

History of Modern Philosophy II: Kant to Nietzsche

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

This course will survey German philosophers of the late modern period, including Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche and Freud. Reading selections map the historical development of the concept of freedom – a distinguishing feature of modern European political culture. We will search for the most tenable account of what it means to be free in the high modern German philosophy. We will begin with Kant’s original formulation of freedom as ‘moral autonomy’ that engages the ‘transcendental’ dimension of reason. We will proceed to analyze Hegel’s criticism of Kant’s view of freedom in terms of the historical movement of ‘Spirit,’ a collective struggle for self-understanding and social recognition. Next, we will engage with Marx’s emphasis that freedom is (1) the free development of capacities, (2) the satisfaction of needs and (3) the revolutionary reorganization of modern society’s ‘material’ conditions, namely, major social institutions such as private property, civil society, and the state. Lastly, we will address ‘masterful’ subject formation in the psychological and psychoanalytic framework in Nietzsche and Freud.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Asterisks indicate a short reading response is due

I. Freedom as Moral Autonomy and an ‘A priori’ or ‘Transcendental’ Fact of Reason

Week 1.

- (1) Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, “Third Antinomy: Freedom”
- (2) G. A. Cohen, “Kant’s Ethics,” in *Lectures on the History of Moral and Political Philosophy*

Week 2.*

- (1) Kant, “What is Enlightenment?”
- (2) Ciaran Cronin, “Kant’s Politics of Enlightenment”
- (3) Hannah Arendt, *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy* (selections)

Week 3. Arendt, *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy* (selections)

Week 4.*

- (1) Kant, “Idea for Universal History as Having a Cosmopolitan Purpose”
- (2) Kant, *Perpetual Peace*, “First Definitive Article,” p. 1239-41

Week 5. Kant, cont’d

Recommended Secondary Sources for Section I:

- Allison, Henry, “Kant’s Practical Justification of Freedom,” in *Essays on Kant*
- Korsgaard, Christine M. *Sources of Normativity*, chps. 1-3
- Pinkard, Terry: *German Philosophy*, Introduction and chp. 1 (general overview)

II. Hegel's Criticism of Kant: The Socio-Historical Conditions of Freedom

Week 6.

- (1) Hegel, *Lectures on Philosophy of History*, Lecture 3
- (2) Neuhouser, "Introduction," *Hegel's Social Theory*

Week 7.*

- (1) Hegel, *Lectures on Philosophy of History*, Lecture 4
- (2) Jürgen Habermas, "Hegel's Critique of Kant," *Knowledge and Human Interests*
- (3) Pippin, *Hegel's Practical Philosophy*, chp. 1

Week 7.

- (1) Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface and Introduction
- (2) Pippin, "Hegel's Practical Philosophy: The Realization of Freedom"
- (3) Neuhouser, *Hegel's Social Theory*, chp. 5

Week 8.*

- (1) Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, "Sittlichkeit," §§142-157, 182-208, 230-256, and §§257-271
- (2) Honneth, *Pathologies of Individual Freedom* (selections)
- (3) Hegel, "Master and Slave Dialectic," *Phenomenology of Spirit*
- (4) Neuhouser, "Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord," *The Blackwell Companion to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*

Recommended Sources for Section II:

Marcuse, Herbert. *Reason and Revolution*
Buck-Mors, Susan. *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History*
Ferrarin, Alfredo. *Hegel and Aristotle*
Hardimon, Michael. *Hegel's Social Philosophy*
Pippin, Robert. *Hegel's Practical Philosophy*

III. Marx's Critique of Hegel: Political Economy as the 'Material' Conditions of Freedom

Week 9.

- (1) Marx, "Towards a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right"
- (2) Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach"
- (3) Habermas, "Synthesis and Labor" in *Knowledge and Human Interests*
- (4) Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts"
- (5) Rockmore, *Marx after Marxism* (selections)

Week 10.*

- (1) Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts," cont'd
- (2) Marx, *The German Ideology*; "Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy"

Week 11.

- (1) Marx, *The German Ideology*, cont'd
- (2) Marx, "Wage Labor and Capital"

Week 12.* Marx, *Capital* Vol 1

Recommended Sources for Section III:

Carver (Ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Marx*
Cohen, G.A. "Forces and Relations of Production"
Lukács, Georg. *History and Class Consciousness*
Polanyi, Karl. *The Great Transformation*
Wood, Allen. *Karl Marx*

**IV. Freedom as a Certain Kind of Subjective Interiority:
Psychology, Individualism, and Nihilism**

Week 13.

- (1) Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Preface, 1, 2, 3
- (2) Pippin, *Nietzsche, Psychology, and First Philosophy* (excerpt)

Week 14.*

- (1) Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 4, 5, 6, 9
- (2) Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, Preface and Essay 1
- (3) Bernard Reginster, *The Affirmation of Life* (excerpt)

Week 15

- Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, Essay 2 & 3

Recommended Sources for Section IV:

Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power*
Gemes and May, (Eds.). *Nietzsche on Freedom and Autonomy*
Lukács, Georg. "CHAPTER III Nietzsche as Founder of Irrationalism in the
Imperialist Period" from *The Destruction of Reason*