

FR218 Modern French Thinkers

PREPARATION FOR WEEK 1

Please read Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) for our first session.

WEEK 1

Lecture & Discussion

Focus: Intellectual context; Marx and Engels' *The Communist Manifesto*

Recommended resources

Geuss, Raymond. 2013. '[Marxism Lectures at the University of Cambridge](#)', recorded by Iwona Janicka

Schrift, Alain D. 2006. 'Understanding French Academic Culture', in *Twentieth-Century French Philosophy. Key Themes and Thinkers* (Oxford: Blackwell), 188–208

WEEK 2

Assigned text: Badiou *L'hypothèse communiste* (2009)

Focus: The event (*l'événement*)

Recommended reading

Badiou, Alain. 1993. *L'Éthique: Essai sur la conscience du mal* (Paris: Editions Hatier), trans. Peter Hallward. *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*. 2001. (London and New York: Verso)

———. 2009. 'Thinking the Event', in Alain Badiou and Slavoj Žižek. *Philosophy in the Present*, ed. Peter Engelmann, trans. Peter Thomas and Alberto Toscano (Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity Press), 1–48

Badiou, Alain and Fabien Tarby (ed.). 2010. *La Philosophie et l'événement. Entretiens: Suivis d'une courte introduction à la philosophie d'Alain Badiou* (Meaux: Germina), trans. Louise Burchill. *Philosophy and the Event*. 2013. (Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity)

Burchill, Louise. 2011. 'Translator's Preface: A Manifest Power of Elevation', in Alain Badiou, *Second Manifesto for Philosophy*, trans. Louise Burchill (Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity), viii–xxxiv

WEEK 3

Assigned text: Badiou *L'hypothèse communiste* (2009) [key for the seminar discussion p. 181–205]

Focus: The Idea of Communism (*L'Idée du communisme*)

Recommended reading

*Badiou, Alain. 2007. *Circonstances. 4, De quoi Sarkozy est-il le nom?* (Paris: Nouvelles éditions Lignes), trans. David Fernbach. *The Meaning of Sarkozy*. 2008. (London: Verso) [particularly the last two chapters]

- . 2015. *Quel communisme? Entretien avec Peter Engelman* (Montrouge: Bayard)
- . 2016. *La vraie vie* (Paris: Fayard, collection Ouverture)
- . 2016. *Qu'est-ce que j'entends par marxisme?* (Paris: Les éditions sociales)
- *Russo, Alessandro. 2010. 'Did the Cultural Revolution End Communism? Eight Remarks on Philosophy and Politics Today', in Costas Douzinas and Slavoj Žižek (eds). *The Idea of Communism* (London and New York: Verso), 180–94

WEEK 4

Assigned text: Rancière *Le partage du sensible* (2000)

Focus: Politics as Dissensus

Recommended reading

- Rancière, Jacques. 1995. *La Méésentente: Politique et philosophie* (Paris: Galilée), trans. Julie Rose. *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*. 1999. (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press) [particularly chapters 1–4]
- . 1998. *Aux bords du politique* (Paris: Gallimard), trans. Liz Heron, *On the Shores of Politics*. 2007. (London: Verso) [particularly chapter 1]
- . 2010. 'Communists without Communism', in Costas Douzinas and Slavoj Žižek (eds). *The Idea of Communism* (London and New York: Verso), 167–77

WEEK 5

Assigned text: Rancière *Le partage du sensible* (2000)

Focus: Politics as Aesthetics

Recommended reading

- Rancière, Jacques. 2005. 'From Politics to Aesthetics?', *Paragraph 28*: 1, 13–25
- Rancière, Jacques and Gabriel Rockhill. 2004. 'The Janus-Face of Politicized Art: Jacques Rancière in Interview with Gabriel Rockhill', in Jacques Rancière. *The Politics of Aesthetics*, trans. and ed. Gabriel Rockhill (London and New York: Bloomsbury), 45–61

WEEK 6

Reading Week

WEEK 7

Assigned text: Nancy & Baily *La Comparution* (1991)

Focus: The 'common' (*le « commun »*) and being-in-common (*l'être-en-commun*)

Recommended reading

- Nancy, Jean-Luc. 1991. 'Of Being-in-Common', in The Miami Theory Collective (ed.). *Community at Loose Ends* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 1–12

WEEK 8

Assigned text: Nancy & Baily *La Comparution* (1991)

Focus: *L'hypothèse du partage*

Recommended reading

Nancy, Jean-Luc. 1997. *Etre singulier pluriel* (Paris: Editions Galilée), trans. Robert D. Richardson and Anne E. O'Byrne. *Being Singular Plural*. 2000. (Stanford: Stanford University Press), 56–65 [passage on 'co-appearing' (*comparution*)]

WEEK 9

Lecture & Discussion

Focus: Equality and emancipation in Badiou, Rancière and Nancy

Recommended reading

May, Todd. 2007. 'Jacques Rancière and the Ethics of Equality', *SubStance* 36, 20–36

Rancière, Jacques. 1987. *Le Maître ignorant: Cinq leçons sur l'émancipation intellectuelle* (Paris: Fayard), trans. Kristin Ross. *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation*. 1991. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press)

———. 1998. *Aux bords du politique* (Paris: Gallimard), trans. Liz Heron, *On the Shores of Politics*. 2007. (London: Verso) [particularly chapter 3]

WEEK 10

Lecture & Discussion

Focus: Political practice in Badiou, Rancière and Nancy

Recommended reading

Badiou. Alain. 2011. *La relation énigmatique entre philosophie et politique* (Paris: Germina), trans. Bruno Bosteels. *Philosophy for Militants*. 2012. (London: Verso)

May, Todd. 2009. 'Anarchism from Foucault to Rancière', in Randall Amstar *et al.* (eds). *Contemporary Anarchist Studies. An Introductory Anthropology of Anarchy in the Academy* (New York and London: Routledge), 11–17

Nancy, Jean-Luc. 1997. 'What Is to Be Done', in Jean-Luc Nancy and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe. *Retreating the Political* (London and New York: Routledge), 157–158

———. 2005. 'The Future of Philosophy. An Interview', in B.C. Hutchens. *Jean-Luc Nancy and the Future of Philosophy* (Chesham: Acumen), 161–166