

Hegel's *Science of Logic* (1812 – 1816)
Seminar of the NYC Marxist Hegel-Studies Collective
Spring 2015 / Conducted by Russell Dale

Hegel's philosophy has had a great influence on much of what has happened in the world since his time (1770 – 1831) and is crucial to understanding much of modern social thought and philosophy as well as to understanding Marxism and the socialist tradition in its varied aspects.

Hegel's *Science of Logic* is considered by many the most important and developed of all of Hegel's works. It is essential for understanding Hegel's other works and therefore it is essential for understanding the works of Marx and Engels as well.

We are going to be reading the entire *Science of Logic* over the 2014-2015 academic year running from September 2014 through to August 2015. You don't have to commit yourself to the whole course, though you will probably want to. The work divides into three sections which we will cover in the three terms as follows: (1) Fall 2014 (September through December, 2014): “The Doctrine of Being”; (2) Spring 2015 (February through May, 2015): “The Doctrine of Essence”; and (3) Summer 2015 (June through August, 2015): “The Doctrine of the Concept”.

So, in this Spring 2015 course, we will read, get a handle on, and discuss the entire second section of the *Science of Logic* which is called “The Doctrine of Essence”. We will discuss in detail what Hegel is trying to do as well as how what he is doing fits into the general project of, Hegel's whole philosophical “system”.

We will start the course with a review of what has already gone on in the work up to this second section of the work, so nobody will be lost, even if they were not able to take the previous course.

We will also be discussing how Hegel's views here made it possible for Hegel to come to the socially reactionary conclusions that he ultimately drew, while at the same time they were inspirational for so many radical and progressive thinkers as well, including Marx and Engels. We will give special attention to and treatment of the fact that Hegel had white-supremacist, racist views, and played an important role in the development of the pseudo-science of biological race theory. We will look at how these views relate to his abstract theories of logic, metaphysics, and nature as well as what this means for the tradition of thought that stems from Hegel, which includes some of the greatest thinkers of African descent in the twentieth century, such as W. E. B. DuBois, C. L. R. James, Frantz Fanon and others.

The course will run for 12 weeks on Friday evenings from 7:30 PM to 9:30 PM from Friday, January 30 to Friday, April 17, 2015. We will be reading the edition of Hegel's *Science of Logic* translated by A. V. Miller, and published by Humanity Books. (Arrangements will be made for students who cannot afford to buy a copy of this book which costs about \$33 new online.)