KEY ISSUES IN SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

Dept. of Sociology and Social Anthropology, CEU

Fall 2018

Lecturer: Ju Li

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# INTRODUCTION:

This course intends to give the students a detailed insight into the emergence of sociology as a distinct discipline, and the development of sociological theory, based on the works of the core founding theorists, at a time period beginning from the mid nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. At the same time, we will endeavor to develop a critical reading of these classics, by re-embedding them within their own specific historical context; we will also read and discuss some work by scholars, writing outside the ‘west’, whose work is not conventionally included in the mainstream classical curriculum because of the west-European bias of our discipline.

**PARTICIPATION:**

Attendance and participation are mandatory. The course will be a combination of lecture and discussion. You are required to come completely prepared, including a thorough, “quality-time” reading of the assigned texts. Participation is assessed through a combination of attendance record and active, meaningful participation in class. If you miss **TWO** classes or more WITHOUT ANY SPECIAL REASON LIKE SICKNESS, you cannot pass the course. Over fifteen minute of lateness will be considered as absence.

**CRITICAL COMMENTARY:**

You are required to bring at least one question to our small-group discussion each week. The question should be posted on the E-learning before the class.

**TAKE-HOME EXAM:**

We will have a take-home exam at the end of the semester. It will be composed of two short-essay questions. You will have two days to finish the exam.

**AVOID PLAGIARISM:**

You are not expected to read the thousands of secondary literature items dealing with any of the readings. However, this does not mean that you are entitled to appropriate other interpretations and critical readings from this vast body of secondary literature and present them as your own in your essays. Obviously, the same applies to the use of material from the internet. If you feel that you have come across a particularly relevant idea, which you need to use in your paper, make sure to include the proper references. Overall, use secondary sources sparingly. Also, try to avoid using too many direct quotes from the readings too, but do provide page references when relying on the text. Any attempt at plagiarism will result in a failing grade.

For more details on what constitutes plagiarism see:

<http://www.ceu.hu/sites/default/files/Guidelines%20on%20Academic%20Dishonesty%20G-1009-1.pdf>

# COMPOSITION OF YOUR GRADE:

* Class participation: 30%
* Online critical responses: 30%
* Take-home exam: 40%

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

**Week 1 (Sep 17)**

**Introduction**

**Week 2 (Sep 24)**

## Marx: Capital and Capitalist Development

Giddens, Ch. 3

Selections from “Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844”, pp. 70-81, 93-101, in **Tucker**.

Marx, Karl. 1977 (1867) Capital, A critique of the Political Economy. Part I: “Commodities and Money.” Part II: “The Transformation of Money into Capital.”

Marx, Capital, Volume one, “The secret of primitive accumulation”, https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/ch26.htm

**Week 3 (Oct 1)**

**Marx: the relation of production and class structure**

Giddens, Ch. 3

### Marx, Formal and Real Subsumption of Labour under Capital.

<https://marxists.catbull.com/archive/marx/works/1861/economic/ch37.htm>

Marx, Alienation and Social Classes (from The Holy Family)

Engels, Friedrich. 1845. The Condition of the Working Class in England. http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/condition-working- class/

**Week 4 (Oct 8)**

**Durkheim: Division of Labor**

Giddens, Ch. 65-105

Durkheim, Emile. 1893. Division of Labor in Society.

Parsons, Talcott. 1964. “Evolutionary Universals in Society.” American Sociological Review, XXIX, 3: 339-57

**Week 5 (Oct 15)**

**Weber: The Spirit of Capitalism**

Weber, Max, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. (London: Routledge, 1992). Chapter I, II, III, V

**Week 6 (Oct 22)**

**CEU CLOSED**

**Week 7 (Oct 29)**

**Weber’s Class, Status and Estate**

Weber, Max. 1978 (1920) “Status Groups and Classes.” Pp. 302-7 in Economy and Society, Volume 1. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kocka, Jürgen. 1985. “Marxist Social Analysis and the Problem of White-Collar Employees.” State, Culture and Society, 1,2(Winter):137-51.

**Week 8 (Nov 5)**

**Simmel’s Modernity**

Simmel, Georg. “The Metropolis and Mental Life”; “The Stranger”; “Group Expansion and the Development of Individuality”.

Frisby, David. 1992. Simmel and Since. Essays on Georg Simmel’s Social Theory. London: Routledge. ONLY the following chapters: . “The Study of Society” (5-19) . “Some Economic Aspects of The Philosophy of Money” (80-97) and “The Aesthetics of Modern Life” (135-52).

Fisby, David. 1994. “Introduction to the Simmel Texts.” Theory, Culture & Society, 11,1:1-3.

**Week 9 (Nov 12)**

**“Missed Categories of Modernity” – race I**

Fanon, Frantz, *Black Skin, White Masks*. Excerpts.

Film: Frantz Fanon: Black Skin White Mask. Dir.: Isaac Julien. BBC, 1995

**Week 10 (Nov 19)**

**“Missed Categories of Modernity” – race II**

Dubois, W.E.B. 2007 (1903) Souls of Black Folk. Oxford: Oxford UP.

Césaire, Aimé. 2000 (1955) Discourse on Colonialism. Translated by Joan Pinkham. New York: Monthly Review Press. Pp 29-78.

**Week 11 (Nov 26)**

**“Missed” Categories of Modernity: ‘Gender’**

Scott, Joan. 1986. “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis.” The American Historical Review, 91,5 (Dec): 1053-1075. OR: http://ascweb.unl.edu/majors/Joan%20Scott%20article.pdf

Sarkar, Mahua. 2004. “Looking for Feminism.” Gender and History, 16,2(Aug): 318- 33. OR:

http://bingweb.binghamton.edu/~msarkar/looking.for.feminism.published.pdf

**Week 12 (Dec 3): Take-home exam**