 January: Philosophy and Society**

*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* (Selection: Estranged Labour and Third Manuscript)

<http://marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/preface.htm>

"For a Ruthless Criticism of Everything Existing"

[http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1843/letters/43\\_09.htm](http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1843/letters/43_09.htm)

“Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*” (Introduction)  
<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1843/critique-hpr/intro.htm>

“Theses on Feuerbach”

<http://marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/theses/index.htm>

**Supplementary Text:** “On the Jewish Question”

<http://marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/jewish-question/index.htm>

### **Week Three – 6 February: On Method**

*The Holy Family* (Selection; divide chapters among ourselves; foreword plus one of Chs1-8)

<http://marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/holy-family/index.htm>

*The German Ideology* (Selection: pp. 162-196 in the Portable Karl Marx)

**Supplementary Text:** Bertell Ollman, *Alienation* or Ollman, *Dance of the Dialectic*

### **Week Four – 13 February: On Capitalism**

Appendices from the *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*

<http://marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/appx1.htm>

Marx, *Capital*, Volume 1 (Chs 1, 4, 6, 10 [secs 5, 6,7], 13, 14 [sec 4, 5], 15 [sec 5],

<http://marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/index.htm>

## **BREAK**

### **Week Five – 27 February: Capital continued...**

*Capital*, Chs 25, 26, 27, 31, 32, 33

*The Communist Manifesto* [*MPW1*, pp. 62-98]

### **Week Six – 5 March: The Communist League, the Manifesto, the Brumaire**

*Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* [*MPW2*, pp. 143-249]

Addresses to the Communist League, [*MPW1*, pp. 319-338]

**Supplementary Text:**

Articles from the *NRZ* on various revolutionary struggles in Europe [*MPW1*]

### **Week Seven – 12 March: Articles and Letters on Britain, India, Poland, Ireland, and the U.S. Civil War (selections) [everyone reads any two clusters]**

On Poland:

*MPW1*, pp. 99-108; *MPW3*, pp. 378-392

On Britain:

*MPW2*, pp. 250-298

On India: (1853)

*MPW2*, pp. 301-324

Reference: <http://maximumred.blogspot.com/2005/02/aijaz-ahmad-on-marx-on-india.html>

On the U.S. Civil War: (1861-62)

*MPW2*, pp. 334-353

Complete: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1861/us-civil-war/index.htm>

Supplementary: Robin Blackburn, *An Unfinished Revolution: Karl Marx and Abraham Lincoln*.

On Ireland: (1867-70)

*MPW3*, pp. 158-171

### **Week Eight – 19 March: The Paris Commune and After; On to the Second International**

*The Civil War in France*, *MPW3*, pp. 187-268

“Political Indifferentism,” *MPW3*, pp. 327-332

“Critique of the Gotha Programme,” *MPW3*, pp. 339-359

Conflict with Bakunin, *MPW3*, pp. 333-338

(complete: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1868/iwma/index.htm>)

*MPW3*, pp. 73-120

*MPW3*, pp. 269-326

### **BREAK: Read Hobsbawm’s *The Age of Empire***

### **Week Nine – 2 April: Philosophy and Strategy**

Lenin, “On Marxism and Philosophy,” *TLA*, pp. 639-653

Lenin, “What is to be Done?” *TLA*, pp. 12-114

Luxemburg, “Reform or Revolution,” *RLR*, pp. 128-167

Luxemburg, “The Mass Strike,” *RLR*, pp. 168-199

\*Althusser, “Lenin and Philosophy”

### **Week Ten – 9 April: On Imperialism and the non-West**

Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. *TLA*, pp. 204-274

Luxemburg, selections on Imperialism, *RLR*, pp. 32-127

### **Week Eleven – 16 April: The Revolution**

Lenin, “April Theses,” *TLA*, pp. 295-300

Lenin, *State and Revolution*, *TLA*, pp. 311-398,

Luxemburg, *The Russian Revolution*, *RLR*, pp. 281-311

Luxemburg, speeches and letters, *RLR*, pp. 342-379

### **Week Twelve – 23 April: The Third International**

Lenin, *TLA*, writings on the Comintern, pp. 537-627

Roundtable/Congress

**Week Thirteen—30 April**

Presentations on one twentieth-century Marxist

**Week Fourteen—7 May**

Presentations

**FINALS AND SUMMER!**