



PSCI 4809/5309

Concepts of Political Community II

The Modern Search for Political Wholeness

G.W.F. Hegel's THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT seeks to recover the Platonic account of the soul's search for transcendence so as to counter-act the widespread feeling that the Modern Age of the Enlightenment and liberalism had debased the human spirit with its excessive emphasis on individual self-interest and materialism. We will consider how Hegel's attempt to synthesize Platonism with the progress of history emerged from the thought of Rousseau (who was, along with Plato, Hegel's favorite thinker), Kant and Schiller. Then, after our exploration of THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT itself, we will examine how Hegel's grand synthesis of history and transcendence was attacked from both the left and the right by Marx ("The Communist Manifesto" and "On the Jewish Question"), Nietzsche (BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL) and Heidegger (AN INTRODUCTION TO METAPHYSICS), with the result that Hegel's moderate political progressivism was increasingly set aside in favor of ever more revolutionary expectations for the future transformation of the human condition, a Third Age of collective bliss variously evoked by Marx's proletariat, Nietzsche's Superman and Heidegger's vision of the German "community of destiny."

Instructor: Professor Waller R. Newell

Schedule: January to April 2016

Time: Please consult Carleton Central