Political Science 253

COMMUNIST POLITICAL THOUGHT: MARX TO MAO

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Office Hours

The development of Marx's social and economic theory was one of the great intellectual achievements of the 19th century. It is a remarkable synthesis of ideas from philosophy, history, and the social sciences.

Marx argued that he wanted to change the world, not merely interpret it. He intended for his work to have a practical effect by helping shape the thinking of the industrial working class, to which, in Marx's thinking, "the future belonged."

Yet the very breadth and power of Marx's synthesis (as well as the fact that his work was largely unfinished) has given rise to many interpretations. These different interpretations--each with their own proponents--have had a major impact on the course of political events in the 20th century. Soviet Marxism, for example, was as different from Chinese Marxism as the thinking of the mature Marx was different from that of the romantic young man who began to dream of a different world order. These interpretations of Marx continue to shape political movements right up to the present day, as evidenced by the differences between, say, the millenarian Marxist movements in Cambodia and the more mechanistic Marxism of Castro's revolution in Cuba.

This course is an introduction to the major themes in Marx's large body of political and economic works. Students are expected to master the logic embedded in these themes, evaluate their political significance, and trace their emigration into radical movements far from the German, French, and English revolutions they were intended to guide.

Readings

The readings present historical information and analytic perspectives. Students are responsible for all of the assigned readings, even those not discussed in class. Readings should be completed before coming to class on the date indicated in the syllabus.

The following books will be used as texts for this course:

- Robert C. Tucker, The Marx-Engels Reader
- Marx, Capital, Volume I
- John Gurley, Challengers to Capitalism
- Edmond Wilson, To The Finland Station

Selections (handouts) from the following will also be used:

- Lenin -Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism
- State and Revolution
- Mao Zedong, Selected Readings From the Works of Mao

Grading

https://acad.carleton.edu/curricular/POSC/classes/Posc253/S99/index.html
Grades for the course will be based on three papers, a series of short exercises, and participation in the class discussions. Each paper will require the analysis of a political or economic topic, and require also that the analysis be supported with citations from the assigned texts.

The weight of each is as follows:

1st paper (8 pages) due April 19 25%
2nd paper (8 pages) due May 5 25%
3rd paper (10-12 pages) due June 2 25%
Attendance, participation, exercise 25%

COMMUNIST POLITICAL THOUGHT: MARX TO MAO

Mon Mar 29 INTRODUCTION
Gurley, *Challengers to Capitalism*, pp. 1-5

Wed Mar 31 THE EUROPEAN TRADITION
Wilson, *To The Finland Station*, pp. 3-93

Fri Apr 2 THE EUROPEAN TRADITION (2)
Wilson, *To The Finland Station*, pp. 94-130

Mon Apr 5 GERMAN IDEALISM

Wed Aprl 7 YOUNG MARX
Wilson, *To The Finland Station*, pp. 131-177
Marx, pp. 7-8 (*Discovering Hegel*)
...... pp. 70-105 (*1844 Manuscripts*)

Fri Apr 9 YOUNG MARX (2)
Marx pp. 136-142 (from *Society and Economy*)

Mon Apr 12 YOUNG MARX (3)
Marx, pp. 143-145 (*Theses on Feuerbach*)

Wed Apr 14 CLASS AND SUPERSTRUCTURE
Gurley, *Challengers to Capitalism*, pp. 7-29
Wilson, *To The Finland Station*, pp. 178-233
Marx, pp. 147-175 (from *The German Ideology*)

Fri Apr 16 FAMILY AND SOCIETY
Marx, pp. 734-759 (from Engels, Origins of Family, Private Property, and the State)

(1st Paper Assigned)

Mon Apr 19 SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

(1st Paper Due)

Wed Apr 21 THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM: FIRST DEFINITIONS

Wilson, To The Finland Station, pp. 338-384
Gurley, Challengers to Capitalism, pp. 31-54
Marx, -pp. 203-217 (Wage Labour and Capital)
Marx, Capital, Vol. I, pp. 43-88

Fri Apr 23 THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM: GENERAL TENDENCIES

Marx, Capital, Vol. I, pp. 88-144
......-pp. 221-236 (from Grundrisse)

Mon Apr 26 THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM: PRICE AND VALUE

......-pp. 247-261 (from Grundrisse)

Wed Apr 28 THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM: SYSTEMIC TRENDS

......-pp. 278-290 (from Grundrisse)

Fri Apr 30 THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM: CRISES

Gurley, Challengers to Capitalism, pp. 54-61
Marx, Capital, Vol. I, pp. 351-72, 486-507, 574-606
......-pp. 291-293 (from Grundrisse)
......-pp. 443-465 (Crisis Theory)

(2nd Paper Assigned)

Mon May 3 Mid Term Break

Wed May 5 THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM: CHANGE AND REDEMPTION

(2nd Paper Due)

Wilson, To The Finland Station, pp. 234-337
Marx, -pp. 469-500 (The Communist Manifesto)
Fri May 7 MARX’S POLITICS

.......-pp. 522-524 (*Possib. of Non-Violent Rev.)*

.......-pp. 594-617(*Eighteenth Brumaire....*)

.......-pp. 618-652 (*Civil War in France*)

Mon May 10 MARX’S POLITICS (2)

Marx, pp. 525-541 (*Critique of Gotha Program*)

Wed May 12 ENGELS’ RESTATEMENT

Wilson, *To The Finland Station*, pp. 385-403

Engels, -pp.683-717 (Socialism: Utopian and Scientific)

-pp. 728-733 (Anarchism, Authority)

-pp. 760-768 (Letters...)

Fri May 14 LENIN

Wilson, *To The Finland Station*, pp. 407-471

Gurley, *Challengers to Capitalism*, pp. 63-95

Lenin, *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*

Mon May 17 TROTSKY

Wilson, *To The Finland Station*, pp. 472-519

Wed May 19 THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Wilson, *To The Finland Station*, pp. 520-554

Lenin, *State and Revolution*

Gurley, *Challengers to Capitalism*, pp. 97-131

Fri May 21 THE RISE OF STALIN

Mon May 24 THE END OF SOVIET COMMUNISM

Wed May 26 MAO AND CHINESE MARXISM

Gurley, *Challengers to Capitalism*, pp. 133-183

Mao, pp. 23-39, 85-133

(3rd Paper Assigned)

Fri May 28 TBA

Mon May 31 TBA
Wed Jun 2 MARXISM AND CAPITALISM

Gurley, *Challengers to Capitalism*, pp. 185-210

*(3rd Paper Due)*