

INTELLECTUALS AND POWER IN EUROPE

Tues. 9:25-11:15a (location TBD)

Dr. Terence Renaud

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OH: Mon. 10:30a-12:30p (Old Campus, McClellan Hall #108)

Intellectuals are a modern phenomenon: a social group devoted to professional knowledge and technical expertise, operating within the context of rational state administration, industrial and post-industrial economies, and a democratic public sphere. What happens when intellectuals enter into politics? Do they betray a higher spiritual calling, or do they merely practice what they preach? This seminar uses methods of intellectual history to measure the social power of ideas. Texts range widely from Olympe de Gouges's "Declaration of the Rights of Woman" to Max Weber's "Science as a Vocation" and from Lenin's *What Is to Be Done?* to Simone Weil's essays against technocracy. Our geographical focus is European, but additional texts by Edward W. Said, Dipesh Chakrabarty, and Houria Bouteldja expand our view to the ex-colonial periphery. We discuss themes such as speaking truth to power, liberal and conservative elitism, Marxist ideology critique, vanguardism, women as public intellectuals, antisemitism, and neoliberalism. This course challenges students to defend the autonomy of mental labor and to examine their own social and political responsibility.

Course components:

You must come to class prepared to discuss each week's required reading. Each discussion will begin with a short **presentation** by a student of one of the optional materials. This presentation will form the basis for the student's **short essay**, which will integrate the rest of that week's readings and be due the following Monday (day before next class). Additionally, each week one student will serve as **discussion reporter**, taking notes and synthesizing a one-page summary to be shared with the rest of class. Sign-up for presentations and reports will occur during the second week of class. You will all write a **final essay** on a relevant subject of your choosing, which will be due one week after classes end. A **proposal** for the final essay will be due midterm.

- Reading and participation (10%)
- Discussion report, 1 pg. (10%)
- In-class presentation, 7-10 mins. (15%)
- Short essay based on presentation, 5-7 pgs., due at 5:00p the following Monday (20%)
- Proposal for final essay, 1 pg., due at **5:00p on Friday, November 8** (10%)
- Final essay, 10-12 pgs., due at **5:00p on Monday, December 16** (35%)

Format for essays and reports is 12pt. serif font, 2.0 spacing, and ≤ 1.25 in. margins. For essays, please include a unique title, page numbers, and citations in any consistent style. Essays should be uploaded as DOC, DOCX, or PDF to the Assignments section of Canvas, and reports to the Files/Reports section. Late submissions will be penalized $\frac{1}{2}$ letter grade (or 5%) per day late.

Required books:

Houria Bouteldja, *Whites, Jews, and Us: Toward a Politics of Revolutionary Love* (Semiotexte, 2017)
Edward W. Said, *Representations of the Intellectual* (Vintage, 1996)
Quinn Slobodian, *Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism* (Harvard, 2018) – an e-book version is available through Yale library resources
Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures* (Hackett, 2004)

Academic integrity:

Neither the university nor I tolerate plagiarism, but many instances of it are unintentional. Be sure you know exactly how to properly cite other people's words and ideas. [Inform and protect yourself.](#)

Reading schedule:

Titles marked with an asterisk (*) are required books, which you must buy (e.g., copies are available in the Yale bookstore) or borrow from Bass Library reserves. The rest of the required readings are available as PDFs in the Course Reserves section of Canvas. Books marked with a dagger (†) are available as [library e-resources](#).

WEEK 1 (Sept. 3): What Is an Intellectual?

We devote our first week to discussing what makes the intellectual a modern phenomenon and why European history offers a useful context for exploring the relationship between intellectuals and power. We also outline our method of intellectual history, which combines a traditional history of ideas with an analysis of intellectuals' changing role within social institutions.

required: Raymond Williams, "Intellectual," *Keywords* (1976/83)

WEEK 2 (Sept. 10): Revolutionary Ideas

Both friends and enemies of the French Revolution at the end of the 18th century claimed that it was the radical ideas of the "men of letters" that unsettled the Old Regime and inspired the Revolution. What were those ideas and why were they so incendiary? We juxtapose two rival documents: the foundational "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen" (1789) and the playwright and pamphleteer Olympe de Gouges's "Declaration of the Rights of Woman" (1791). The Revolution's promise of universal liberty, equality, and fraternity paradoxically excluded women and colonized people. The Anglo-Irish philosopher and statesman Edmund Burke identified other paradoxes in this first modern test of intellectuals and revolutionary power.

required: "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen" [1789], in Keith Baker, ed., *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* (1987)

Olympe de Gouges, "Declaration of the Rights of Woman" [1791], *ibid.*

Joan Wallach Scott, "The Uses of Imagination: Olympe de Gouges in the French Revolution," *Only Paradoxes to Offer* (1996)

Edmund Burke, "Reflections on the Revolution in France" [1790], abridged in Jerry Z. Muller, ed., *Conservatism* (1997)

optional: Keith M. Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution* (1984)

Carl Becker, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophes* (1932)

Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution* (1990)

†Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (1982)

†Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World* (2004)

†Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters* (1996)

†Peter McPhee, *Robespierre: A Revolutionary Life* (2012)

WEEK 3 (Sept. 17): Ideology and Utopia

Karl Marx criticized his fellow Germans for being philosophically advanced but politically backward: while the French had a revolution in the real world, the Germans waged abstract battles in the realm of ideas. The early nineteenth century marked the dawn of industrial society. It also saw the proliferation of ideologies: liberalism, conservatism, nationalism, socialism, etc. We discuss the basis of Marx's ideology critique in his theory of historical materialism, including his explanation for why a division arose between manual and mental labor. Then we look at Karl Mannheim's foundational text in the sociology of knowledge, which contrasts ideological and utopian thinking. Finally, we consider the economist Friedrich A. Hayek's polemic against leftwing intellectuals. Do intellectuals serve primarily to create ruling ideologies or to unmask them?

- required: Karl Marx, “Theses on Feuerbach” and “The German Ideology” [1845-46], in Robert C. Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed. (1978)
 Karl Mannheim, excerpts from *Ideology and Utopia* (1929)
 Friedrich A. Hayek, “The Intellectuals and Socialism” (1949)
- optional: Hannah Arendt, prefaces and pt. III of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951)
 Warren Breckman, *Marx, the Young Hegelians and . . . Radical Social Theory* (1999)
 Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (1991)
 George Lichtheim, *The Origins of Socialism* (1969)
 Harold Mah, *The End of Philosophy, the Origin of “Ideology”* (1987)
 Bhikhu Parekh, *Marx’s Theory of Ideology* (1982)
 George Rudé, *Ideology and Popular Protest* (1980)

WEEK 4 (Sept. 24): Elites

Intellectuals today are familiar with the charge of elitism, which almost always carries a negative and undemocratic connotation. But 19th-century liberal thinkers such as J. S. Mill believed that any progressive, democratic society needed the leadership of an intellectual elite. Conservatives such as Matthew Arnold also gave intellectual elitism a more positive spin, but their ideal of defending culture against the uncouth masses meant the abandonment of all democratic pretensions. We conclude by discussing the current separation between the intellectual elite and the power elite.

- required: John Stuart Mill, chs. 1-3 of *On Liberty* (1859)
 Matthew Arnold, “Culture and Anarchy” [1869], abridged in Jerry Z. Muller, ed., *Conservatism* (1997)
 “Revolt of the Elites,” *n+1*, no. 10 (Fall 2010)
- optional: †Stanley Aronowitz, *Taking It Big: C. Wright Mills . . .* (2012)
 †Tom Bottomore, *Elites and Society* (1964)
 Jason Brennan, *Against Democracy* (2016)
 John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses* (1992)
 Gertrude Himmelfarb, *Victorian Minds* (1968)
 †John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography* (1873)
 C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (1956)

WEEK 5 (Oct. 1): The Dreyfus Affair

The Dreyfus affair in France has been described as the “most bloodless of all revolutions.” Between 1894 and 1906, a Jewish army officer was falsely accused of treason, convicted, imprisoned, retried, and eventually pardoned. The French public took sides as core institutions of the social order, the army and the church, were put symbolically on trial. The writer Émile Zola emerged as a leading Dreyfusard, penning an impassioned defense of the accused and calling out the president of the Republic for condoning systemic injustice. Meanwhile, the radical nationalist and antisemite Charles Maurras rallied the anti-Dreyfusards. His intellectual activism laid the foundation for the French fascist movement known as Action Française. Public intellectuals emerged in that context as crucial mediators between the ruling class and the democratic masses.

- required: Alain Pagès, Introduction to Pagès, ed., *The Dreyfus Affair* (2006)
 Émile Zola, “J’accuse...!” [1898], in Pagès, ed., *The Dreyfus Affair* (2006)
 Ernst Nolte, “The Action Française: History,” *Three Faces of Fascism* (1963)
- optional: †Louis Begley, *Why the Dreyfus Affair Matters* (2009)
 Venita Datta, *Birth of a National Icon* (1999)
 Ruth Harris, *Dreyfus: Politics, Emotion, and the Scandal of the Century* (2010)

†Lida Maxwell, *Public Trials: Burke, Zola, Arendt . . .* (2014)

†Zeev Sternhell, *Neither Right Nor Left: Fascist Ideology in France* (1983)

WEEK 6 (Oct. 8): The Bourgeois Intellectual

The growing European middle class produced a new social type that took pride in its technical expertise and objective detachment from the world: the bourgeois intellectual. The public sphere of science, literature, and academia fostered an ideal of pursuing the highest spiritual aims without political bias. Professors, cultural mandarins, and genius writers embodied that ideal over the course of the 19th century. A champion of value-free science, the sociologist Max Weber defined what he considered the limits of intellectual engagement in politics. He delivered his famous vocation lectures against the backdrop of world war and revolution.

required: *Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures* (1918-19)

optional: Joshua Derman, *Max Weber in Politics and Social Thought* (2012)

James Joll, *Three Intellectuals in Politics* (1960)

†Emily J. Levine, *Dreamland of Humanists* (2013)

Thomas Mann, *Reflections of a Non-Political Man* (1918)

Arthur Mitzman, *The Iron Cage* (1969)

†Fritz Ringer, Intro. and chs. 1-3 of *The Decline of the German Mandarins* (1969)

†Ahmad Sadri, *Max Weber's Sociology of Intellectuals* (1992)

†Walter Struve, Intro. and pts. I-II of *Elites Against Democracy* (1973)

*** Oct. 15 class is canceled; October recess follows (Oct. 16 – Oct. 20) ***

WEEK 7 (Oct. 22): Political Vanguardism

Combining bourgeois elitism with the figure of the militant agitator, revolutionary vanguards integrated left intellectuals into the mass organizations of the European workers' movement. Lenin believed that a vanguard should operate conspiratorially and produce a useable theory for rank-and-file workers. Writing after the Wall Street crash in 1929 and the Nazi takeover in 1933, the philosopher Simone Weil expressed misgivings about the vanguard party. She warned that revolutionary movements such as Bolshevism could degenerate into new forms of oppression. The central problem for her was bureaucracy. In managing factories, administering the state, and unionizing workers, bureaucratic forms deepened the divide between mental and manual labor.

required: V. I. Lenin, excerpts from "What Is to Be Done?" [1902], in Henry M. Christman, ed., *Essential Works of Lenin* (1966)

Simone Weil, "Prospects: Are We Heading for the Proletarian Revolution?" [1933] and "Reflections Concerning Technocracy [etc.]" [1933], *Oppression and Liberty* (2001)

optional: Julien Benda, *The Treason of the Intellectuals* (1927)

Kate Evans, *Red Rosa: A Graphic Biography of Rosa Luxemburg* (2015)

†A. James Gregor, *Mussolini's Intellectuals* (2005)

A. James McAdams, chs. 1-7 of *Vanguard of the Revolution: The Global Idea of the Communist Party* (2017)

David McLellan, *Utopian Pessimist: The Life and Thought of Simone Weil* (1990)

Simone Pétrement, *Simone Weil: A Life* (1973)

†Joshua Rubenstein, *Leon Trotsky: A Revolutionary's Life* (2011)

WEEK 8 (Oct. 29): Cultural Vanguardism

Alongside direct action by militant intellectuals, the revolutionary parties of the last century demanded a high degree of cultural engagement. While Antonio Gramsci predicted the replacement of traditional bourgeois intellectuals in the workers' movement by organic (i.e., proletarian) intellectuals, leftist writers like Walter Benjamin found themselves torn between traditional and organic roles. Jean-Paul Sartre provided a classic formulation of engaged literature that mediated between the writer's actual bourgeois public and her virtual public of the oppressed.

- required: Antonio Gramsci, "The Intellectuals," *Prison Notebooks* (1929-35)
 Walter Benjamin, "The Author as Producer" [1934], *Reflections* (1986)
 Jean-Paul Sartre, excerpts from *What Is Literature?* (1948)
- optional: Patrick Baert, *The Existentialist Moment* (2015)
 Sarah Bakewell, *At the Existentialist Café* (2016)
 †Edward Baring, *The Young Derrida and French Philosophy, 1945-1968* (2011)
 Michael Denning, chs. 1-3, 5, 10, and 12 of *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (1998)
 †Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism* (1984)
 †Tony Judt, *Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals, 1944-1956* (1992)
 Arthur Koestler, *The Invisible Writing: An Autobiography* (1954)
 †W. D. Redfern, *Paul Nizan: Committed Literature in a Conspiratorial World* (1972)
 †Marci Shore, *Caviar and Ashes* (2006)

WEEK 9 (Nov. 5): The Business Intellectual

The interwar and wartime crises marked the end of traditional, laissez-faire capitalism. Fascist, communist, and democratic capitalist states alike used economic planning and regulation on an unprecedented scale. Intellectual experts were deeply implicated in the welfare states of the West as well as the communist regimes of the East. At the same time, however, a small network of neoliberal economists and lawyers acted within the League of Nations and later institutions such as the World Trade Organization to protect global capital from democratic interference. The historian Quinn Slobodian calls them globalists, and their influence over European and American economic policy surpassed anything accomplished by their nemeses, the revolutionary intellectuals of the left.

- required: *†Quinn Slobodian, *Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism* (2018)
- optional: †Daniel Bessner, *Democracy in Exile: ... the Rise of the Defense Intellectual* (2018)
 †Angus Burgin, *The Great Persuasion: Reinventing Free Markets...* (2012)
 Richard H. Crossman, ed., *The God That Failed* (1949)
 Christopher Dietrich, *Oil Revolution: ... the Economic Culture of Decolonization* (2017)
 †Udi Greenberg, *The Weimar Century* (2015)
 †Or Rosenboim, *The Emergence of Globalism: Visions of World Order...* (2017)
 Eugene R. Sheppard, *Leo Strauss and the Politics of Exile* (2006)
 †Daniel Stedman Jones, *Masters of the Universe: Hayek, Friedman...* (2012)
 †Noah Benezra Strote, *Lions and Lambs* (2017)

WEEK 10 (Nov. 12): The Woman Intellectual

Unfortunately, European intellectual history has been mostly a male affair. But a consideration of Simone de Beauvoir and Hannah Arendt, two of the last century's most prolific intellectuals, partially compensates for that imbalance. Beauvoir explicitly critiqued the social limits on female intellectual achievement, and Arendt, who never endorsed feminism, nevertheless reflected on the "active life" of past women intellectuals such as the writer and *salonnière* Rahel Varnhagen.

- required: Hannah Arendt, “Berlin Salon” [1932] and “On the Emancipation of Women” [1933],
Essays in Understanding, 1930-1954 (1994)
 Simone de Beauvoir, excerpts from *The Second Sex* (1949)
- optional: Laura Beers, *Red Ellen: The Life of Ellen Wilkinson...* (2016)
 Seyla Benhabib, *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt* (1996)
 Barbara E. Clements, *Bolshevik Feminist: The Life of Aleksandra Kollontai* (1979)
 Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch* (2004)
 Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, Pts. I-IV of *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979)
 Richard H. King, *Arendt and America* (2015)
 † Sylvia Harecstark Myers, *The Bluestocking Circle* (1990)
 Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *The Attack of the Blob: ...Arendt's Concept of the Social* (1998)
 Jacqueline Rose, *Women in Dark Times* (2014)
 † Joan Wallach Scott, *The Fantasy of Feminist History* (2012)
 Elizabeth V. Spelman, *Inessential Woman* (1988)
 † Dana Richard Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger: The Fate of the Political* (1996)
 Benjamin Aldes Wurgaft, *Thinking in Public: Strauss, Levinas, Arendt* (2016)
 † Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, *Why Arendt Matters* (2006)

***** Film screening (date TBD, ca. Nov. 12-15):**

Hannah Arendt, dir. Margaretha von Trotta (2012) ***

WEEK 11 (Nov. 19): The Subaltern Intellectual

The dissolution of European empires that began after World War I and accelerated in the 1950s and '60s not only diminished Europe's global power. It also called into question the supposed universality of European ideas about political, economic, and social order. No longer would European intellectuals dominate the global circulation of ideas. Intellectuals in the former colonies as well as immigrant and minority intellectuals in the former metropolises developed a new consciousness of their subaltern status. One of the founders of subaltern studies, Dipesh Chakrabarty, explains why (European) concepts of modernity and linear historical time are inadequate for understanding postcolonial India. And in her recent controversial book, the French-Algerian activist Houria Bouteldja challenges the European left to internalize the anticolonial struggle, using the solidarity of non-white indigenous people as a template for a new revolutionary politics.

- required: Dipesh Chakrabarty, abridged Introduction, *Provincializing Europe* (2000)
 *Houria Bouteldja, *Whites, Jews, and Us: Toward a Politics of Revolutionary Love* (2016)
- optional: † Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (1991)
 † Jennifer Anne Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis: The Urban Grounds of Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Interwar Paris* (2010)
 Rita Chin, *The Crisis of Multiculturalism in Europe: A History* (2017)
 Nigel C. Gibson, *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination* (2003)
 Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris...* (2015)
 † Lewis R. Gordon, *What Fanon Said* (2015)
 † Kris Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement: German and Indian Intellectuals...* (2014)
 Jerrold E. Seigel, *Between Cultures: Europe and Its Others...* (2015)
 Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization* (2006)
 † Gary Wilder, *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization, and the Future...* (2015)

***** November recess (Nov. 23 – Dec. 1) *****

WEEK 12 (Dec. 3): Public Intellectuals

In our final week, we review the transformations of European intellectuals' social roles over the past two centuries. We also try to answer questions that have accompanied us throughout the course: Is intellectual engagement in politics always reckless or irresponsible? What is the proper role of intellectuals in a modern democratic society? When and how should intellectuals resist injustice?

required: *Edward W. Said, Intro. and chs. 1, 4, and 5, *Representations of the Intellectual* (1994)
Russell Jacoby, "Intellectuals: From Utopia to Myopia," *The End of Utopia* (1999)
Corey Robin, "How Intellectuals Create a Public," *Chronicle of Higher Education*
(Jan. 22, 2016)

optional: Zygmunt Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters* (1987)
David Bromwich, *Politics by Other Means: Higher Education...* (1992)
William Davies, *Nervous States: Democracy and the Decline of Reason* (2019)
Daniel W. Drezner, *The Ideas Industry* (2017)
Jeffrey C. Goldfarb, *Civility and Subversion* (1998)
Russell Jacoby, *The Last Intellectuals: American Culture in the Age of Academe* (1987)
Tony Judt and Timothy Snyder, *Thinking the Twentieth Century* (2012)
Mark Lilla, *The Reckless Mind: Intellectuals in Politics* (2001)
†John Michael, *Anxious Intellects: Academic Professionals, Public Intellectuals...* (2000)
Sophia Rosenfeld, *Democracy and Truth: A Short History* (2018)