**Religion Core Sequence  
Spring Quarter Readings**

**Course Description:** In the Fall quarter, we examined how religious myths and rituals presuppose, challenge, and support social conditions and power relations. In the Winter, we discussed how these myths and accompanying rituals respond to the ways human beings are flawed and finite—vulnerable to evil, alienation, and misfortune. The Spring quarter is devoted to themes surrounding ideology, ethics, hope, and the future. What ideas and practices do religions propose as ways of remedying, coping with, or adjusting to the facts of existence? Where do different groups find the motivation to make the world a better place—is it because of religions and ideologies, or in spite of them? How do different religions address the moral standing of the neighbor, the enemy, the community, and the environment?  How is religion connected to social, economic, and political power—is it the “opiate of the masses,” or the spark that ignites a revolution?

For many of the texts, we will only be reading selections, which will be scanned and posted as PDFs available on Canvas.

**Reading Schedule:**

**Week One:**  Religion and Ideology

* Class One – Introduction (no readings)
* Class Two – Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Theses on Feuerbach,” “The German Ideology – Ideology in General,” “The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism”

**Week Two:** The True and the False

* Class One – Karl Marx, “Introduction,” in *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right* // Karl Marx, “The Fetishism of the Commodity and Its Secret”
* Class Two – Ali Shariati, “Religion vs. Religion” / Gustavo Gutiérrez, “Notes for a Theology of Liberation” / Ahn Byung-Mu, “Jesus and the Minjung in the Gospel of Mark”

**Week Three:** Secrecy and Disclosure

* Class One – Augustine, *City of God,* books 14 and 19
* Class Two – Moses Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed* / Leo Strauss, “How to Begin to Study *The Guide*”

**Week Four:**  Religion and Societal Aims

* Class One – Al-Farabi, *Book of Religion*
* Class Two – John Locke, “A Letter Concerning Toleration”

**Week Five:**  Weber on the Secular and the Religious

* Class One – Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*
* Class Two – Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (continued)

**Week Six:**  Weber Continued; Gandhi and the Critique of Western Civilization

* Class One – Max Weber, *“*The Three Types of Legitimate Rule”
* Class Two – Mohandas Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*

**Week Seven:**  Religion and Political Spirituality I

* Class One – Martin Luther King Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail” and “Pilgrimage to Nonviolence”
* Class Two – Michel Foucault, “Technologies of the Self” and “Political Spirituality as the Will for Alterity”

**Week Eight:**  Religion and Political Spirituality II

* Class One – Michel Foucault’s writings on the Iranian Revolution / The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran
* Class Two – Malcolm X and Alex Haley, *Autobiography of Malcolm X*

**Week Nine:**  Religion and Political Spirituality III

* Class One – Malcolm X and Alex Haley, *Autobiography of Malcolm X* (continued)
* Class Two – Dorothy Day, *By Little and By Little* // Albert Schweitzer, “The Reverence for Life”