

Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Twentieth Century Political Thought
PP5562
2013-2014

Module lecturer:

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Office hours: Monday 11:45-12:45 and
Thursday 13:30-14:30

Module Aims

The main aim of the module is to introduce students to theories of revolution and counter-revolution in early twentieth century Europe. The module will focus intensively on four thinkers who can be regarded as representative of the full range of the political spectrum: Weber, Schmitt, Lenin and Gramsci. Each of these thinkers responded to the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary movements of early twentieth century in a distinctive fashion, developing and transforming some of the key concepts of modern political thought. In so doing, they proposed theoretical perspectives and positions that have remained operative until the present day, including theories of rationalisation, decisionism, dictatorship, democracy, legitimation, sovereignty, hegemony and passive revolution. The module will focus in particular upon the impact of early twentieth century revolutionary and counter-revolutionary movements upon the development of each theorist's work, and the way in which these experiences contributed to the reformulation of classic themes in the history of modern political thought. In particular, these include theories of political power, political form, political organisation and legitimation. The rationale for the module is to study in detail the development of theories of political modernity, revolution and counter-revolution in relation to the concrete political movements of their time. The final aim is to offer students theoretical support for their study of politics and history, with a special focus on early twentieth century Europe. These aims are to be achieved through a close reading of original texts in the seminars, supported by contextual and information provided in the lecturer.

Learning Outcomes

- 1) Students will acquire an understanding of the development of modern political thought in Europe in the early twentieth century, in its historical context;
- 2) Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to make informed judgments about primary sources in the history of political thought;
- 3) Students will have an in-depth knowledge of the work of at least 2 of the theorists studied on the course;
- 4) Students will be able to make informed judgments concerning the impact of experiences of revolution and counter-revolution in the early twentieth century upon the development of modern political thought.

Teaching Mode

This is a Postgraduate 30 credits module.
Contact time consists of one 2 hour meeting per week.

Additional Seminars

The Brunel Social and Political Thought research group organises a regular research seminar throughout the year. All students are welcome and encouraged to attend. More information can be found at <http://www.brunel.ac.uk/sss/politics/research-groups-and-centres/social-and-political-thought>

Assessment

Details are to be found below.

Syllabus

The seminars will be based on selected readings of original texts. You are required to purchase a copy of the books marked with an * on the Reading list. A reading selection of other texts will also be supplied by the lecturer (e-format). This is an intensive reading seminar. Every student will be expected to have read and made notes on the specified reading. Students will be expected to actively contribute to the discussion. It will be a waste of everyone's time if you attend the seminar without having read and made notes on the required reading; please do not do so, as you will be asked to leave.

Reading list

- *Max Weber, *Weber: Political Writings* (CUP, 1994)
- Max Weber, *The Russian Revolution* (Cornell, 1995)
- Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation", in *The Vocation Lectures: Science As a Vocation, Politics As a Vocation* (Hackett, 2004)
- Lenin, *Collected Works* (in particular, *What Is To Be Done?*, *State and Revolution*, *April Theses*)
- Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, 3 Volumes (Columbia 1992-2011)
- *Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (International Publishers, 1971)
- Antonio Gramsci, *Pre-Prison Writings* (CUP, 1994)
- Carl Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy* (MIT, 1998)
- *Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago, 2007)
- Carl Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan* (Telos, 2007)

Suggested readings

- H. Arendt, *On Revolution* [1963] (Penguin, 2006).
- G. Balakrishnan, *The Enemy: An Intellectual Portrait of Carl Schmitt* (Verso, 2002).
- E. Balibar, 'Reflections on Gewalt', in *Historical Materialism* 17.1 (Brill, 2009).
- W. Benjamin, *Critique of Violence* [1921] in *Selected Writings Vol. 1: 1913-1926* (Harvard UP, 1996).
- E. Bolsinger, *The Autonomy of the Political: Carl Schmitt's and Lenin's Political Realism* (Greenwood, 2001).
- C. N. Coutinho, *Gramsci's Political Thought* (Brill, 2012).
- S. R. Farris, *Max Weber's Theory of Personality: Individuation, Politics and Orientalism in the Sociology of Religion* (Brill, 2013).
- C. Galli, *Genealogia della politica. Carl Schmitt e la crisi del pensiero politico moderno* (il Mulino, 1996/2009.)
- N. Harding, *Lenin's Political Thought* (Haymarket, 2009).
- A. Kalyvas, *Democracy and the Politics of the Extraordinary* (CUP, 2008).
- L. Lih, *Lenin Rediscovered: What Is to Be Done? In Context* (Haymarket, 2008).
- Wolfgang J. Mommsen, *Max Weber and German Politics, 1890-1920*, (Chicago, 1984).
- A. Negri, *Insurgencies: Constituent Power and the Modern State* (Minnesota UP, 2009).
- M. Neocleous, 'Friend or Enemy? Reading Schmitt Politically', *Radical Philosophy* 79, September/October 1996, pp. 13-23.
- J. Rehmann, *Max Weber: Modernisierung als passive Revolution. Kontextstudien zu Politik, Philosophie und Religion im Übergang zum Fordismus* (Argument, 1998).
- A. Santucci, *Antonio Gramsci* (Monthly Review Press, 2010).
- P. D. Thomas, *The Gramscian Moment* (Brill, 2009).
- P. D. Thomas, "Hegemony, Passive Revolution and the Modern Prince", *Thesis 11* 117, 2013, pp.20-39.

Week 1 – Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Twentieth Century Political Thought

Introductory Lecture

Background Reading:

H. Arendt, *On Revolution* [1963] (Penguin, 2006). Ch. 1.

E. Balibar, 'Reflections on Gewalt', in *Historical Materialism* 17.1 (Brill, 2009).

Week 2 – Weber and the first Russian Revolution

Reading:

Max Weber, 'On the Situation of Constitutional Democracy in Russia', in Max Weber, *Weber: Political Writings* (CUP, 1994).

Background Reading:

A. Kalyvas, *Democracy and the Politics of the Extraordinary* (CUP, 2008), Chapters 1-3.

Week 3 – Weber before the Weimar Republic

Reading:

Max Weber, 'Parliament and Government in Germany under a New Political Order' in Max Weber, *Weber: Political Writings* (CUP, 1994).

Background Reading:

Wolfgang J. Mommsen, *Max Weber and German Politics, 1890–1920*, (University of Chicago, 1984)

Week 4 – Weber and Revolution in the West

Max Weber, 'Socialism' in Max Weber, *Weber: Political Writings* (CUP, 1994).

Week 5 – Weber and Politics (I)

Reading:

M. Weber, *The Profession and Vocation of Politics* [*Politik als Beruf*] in Max Weber, *Weber: Political Writings* (CUP, 1994).

Background Reading:

David Beetham, *Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics* (Polity Press, 1985).

Peter Breiner, *Max Weber and Democratic Politics* (Cornell UP, 1996).

Week 6 – Weber and Politics (II)

Reading:

M. Weber, *The Profession and Vocation of Politics* [*Politik als Beruf*] in Max Weber, *Weber: Political Writings* (CUP, 1994).

Week 7 - No class: Effective Learning Week

Week 8 – Lenin before Lenin (I)

Lenin, *What Is To Be Done?* (various editions)

Background Reading:

Neil Harding, *Lenin's Political Thought*

Rosa Luxemburg, *Organizational Questions of Russian Social Democracy*, in her *Selected Political Writings*; also available in *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*.

Marcel Liebman, *Leninism Under Lenin*

Paul Mattick, 'Luxemburg versus Lenin', in *Anti-Bolshevik Communism* (Merlin, 1978).

L. Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism, Vol.2*, ch.16,

Lars Lih, *Lenin Rediscovered* (Haymarket)

Lar Lih, *Lenin* (Reaktion books, 2011)

Budgen, Kouvelakis, Zizek (eds), *Lenin Reloaded: Toward a Politics of Truth* (Duke UP, 2007)

Alan Shandro, "Lenin and Hegemony: The Soviets, the Working Class, and the Party in the Revolution of 1905," in *Lenin Reloaded: Toward a Politics of Truth*

Week 9 – Lenin before Lenin (II)

Lenin, *What Is To Be Done?* (various editions)

Week 10 – Lenin before October

Reading:

Lenin, *State and Revolution* (various editions)

Background Reading:

Lucio Colletti, *From Rousseau to Lenin*

Ralph Miliband, 'Lenin's *State and Revolution*', *The Socialist Register* (1970), also in Miliband *Class Power & State Power*, ch.7

A.J. Polan *Lenin and the End of Politics*

Neocleous, *Administering Civil Society*, ch. 2.

Budgen, Kouvelakis, Zizek (eds), *Lenin Reloaded* (Duke UP, 2007)

Week 11 – Lenin and the Dual Power

Lenin, *State and Revolution* (various editions)

Lenin, "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution (Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party)," *Collected Works*, Vol. 24 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964), 55-92. Also available online: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1917/tasks/index.htm>.

Week 12 – Gramsci and Revolution in the West

Introductory Lecture

Reading:

‘Chronology’ in Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, Volume 1, translated by Joseph A. Buttigieg (Columbia 1992).

Frank Rosengarten, ‘An Introduction to Gramsci’s Life and Thought’:
<http://www.internationalgramscisociety.org/about_gramsci/biography.html>

Chronology of Gramsci’s Life:
<http://www.internationalgramscisociety.org/about_gramsci/chronology.html>

A. Gramsci, ‘Socialism and Culture’, ‘The Revolution against Capital’, ‘Workers’ Democracy’, ‘Two Revolutions’, ‘Some Aspects of the Southern Question’

Christmas Break

Week 16 – Introduction to the *Prison Notebooks*

Reading: ‘Introduction’ in Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, Volume 1, translated by Joseph A. Buttigieg (Columbia 1992).

Notebook 1, note § 44.

Week 17 – Passive Revolution

Reading:

Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (International Publishers, 1971), Section 1: Problems of History and Culture, 3. Notes on Italian History, pp. 44-122

Background Reading:

Perry Anderson, ‘The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci’, *New Left Review* 100, 1976-7.

Richard Bellamy & Darrow Schecter, *Gramsci and the Italian State*

Carl Boggs, *Gramsci’s Marxism*

Christine Buci-Glucksmann, *Gramsci and the State*

G. Fiori, *Antonio Gramsci*

Anne Showstack Sason, *Gramsci’s Politics*

Peter Thomas, *The Gramscian Moment: Philosophy, Hegemony, and Marxism* (2009)

Peter Thomas, ‘Modernity as “passive revolution”’: Gramsci and the Fundamental Concepts of Historical Materialism’, *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* (CHA), New Series, Vol. 17, issue 2, 2006.

Week 18 – Civil Society, Political Society, Integral State (I)

Reading:

Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (International Publishers, 1971), Section 2:

Notes on Politics, 2. State and Civil Society, pp. 206-276.

Background Reading:

Norberto Bobbio, "Gramsci and the Concept of Civil Society," and Jacques Texier, "Gramsci, Theoretician of the Superstructures: On the Concept of Civil Society," in Gramsci and Marxist Theory, ed. Chantal Mouffe (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), 21-79.

Joseph A. Buttigieg, "Gramsci on Civil Society," *Boundary 2* 22, no. 3 (Autumn 1995): 1-31.

Week 19 – Civil Society, Political Society, Integral State (II)

Reading: see above

Week 20 – Hegemony and Hegemonic Apparatus

Reading:

Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (International Publishers, 1971), Section 1: Problems of History and Culture, 1. The Intellectuals, pp. 3-23.

P. D. Thomas, *The Gramscian Moment* (Brill, 2009/ Haymarket 2011), chapters 5 & 6 (to be distributed via blackboard)

Stefan Bolinger and Juha Koivisto, 'Hegemonic Apparatus', *Historical Materialism* 17.3, 2009.

Background Reading:

Benedetto Fontana, *Hegemony and Power: On the Relation Between Gramsci and Machiavelli* (University of Minnesota Press, 1993), pp. 99-131.

Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (Monthly Review Press, 1971), 127-86.

Week 21 - No class: Effective Learning Week

Week 22 – The Intellectuals and the Modern Prince

Reading:

Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (International Publishers, 1971), Section 2: Notes on Politics, 1. The Modern Prince, pp. 123-205.

Week 23 – Violence and Dictatorship

Introductory Lecture

Reading:

Carl Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy* (MIT, 1998), pp. 51-76.

Background Reading:

E. Bolsinger, *The Autonomy of the Political: Carl Schmitt's and Lenin's Political Realism* (Greenwood, 2001).

G. Balakrishnan, *The Enemy: An Intellectual Portrait of Carl Schmitt* (Verso, 2002).

Week 24 – Friend and Enemy (I)

Reading:

Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago, 2007)

Background Reading:

A. Kalyvas, *Democracy and the Politics of the Extraordinary* (CUP, 2008), Chapters 4-5.

Week 25 – Friend and Enemy (II)

Reading: see above

Week 26 – From Real to Absolute Enemy

Reading:

Carl Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan* (Telos, 2007), pp. 14-22; pp. 33-67; pp. 85-94.

Week 27 – Conclusion

Discussion of Essays

Assessment

You are required to write one essay. You are reminded that plagiarism, the presentation of another person's work or ideas as your own, is a serious offence and carries serious penalties. To help you avoid this potential pitfall you should consult the rules on plagiarism in the Politics and History Handbook and in the University Senate Ordinances. Please note that a percentage of coursework will be run through 'Turnitin' to detect plagiarism.

Please note: you must submit two copies of your essay. **One copy** should be submitted in **printed form** via the Office and **one copy** submitted in electronic form via **U-link**.

Essay

- This can be chosen from the list of essay questions below, or you can formulate a question of your own choice in consultation with your lecturer. NB. In this case, you **MUST** receive approval from the lecturer before beginning your essay.
- Essay due date: **Tuesday 6th May 2014**
- Should be approximately 6-7000 words long
- Worth 100% of the marks for the module
- This essay will be returned with comments

A note on sources

You are expected to read and use original texts for the essay; this is one of the learning outcomes that will be tested. These should go beyond the texts read for seminars.

The background reading is intended to supplement the reading for the essays. It is not exhaustive, and you are expected to consult a wider range of secondary texts for your essays.

Suggested questions for essay

- a) Critically analyse the role of political leadership in the thought of Weber and Lenin. What are the most significant similarities and differences of their theories?
- b) To what extent does Gramsci's thought represent a continuation of Lenin's understanding of politics? Analyse in particular in relation to the question of organisation.
- c) What role does the concept of hegemony play in Gramsci's theory of politics? Compare to the political theory of either Weber or Schmitt.
- d) To what extent was Jürgen Habermas correct when he argued that Carl Schmitt can be regarded as a 'legitimate pupil' of Max Weber?
- e) What are the major differences and similarities of the theories of the state of Lenin, Gramsci, Weber and Schmitt?
- f) Critically analyse the role of violence in the political theory of 3 of the authors studied on the course (choose between Weber, Lenin, Gramsci, Schmitt).

Academic Skills (ASK), based in the Library, are there to help support you in developing the essential skills for university study, from how to make the most of lectures and communicate effectively to how to think critically, write academically and use statistics. ASK services and sessions are available to all students and cover a range of topics, including:

- Academic writing – planning, structuring, clarity and conciseness;
- Active and critical reading;
- Critical and analytical thinking;
- Critiquing and organising your research;
- Improving English grammar, punctuation and style;
- Presentations and projects;
- Statistics and statistical software including SPSS and Excel;
- Time management and organisation.

What can ASK do for you?

Workshops: ASK run a programme of workshops and courses within the Library on a range of academic skills and also organise events such as ASK Week. Information about what's on and timetables can be viewed on the booking calendar: <http://tinyurl.com/askbrunel>

Resources: Browse the study skills book collection in the Library and the ASK u-Link site for useful links, documents and interactive lessons. For more information on getting started for University studies see our Headstart website: <http://www.brunel.ac.uk/headstart>

Individual Advice: Drop-in to the Library:



Royal Literary Fund Fellow

Brunel's Royal Literary Fund Fellow, Lisa Evans, is available to provide students with 1-to-1 practical help with writing. This service is in room HW105 (Heinz Wolff Building) on Mondays and Tuesdays.

To book an appointment: call 01895266788, email lisa.evans@brunel.ac.uk, or go to room HW105 on Monday or Tuesday.