

RELIGION FROM LEFT FIELD
Fall 2022
Tuesdays & Thursdays 2-3:15p.m.; Room A2071



Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? - Jeremiah 23:29

The tradition of the dead weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living.
- Karl Marx, 'The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, 1852'

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Course Description. Religion From Left Field examines modern, left-leaning understandings, adaptations, and critiques of Jewish and Christian thought. We consider religion not simply as an object of political analysis and critique, but as a contributing factor to the emergence of an influential body of post-Enlightenment emancipatory thought and political theology, as found in currents of Western Marxism, Christian socialism, and religious anarchism.

Context. In the wake of 9/11, there has been a dramatic resurgence of religion in the public sphere and political discourses; alongside this re-emergence has been an intensified, cross-disciplinary effort in scholarship to revisit and reappraise the complex historical and on-going relationships between the religious and the political. Coupled with this, in the wake of the 2008 financial collapse, there has been a resurgence of interest in socialism, as both a theoretical/analytical perspective and political option. In some ways, the contemporary moment mirrors the dynamics and energies of culture a century earlier. The course surveys, from a historical and philosophical perspective, the intersections of religion and left-leaning emancipatory thought.

Learning Outcomes. Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to

- ◆ Give an account of those aspects of Jewish and Christian thought, as found in the biblical tradition, that contribute to emancipatory thinking and resistance to systems of oppression and domination.
- ◆ Give a synoptic account of the development, key ideas, and trajectories of ‘Western Marxist’ social-political theory.
- ◆ Give an account of the ways in which critical social-cultural theory has engaged with key elements of Christian and Jewish thought and practice.

Reading. Paul Tillich, *The Socialist Decision* (Wipf & Stock, 2012 [1933]); in bookstore, or through online sellers; there are used copies out there too). Other readings in schedule available online, via QEII, or found in the BrightSpace course shell.

Course Requirements & Evaluation.

20% Summary Papers. Over the course of the term, you are required to prepare 4 reading summaries (1-2 pages (single spaced)). Details will be given in class.

20% Midterm Exam. A scheduled, in-class midterm. Details given in class.

30% Term Paper. A 6-7 page term paper, on an individual, an event, or particular a topic/theme. Details to be given in class. Due November 24th.

30% Final Exam. A scheduled final exam, consisting of short response and short essay questions (2 hours).

“At the heart of the Frankfurt School critical theory we find not just an incidental or ancillary attention to religion, but a central, deliberate, and explicit confrontation with both religion and theology.”

- Eduardo Mendieta, *The Frankfurt School on Religion: Key Writings by the Major Thinkers* (2004)

Important Dates

September 6, 2022, Tuesday, Deadline for fees payment Fall semester. Lectures begin.

September 20, 2022, Tuesday End of Regular Registration Period and last day for undergraduate and graduate students to add courses, Fall semester

September 30, 2022, Friday National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, no lectures

October 10, 2022, Monday Fall semester break begins at St. John’s and Grenfell Campuses Thanksgiving Day, no lectures – so, no class on October 11

October 12, 2022, Wednesday Lectures resume at St. John’s and Grenfell Campuses. Lectures will follow the Monday schedule on this day only.

November 1, 2022, Last day to drop without academic prejudice.

November 10, 2022, Thursday Lectures will follow the Friday schedule – so, no class on November 10

November 11, 2022, Friday Remembrance Day holiday, no lectures

December 2, 2022, Friday Lectures end

December 7, 2022, Wednesday Examinations begin

December 16, 2022, Friday Examinations end

“I write in the very beginning of finding the Bible and the impression it made on me. I must have read it a good deal, for many passages remained with me through my earlier years to return and haunt me. Do you know the Psalms? They were what I read most when I was in jail in Occoquan. I

read with a sense of coming back to something that I had lost. There was an echoing in my heart. And how can anyone who has known human sorrow and human joy fail to respond to these words?" – Dorothy Day, *From Union Square to Rome* (1938)

SCHEDULE

September 6 & 8 – Intro, Getting Oriented

- ◆ After the Revolutions
- ◆ The slow cancellation of the future (Franco Berardi) & elective affinities (Michael Löwy)
- ◆ Marx: bio, myths, and misunderstandings
- ◆ Reading: Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, preamble and Chapter 1, Bourgeois and Proletarians; link: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch01.htm>

Our contemporary societies are characterized by a puzzling divide. On the one hand, discontent with the current socio-economic state of affairs, with contemporary economic and working conditions, has increased enormously in recent years. More than ever in the postwar era, people are outraged at the social and political consequences unleashed by the global liberalization of the capitalist market economy. On the other hand, this widespread outrage seems to lack any sense of direction, any historical sense of its ultimate aim. As a result this widespread discontent has remained oddly mute and introverted, giving the impression that it simply lacks the capacity to think beyond the present and imagine a society beyond capitalism. The disconnect between this outrage and any notion about the future, between protest and a vision of a better world, is a novel phenomenon in the history of modern societies.

– Axel Honneth, *The Idea of Socialism: Towards a Renewal* (2017)

September 13 & 15 – ‘Sigh of the Oppressed Creature’

- ◆ Marx’s critique of Capitalism (structural & moral)
- ◆ Religion as consolation; deprivation, existential security models of religion
- ◆ Readings:
 - ◆ Karl Marx, selection from Capital, vol. 1, from Part 8, ‘Primitive Accumulation’ – ‘Ursprüngliche Akkumulation’ - Chapters 26, 27, 28, 31
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/>
 - ◆ Karl Marx, Various Passages on Religion (BrightSpace)

But what all the violence of the feudal institutions could never have effected, the silent and insensible operation of foreign commerce and manufactures gradually brought about. These gradually furnished the great proprietors with something for which they could exchange the whole surplus produce of their lands, and which they could consume themselves without sharing it either with tenants or retainers. All for ourselves and nothing for other people, seems, in every age of the world, to have been the vile maxim of the masters of mankind. As soon, therefore, as they could find a method of consuming the whole value of their rents themselves, they had no disposition to share them with any other persons. For a pair of diamond buckles, perhaps, or for something as frivolous and useless, they exchanged the maintenance, or what is the same thing, the price of the maintenance of a thousand men for a year, and with it the whole weight and authority which it could give them. The buckles, however, were to be all their own, and no other human creature was to have any share of them; whereas in the more ancient method of expense they must have shared with at least a thousand people. With the judges that were to determine the preference this difference was perfectly decisive; and thus, for the gratification of the most childish, the meanest, and the most sordid of all vanities, they gradually bartered their whole power and authority. - Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (1776)

Despite progress in some countries, income and wealth are increasingly concentrated at the top. The share of income going to the richest 1 per cent of the global population increased in 46 out of 57 countries and areas with data from 1990 to 2015.¹ Meanwhile, the bottom 40 per cent earned less than 25 per cent of income in all 92 countries with data (United Nations, 2019a). – UN, *Inequality in a Rapidly Changing World*, 2020.

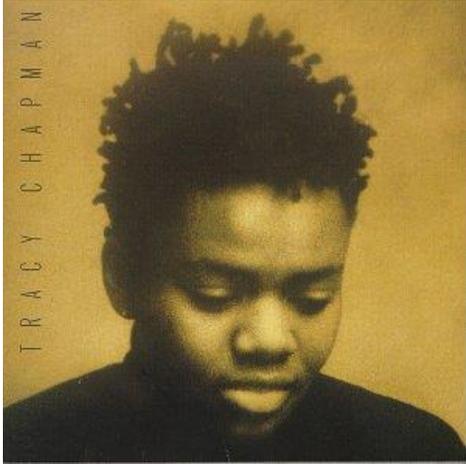
At the beginning of the 20th century, African Americans owned at least 14 million acres of land. By the 21st century, 90 percent of the land had been stolen from them. Now, African Americans only own 1.1 million acres of farmland and are part owners of another 1.07 million acres. Across a century, white farmers and landowners developed multiple ways to take African Americans’ land, using methods such as heirs property, tax sales, and Torrens Acts. To understand the magnitude of this land theft, one must examine the extreme measures taken by those who captured the land from African American landowners. Both laws and practices allowed white landowners, farmers, and developers to manipulate the system so they could gain control over the land owned by African American farmers and homeowners. - Tykeisa Nesbitt, ‘Black Land Theft and the Racial Wealth Divide.’ *Inequality.org*. May 6, 2022.

September 20 & 22 – Marxist/Leftist views and voices

- ◆ Adding nuance and context to Marx's view of religion
- ◆ Readings:
 - ◆ Michael Löwy, "Religion and Politics: Revisiting Marx and Weber," in *The War of the Gods: Religion and Politics in Latin America* (1996) (BrightSpace)
 - ◆ Rosa Luxemburg, *Socialism and the Churches* (1905) – link: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/luxemburg/1905/misc/socialism-churches.htm>
 - ◆ Terry Eagleton, Chapter 6 from *Why Marx Was Right* (2011) (BrightSpace)
 - ◆ Cornel West, "The Making of an American Democratic Socialist of African Descent," from *The Ethical Dimension of Marxist Thought* (1991) (BrightSpace)
 - ◆ Clara Fraser, "Fighting Words on the Humanity of Marxism," (1981), in *Revolution, She Wrote* (1998) (BrightSpace)

A Bohemian nihilism exists in the exaggerated Futurist rejection of the past, but not a proletarian revolutionism. We Marxists live in traditions, and we have not stopped being revolutionists on account of it. We elaborated and lived through the traditions of the Paris Commune, even before our first revolution. Then the traditions of 1905 were added to them, by which we nourished ourselves and by which we prepared the second revolution. Going farther back, we connected the Commune with the June days of 1848, and with the great French Revolution. In the field of theory, we based ourselves, through Marx, on Hegel and on English classical political economy. We were educated, and we entered the struggle during an organic epoch, and we lived on revolutionary traditions. More than one literary tendency was born under our eyes, which declared a merciless war upon "bourgeoisdom", and which looked upon us as not quite whole. Just as the wind always returns to its own circles, so these literary revolutionists and destroyers of traditions found their way to the Academy. The October Revolution appeared to the intelligentsia, including its literary left wing, as a complete destruction of its known world, of that very world from which it broke away from time to time, for the purpose of creating new schools, and to which it invariably returned. To us, on the contrary, the Revolution appeared as the embodiment of a familiar tradition, internally digested. From a world which we rejected theoretically, and which we undermined practically, we entered into a world which was already familiar to us, as a tradition and a vision. Here lies the incompatibility of psychologic type between the Communist, who is a political revolutionist, and the Futurist, who is a revolutionary innovator of form. This is the source of the misunderstandings between them. The trouble is not that Futurism "denies" the holy traditions of the intelligentsia. On the contrary, it lies in the fact that it does not feel itself to be part of the revolutionary tradition. We stepped into the Revolution while Futurism fell into it. – Leon Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution* (1924)

The philosophy of oppression, perfected and refined through civilizations as a true culture of injustice, does not achieve its greatest triumph when its propagandists knowingly inculcate it; rather the triumph is achieved when this philosophy has become so deeply rooted in the spirits of the oppressors themselves and their ideologues that they are not even aware of their guilt. Marx himself recognizes that in the capitalist system the oppressor is as alienated as the oppressed. Thus I wish to make it clear from the very beginning that when I speak of exploiters, I do not wish to assign conscious guilt to all of them nor to all their purveyors of philosophical ideology. Far from it. Rather, I hope that the conscience of people of good will is capable of being shaken up and of challenging itself. Injustice is more a work of the social machinery, of the system of civilization and culture, than it is of people's intentions. "Indeed, the hour is coming," Jesus warned his disciples, "when anyone who kills you will think he is doing a holy duty for God" (John 16:2). Besides this point it seems necessary to make clear only two others beforehand, although in the chapters that follow they will be obvious to the reader. The first is that I speak of Marx and not of communism. The second is that the author does not believe himself to be outside the social and cultural system criticized here; he only wishes that he might be freed from it himself and that all of us might be freed from it as well. - Jose Porfirio Miranda, *Marx and the Bible: A Critique of the Philosophy of Oppression* (1974)



Self-Titled Debut Album, 1988

What really matters is what happens the morning after, when the drunkenness of the collective trance is over and the enthusiasm has to be translated into concrete measures. I often mockingly evoked a group of participants who, once a year, meet in a cafeteria at the anniversary of past demonstrations and sentimentally remember the bygone moments of ecstatic unity – but then a cellphone rings and they have to run back to their boring jobs.

"Marx says that revolutions are the locomotive of world history. But perhaps it is quite otherwise. Perhaps revolutions are an attempt by the passengers on this train – namely, the human race – to pull the emergency brake."

- Walter Benjamin

REVOLUTION

Don't you know
They're talking about a revolution?
It sounds like a whisper
Don't you know
Talking about a revolution?
It sounds like a whisper
While they're standing in the welfare lines
Crying at the doorsteps of those armies of salvation
Wasting time in the unemployment lines
Sitting around waiting for a promotion
Don't you know
Talking about a revolution?
It sounds like a whisper
Poor people gonna rise up
And get their share
Poor people gonna rise up
And take what's theirs
Don't you know you better run, run, run, run, run,
run
Run, run, run, run, run, run
Oh, I said you better run, run, run, run, run, run
Run, run, run, run, run, run
'Cause finally the tables are starting to turn
Talkin' 'bout a revolution
'Cause finally the tables are starting to turn
Talkin' 'bout a revolution, oh no
Talkin' 'bout a revolution, oh
I've been standing in the welfare lines
Crying at the doorsteps of those armies of salvation
Wasting time in the unemployment lines
Sitting around waiting for a promotion
Don't you know
Talking about a revolution?
It sounds like a whisper
And finally the tables are starting to turn
Talkin' 'bout a revolution
Yes, finally the tables are starting to turn
Talkin' 'bout a revolution, oh, no
Talkin' 'bout a revolution, oh, no

I am ready to sell my mother into slavery to see a film, *V for Vendetta* part 2!... I hate this idea of revolution you know, things are stable, boring and every couple years we need some big event, enthusiastic, ecstasy, and so on. I don't care about that. The most important aspect of a revolutionary process is for me change in everyday daily life. Even though it wasn't a real revolution, I even have a certain sympathy for the 68 movement in France and Europe. Okay, it failed as a social revolution but nonetheless many things passed into daily life.... The different way we treat women, the pride parades. - Zizek, from a popular YouTube talk, 'The Day After: An Interview with Slavoj Zizek'

September 27 & 29 – Word, Like Fire: Prophetic, Messianic Religion

- ◆ The Bible, in a nutshell; the axial age
- ◆ Jesus within Judaism within Roman Empire
- ◆ Why was Christianity successful?
- ◆ Readings:
 - Terry Eagleton, 'Introduction' to Terry Eagleton presents Jesus Christ: The Gospels.' Verso, 2008. (BrightSpace)
 - John Dominic Crossan, "Empire and the Barbarism of Civilization," from *God and Empire* (2007). (BrightSpace)
 - Paul, Philemon – link <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/r/rsv/rsv-idx?type=DIV1&byte=5430428>
 - Justin Meggit, "Was the Historical Jesus on Anarchist?", in *Essays on Anarchism and Religion*, vol. 1, edited by edited by A. Christoyannopoulos (Stockholm University, 20187; open access via QEII)

"My task is to rescue the Bible from the clutches of the religious and political right, its most systematic abusers. It is far too important and too multi-vocal a text to be surrendered to right-wing agendas. As far as the left is concerned, the old divisions of religious left and secular left are no longer workable. So I argue that they should unite in a common front – a 'worldly left' – in order to reclaim and rescue the Bible for radical politics. Fortunately for such a common left, the Bible is so multi-vocal that it is perfectly plausible to draw from it a deep current of revolutionary themes. And it matters not whether those who read the Bible in this way are 'believers' or not." - Roland Boer, *Rescuing the Bible* (2007)

"When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left.

Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;

for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,

I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink?

And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee?

And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?'

And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.'

Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels;

for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,

I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.'

Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?'

Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.'

And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

– Gospel According to Matthew 25

October 4 & 6 – Tillich’s *The Socialist Decision*, Intro & Part 1

- ◆ These next 3 weeks we read our way through Tillich’s book. Written in 1933, just after the rise of the Nazis to power. Tillich would flee Germany, and this book would be banned and burned. The book became an important source of 20th-century Christian socialist thought in Europe.

October 13 – Tillich, *The Socialist Decision*, Part 2

October 18 & 20 – Tillich, *The Socialist Decision*, Part 3

“The political events of recent years have been decisive in providing the impulse to begin and complete this book: the decline of the political influence of the Social Democrats, the apparently final split in the proletarian working class, the triumphal advance of National Socialism, the consolidation of late-capitalistic powers on a military basis, the increasingly perilous situation in foreign affairs.” – Tillich, *The Socialist Decision*

A theologian who had a major influence on Martin Luther King’s religious ideas, Paul Tillich is considered one of the foremost thinkers of Protestantism. In response to Tillich’s death in October 1965, King commented: “He helped us to speak of God’s action in history in terms which adequately expressed both the faith and the intellect of modern man” (King, October 1965).

Paul Tillich was born on 20 August 1886, in the province of Brandenburg, Germany, to Johannes Tillich, a Lutheran pastor, and his wife, Wilhelmina Mathilde. He studied at a number of German universities before obtaining his PhD at Breslau in 1911. In 1912 he was ordained as a pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Brandenburg. After serving as a chaplain in the German Army during World War I, he taught theology at the Universities of Berlin, Marburg, Dresden, Leipzig, and Frankfurt. Removed from his Frankfurt post due to his public support of leftist intellectuals and Jews during the early Nazi regime, Tillich accepted Reinhold Niebuhr’s invitation to teach at Union Theological Seminary in New York. Tillich served on the faculty as a professor of philosophical theology from 1933 until his retirement in 1955, and went on to join the faculty at Harvard University. In 1962 he accepted a post as the Nuveen Professor of Theology at the University of Chicago, where he remained until his death. – from King Institute website (Stanford).

October 25 – Midterm exam

October 27 – Select Poems by William Blake

- ◆ Blake as exemplary of romantic radicalism, social critique, and proto-anarchist
- ◆ No readings!

November 1 & 3 - Christianity, Social Gospel, Class Struggle

- ◆ Historical Christian sectarianism as resistance to domination
- ◆ Social Gospel, Christian Socialism, Liberation Theology
- ◆ Readings:
 - ◆ Jaroslav Pelikan, “The Liberator,” from *Jesus Through the Centuries* (BrightSpace)
 - ◆ Vida Dutton Scudder, “The Tug’s to Come,” chapter 7 from *Socialism and Character* (1912). (BrightSpace)
 - ◆ Herbert McCabe, “Class Struggle and Christian Love,” in *God Matters* (BrightSpace)
 - ◆ Martin Luther King Jr., “Pilgrimage to Nonviolence” (1958), in *The Radical King*, edited by Cornell West (2015); also included is West’s Introduction (BrightSpace)
 - ◆ Andrew Douglas, “Something is Wrong with Capitalism”: On the Revolution of Values, in *Prophet of Discontent: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Critique of Racial Capitalism* (2021). (QEI e-book)

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose.

– Paul, Romans

November 8 - 'No Gods, No Masters', Dorothy Day

- ◆ Anarchists, anarchism and religion
- ◆ Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker's movement
- ◆ Readings
 - Dorothy Day, selections from *From Union Square to Rome* (1938)
 - Chapter 3 Early Years; Chapter 4 College; Chapter 7 New York; Chapter 11 New Life; Chapter 12 Wheat and Cockle; Chapter 13 Your Three Objections
 - Link: <https://www.catholicworker.org/dorothyday/articles/2.html>
 - Benjamin Pauli, "The Catholic Worker, Dorothy Day, and Exemplary Anarchism," in *Essays in Anarchism and Religion*, vol. 1, edited by A. Christoyannopoulos (Stockholm University, 2017; open access via QEII)

You ask me how I came to reject Communism. First of all, let this be understood, that I was a Communist in sympathy but with reservations scarcely formulated. I accepted Marxism as an economic theory and if I had been pinned down as to whether or not I was an atheist, I would probably have argued as you do: "How can we believe in a God who permitted such suffering and injustice in the world?"

Always at the bottom of my heart was the desire to believe, sometimes so faint as to be barely perceptible, at other times very strong. But I distrusted myself, my own emotional reactions and my own instability.

I did not believe in private property. I wanted to work for a state of society in which each should "work according to his ability and receive according to his need." That is Marx's definition of Communism. I did not believe that greedy and unjust men could be converted. I believed rather in the inevitability of revolution.

– Dorothy Day, *From Union Square to Rome* (1938). Semi-autobiographical letters written to her brother.



November 10 – no class

November 15 & 17 – Cornell West’s & Marxist Humanism

- ◆ Cornell West, “Prophetic Christian as Organic Intellectual: Martin Luther King, Jr.” In *The Cornell West Reader*, 425-434. (BrightSpace)
- ◆ Cornel West, “Religion and the Left: Introduction,” *Monthly Review* (1984). Reprinted in *The Cornel West Reader*, 372-379. (BrightSpace)
- ◆ Christian Fuchs, “Cornell West and Marxist Humanism.” *Critical Sociology* 47.7-8 (2021): 1219-1243. (QEII journal)
- ◆ Cornell West and Christa Buschendorf. “‘We Need Martin More Than Ever’: Interview with Cornel West on Martin Luther King, Jr., August 2011.” *Amerikastudien* 56, no. 3 (2011): 449–67. (QEII journal) – note: An entire volume of Buschendorf’s interviews with West has been published under the title, *Black, Prophetic Fire* (2015).

November 22 & 24 – Zizek’s Theology; Religion and Post-Marxism

- ◆ R: “The Fear of Four Words: A Modest Plea for a Hegelian Reading of Christianity”, in Creston Davis (ed.), *The Monstrosity of Christ: Paradox or Dialectic* (2009). (e-book QEII)
- ◆ R: Nelson Maldonado-Torres, “Post-Marxism and Religion,” in Richard King (ed.), *Religion, Theory, Critique* (2017). (QEII e-book).

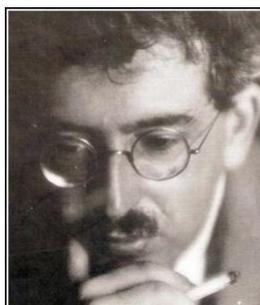


The death of Christ... is not any kind of redemption... it’s simply the disintegration of the God which guarantees the meaning of our lives.
 – Žižek, from the film *The Pervert’s Guide to Ideology* (2012).

‘Atheism’ (in the sense of deciding not to believe in God) is a miserable, pathetic stance of those who long for God but cannot find him (or who ‘rebel against God’).
 - Žižek, *Interrogating the Real* (2006)

November 29 & Dec. 1 – Walter Benjamin: Time, History, Salvation

- ◆ R: Benjamin, “Capitalism as Religion,” *Theologico-Political Fragment*,” and “Theses on the Philosophy of History.” Each of these is found in Mendieta, *The Frankfurt School on Religion: Key Writings by the Major Thinkers*. (ebook, QEII)
- ◆ R: Annika Thiem, “Benjamin’s Messianic Metaphysics of Transience,” in *Walter Benjamin and Theology*, edited by Colby Dickinson and Stéphane Symons (2016). (ebook QEII).



The present, which, as a model of Messianic time, comprises the entire history of mankind in an enormous abridgment, coincides with the stature which the history of mankind has in the universe.
 — Walter Benjamin —

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(for your future reading pleasure).

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General Course and University Regulations, Policies and Supports.

Students should be familiar with the General Regulations and Academic Regulations of the Undergraduate Calendar. governing undergraduate studies. Disabilities. If you have a documented disability, please inform me as soon as possible, so that any necessary accommodations are made in a timely fashion. Class Attendance, Due Dates, Missed Classes. Your responsibilities include regular class attendance. Should you have to miss a class, inform me ahead of time, if possible. Be aware of and understand University regulations regarding health-related absence. If you are applying for a waiver of regulations, requesting a deferred final exam or assignment/paper please refer to General University Regulations on waivers and/or Information Required in Certificates from Health Professionals. Honesty and Plagiarism. Be sure you understand the University's policies, and what constitutes plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to allowing another student to copy from your work, presenting someone else's work as your own including through failure to credit the source of ideas, consulting electronic devices such as mobile phones or MP3 players and/or interacting with others while a test is ongoing. Etiquette. Please be punctual, if possible. Please!, during class, do not surf, tweet, text, tik tok, and so on. Debate, argument, passion—yes please! Civility and respect are required, always. Campus Support. A number of student support services exist on campus that one may wish to provide to students.

- The Academic Advising Centre (SN-4053) provides academic guidance to students in their first year of study. Students seeking advice about a specific Major or Minor should contact the designated undergraduate advisor in that department.
- The Commons (QEII library) provides access to print, electronic and technology resources.
- The Counselling Centre (UC-5000) helps students develop their personal capabilities, ranging from study strategies to assisting distressed students.
- Student Affairs and Services (Answers, UC-3005) answers questions about such things as courses, housing, books, financial matters and health.
- The Writing Centre (SN-2053) is a free, drop-in facility for students and helps them become better writers and critical thinkers.
- The Glenn Roy Blundon Centre. I am committed to facilitating and promoting an accessible, inclusive, and mutually respectful learning environment. Students requiring special accommodation are asked to communicate firstly with the Glenn Roy Blundon Centre (www.mun.ca/blundon) at the earliest opportunity. University policies and procedures pertaining to accommodations for students with disabilities can be found at www.mun.ca/policy/site/policy.php?id=239"

A RELIGION MAY BE DISCERNED IN
CAPITALISM—THAT IS TO SAY, CAPITALISM
SERVES ESSENTIALLY TO ALLAY THE SAME
ANXIETIES, TORMENTS, AND DISTURBANCES
TO WHICH THE SO-CALLED RELIGIONS
OFFERED ANSWERS.

- WALTER BENJAMIN -

