

Instructor: Georgi Derlugian,  
Department of Sociology, 1810 Chicago Ave. rm 322

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Revolution means dramatic and often violent popular upheaval aiming to re-engineer the world. Revolutions were always exhilarating (“1848 was one huge bout of emotional drunkenness” said the Russian anarchist Count Bakunin), as unpredictable as volcanic eruptions (“One cannot start a revolution at will, nor can one stop it at will”, said Napoleon). Radicals hailed them as “locomotives of history” (Marx); conservatives warned of “perverse results” (Edmund Burke in 1792). Revolutions “devour their children” (Danton, on his way to guillotine). Leon Trotsky’s famous title “*Revolution betrayed*” means that new dictatorial bureaucracies emerge in the place of old despotisms. In 1989, at the French bi-centennial, revolutions were famously proclaimed ‘now extinct’ by the prominent academic François Furet – only to come back in the very same autumn all across the communist countries. Historical sociologists have now formulated a robust theory which can explain if not predict revolutions. Richard Lachmann provides the best exposition. This is what will be taught in this class. Last but not least, exploring revolutions is fundamentally important to understanding the modern era, especially the emergence of mass politics, ideologies, and democracy.

**METHOD:** Lectures, discussions, readings, films. The course is divided into three parts corresponding to three short summary papers (5-6 pages each; the questions will be issued a week in advance). You must participate in discussion sections to prepare for writing these papers. Each take-home assignment is worth 30% of final grade plus 10% for discussion participation.

**REQUIRED Books:**

- Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848*. Vintage, 1996 (or any edition in any of the twenty six languages into which it was translated)
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Communist Manifesto*. Verso 1998 (PREFERABLY THIS EDITION, WITH THE INTRODUCTION BY HOBSBAWM AND COVER DESIGN BY THE FAMOUS ‘SOTSARTISTS’ KOMAR & MELAMID)
- Immanuel Wallerstein, *Utopistics*. The New Press, 1998.
- Georgi Derlugian, *Bourdieu’s Secret Admirer in the Caucasus: A World-System Biography*. University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- Richard Lachmann, *States and Social Power*. Polity Press, 2010.

**Seriously recommended:**

- Simon Schama, *Citizens: a chronicle of the French Revolution*. New York : Knopf, 1989.
- Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Mike Royko, *Boss: Richard J. Daley of Chicago*. New York, Dutton, 1971.
- L.S. Stavrianos, *Global Rift: the Third World Comes of Age*. New York: Morrow, 1981.
- James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. Yale University Press, 1998.
- William Domhoff, *Who Rules America?* Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2006 (A long-running classic, now available in its 5<sup>th</sup> EDITION)
- Gail Stokes, *The walls came tumbling down: the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe*. Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Mark Kurlansky, *1968: the year that rocked the world*. New York: Ballantine, 2004.
- Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.

## **Schedule of Classes and Readings.**

### **Part I. The Classics**

- 21/IX **Change invades the traditional universe.** Read Hobsbawm, Ch. 1 “The World in the 1780s” and Ch. 2 “The Industrial Revolution”
- 23/IX **Progress erupts.** Read Hobsbawm, Chs. 3, 4, 5 (on the *French Revolution, Napoleonic War and Peace*). A very good background reading would be Simon Schama’s bestseller *Citizens: a chronicle of the French Revolution*. (New York, 1989).
- 28/IX **The emergence of modern mass politics.** Read Hobsbawm, Ch. 6 *Revolutions* and Ch. 7 *Nationalism*
- 30/IX **New Industrial Society.** Read Hobsbawm Chs. 9 “Towards an Industrial World”, 10 “Career Open to Talent”, and 16 “*Conclusion: Towards 1848*”
- 5/X **The trinity of modern ideologies: Conservatism, Liberalism, Socialism.** From Hobsbawm you now read Chs. 12 and 13, on Ideologies, esp. the secular ones. In class, I will explain about the origins of Marxism and its key concept of modes of production. Under the table or in some other secure secret location, start reading the subversive *Communist Manifesto*.

7/X **Industry + Social Ownership = Industrial Socialism.** Read Marx & Engels, *THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO* with Introduction by Hobsbawm.

12/X **The universe consciously engineered: Summary of the first part.** Conclude reading Hobsbawm and the Manifesto.

**The first paper** (on the classical idea of revolution) due on October 14.

#### **Part II-a. States and Revolutions: Sociological Theory**

14/X **State as Machine for generating social power** Read Richard Lachmann's States and Social Power, Ch. 1 "Before States" and Ch. 2 "The Origins of States".

19/X **How did modern State emerge?** Continue reading Lachmann, now into Ch. 3 "Nations and Citizens".

21/X **The improbable transformation of medieval 'racketeering state' (Charles Tilly) into the modern social provider.** Read Lachmann's Ch. 5 "Democracy, Civil Rights, and Social Benefits".

26/X **Finally, it should become clear: the 'State-Centered Theory of Revolutions'.** Lachmann, Ch. 6 "State Breakdowns". (Leave until the end of the course his last chapter, on the Future of states, although you are more than welcome to read it now.)

#### **Part II-b . States and Revolutions: Empirical examples**

28/X **1917: The Bolshevik revolution and state.** Lecture and film. Very much recommended: Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*. Oxford University Press, 1994.

2/XI **What was 'really-existing socialism'?** Read *Bourdieu's Secret Admirer* Ch. 3 'The Dynamics of De-Stalinization' and Ch. 5. "Social Structure" (Chapter 1 'The Field', however, likely provides the most vivid reading.)

4/XI **1968: 'QUESTION AUTHORITY'.** *Bourdieu's Secret Admirer* Ch. 4 'From 1968 to 1989'. Recommendations include: Robert Daniels, *Year of the Heroic Guerrilla*; Mark Kurlansky, *1968: the year that rocked the world*. Film: Ken Loach's *Land and Freedom*. Music: Pink Floyd, The Wall.

9/XI **The End of communisms.** Read *Bourdieu's Secret Admirer* Ch. 6 'Nationalization of Provincial Revolutions'.

11/XI **Iranian revolution: empirical case against theory.** Read Ryszard Kapuscinski, *The Shah of Shahs*. Film: **The Battle of Algiers**. **Recommendations:** Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad*. The best, however, remains L.S. Stavrianos, *Global Rift*.

**The second paper** (on theories of revolution) is due on November 11.

### **Part III. Your Future**

16/XI **Do revolutions at all matter?** Read Immanuel Wallerstein's *Utopistics*.

18/XI **Does globalization end states and revolutions?** Return to Lachmann's last chapter 7 'The Future'. From *Bourdieu's Secret Admirer*, try Ch. 7 'Theoretical Reprise' (omit its theory review, read only pp. 290-307 and 318-324). Moreover, read and enjoy Wallerstein's masterpiece *Utopistics*.

23/XI **The crisis of capitalism, again?** Immanuel Wallerstein's *Utopistics*.

**The third paper due no later than 5PM on Monday, December 6 at 4:55 PM.**

*A Luta, certainly, Continua!*