European Political Thought Since Rousseau  
Professor Tamsin Shaw

Description

We will examine the development of political thought in Europe from the second half of the eighteenth century to the start of the twentieth. We will look at the Kantian, Hegelian and Marxist developments in this tradition. We will discuss the important role played by differing conceptions of freedom, human nature, and history, in shaping the political thought of the period. And we will address issues concerning autonomy and authority, the nature of the state, and the limits to state power.

Syllabus

Week One: Introduction
Reading: none
Lectures: a). Romanticism and Authenticity  
 b). Enlightenment and Autonomy

Week Two: Rousseau
Reading: The First and Second Discourses
Lectures: a). The First Discourse  
 b). The Second Discourse

Week Three: Rousseau
Reading: The Social Contract
Lectures: a). The General Will  
 b). Therapeutic Politics

Week Four: Herder
Reading: Herder, ‘Yet another philosophy of history’; copies to be distributed  
Lectures: a). Expressivism  
 b). Nationalism

Week Five: Kant
Reading: Groundwork
Lectures: a) Kant’s Ethics I  
 b). Kant’s Ethics II
Week Six: Kant
Reading: From Kant’s *Practical Philosophy*:
“Idea for a Universal History”
“An answer to the question: What is enlightenment?”
“On the common saying: That may be correct in theory, but it is of no use in practice.”
“Toward perpetual peace”
Lectures: a). Kant’s Political Thought
b). Herder, Kant and Hegel on History

Week Seven: Hegel
Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*, Preface (pp.9-23)
Lectures: a). Hegel’s philosophy of history I
b). Hegel’s philosophy of history II

Week Eight: Hegel
Lectures: a). Hegel’s Philosophy of Right I – freedom and property
b). Hegel’s Philosophy of Right II – ethical life and the state

Week Nine: Marx
Reading: selections from *Marxism: Essential Writings*:
"On the Jewish Question"; "Towards a Critique of Hegel...Introduction"; "Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts", sections on Alienated Labor and Private Property and Communism.
Lectures: a) Marx and Hegel
b) Marx on alienation

Week Ten: Marx and Engels
"Communist Manifesto", chs 1-2; "Preface to the Critique of Political Economy" (pp. 424-7 of McLellan, Karl Marx: Selected Writings); Capital I, chs 25-28, 31-32.
Lectures: a). Communism
b). Marx’s theory of history

Week Eleven: Nietzsche
Reading: ‘The Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life’
*On the Genealogy of Morality*, Essay I
Lectures: a). Nietzsche and history
b). Nietzsche’s critique of morality

Week Twelve: Nietzsche
Reading: *On the Genealogy of Morality*, essays II and III
Lectures: a). Nietzsche and the problem of suffering
b). Nietzsche’s politics

**Week Thirteen: Weber**
Reading: Max Weber, ‘Science as a Vocation,’ and ‘Politics as a Vocation’
Lectures: a). The disenchanted worldview
            b). Political legitimacy in a disenchanted age

**Week Fourteen: Schmitt and Habermas**
Reading: Selections from Schmitt’s *Legality and Legitimacy* and *The Concept of the Political*; and from Habermas’s *Theory of Communicative Action*
          b). Habermas’s response to Weber