

PHIL UN3352 European Social Philosophy (TR 8:40 – 9:55)

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This course will explore the notion of social philosophy in its difference to other philosophical sub-disciplines and the history of its development since the beginning of modernity. The understanding of social philosophy that the course will operate with is that of a systematic investigation into the causes, symptoms and possible cures of “social pathologies”. Such “social pathologies” are best understood as forms of life or institutional arrangements that are meant to undermine the conditions of a good life among citizens. The main representatives of such a philosophical tradition in Europe are J.J. Rousseau, G.W.F. Hegel, Karl Marx, Hannah Arendt and the members of the Frankfurt School; however, other thinkers with different backgrounds or heritages like Sigmund Freud or John Dewey will also be included in the syllabus.

The course is divided in three sections:

1. The notion of a “social philosophy” in the beginning of modernity
2. The development of social philosophy from Rousseau to Hannah Arendt and Jürgen Habermas
3. Systematic problems of the concept of a “social pathology”

Course Readings:

The course will cover in its first part longer passages from Rousseau’s “Second Discourse”, Hegel’s “Philosophy of Right” and Marx’ early writings; after this first round experts from Nietzsche, Freud, Dewey, Adorno, Arendt and Habermas will be read. The readings for the last part of the course where the systematic challenges of a diagnosis of social pathologies will be discussed will be announced in due course.

The course will be taught remotely in Fall 2020, given the challenges of physical distancing for larger classes.

If not announced differently, the course will use *Zoom*