

Max Weber Occasional Lectures

MWF - Archived date: Feb 2023

ABSTRACT

The Max Weber Occasional Lectures are informal seminars by distinguished scholars invited by members of the Programme as the academic year develops.

The aim of this initiative is to enrich the academic life of the Programme and the EUI by taking advantage of scholars passing through Europe and Italy and inviting them to stop over in Florence and deliver a talk about their most recent research and upcoming books. Occasional Talks are also given by scholars who happen to be visiting the EUI for other purposes already, such as a thesis defense.

Occasional Talks may also be linked to a Multidisciplinary Workshop organized by Fellows, one of the Thematic Groups, an ad hoc reading group, or some other activity. Fellows not listed in any of the Thematic Research Groups are particularly encouraged to put forward the names of suitable candidates for Occasional Talks.

Past years

2021 - 2020 - 2019 - 2018 - 2017 - 2016 - 2015 - 2014

Multidisciplinary Workshops Abstracts 2020-2021

Max Weber Occasional Lecture

jointly organized with [EUI Interdisciplinary Research Cluster "Inequality, Welfare and Social Justice"](#)

Meritocracy in the Workplace -Emilio J. Castilla (MIT Sloan School of Management) - 14 December 2021, 17:00-18:30 - Badia, Emeroteca and Online, Zoom

Abstract

Since the beginnings of the 2000s, with the goals of promoting opportunity, fairness, and diversity inside organizations, merit has been widely considered a legitimate principle for guiding workplace decisions (in contrast to class, wealth, origins, or demographics, among others). In the United States, for example, the idea that selecting individuals based on talent, ability, and competence is “meritocratic” and provides opportunity for all is at the core of the “American Dream.” Across the world, the introduction and implementation of meritocratic processes and ensuring meritocratic outcomes is widely considered a sign of development and progress (and even fairness). In the context of for-profit organizations, for example, employers have adopted merit-based reward systems to encourage and reward the performance of their workers, where performance on the job counts as merit. These formalization efforts regarding the hiring of applicants and the distribution of rewards among employees based entirely on individuals’ merit are portrayed as illustrations of meritocracy.

Given the widely popular goals of promoting meritocracy and creating opportunity inside organizations, for a number of years now, my research has focused on the role that merit and merit-based work practices play in shaping employees’ careers in today’s workplace. In this lecture, I look forward to summarizing some of my key projects on meritocracy in the workplace. In so doing, I will stress the theoretical and practical implications of my research into the areas of employment, organizations, and workplace inequality.

About the speaker

Emilio J. Castilla is the NTU Professor of Management and a Professor of Work and Organization Studies at the MIT Sloan School of Management. He is currently the co-director of the Institute for Work and Employment Research, and a member of the Economic Sociology Group at MIT. He joined the MIT Sloan faculty in 2005, after being a faculty member in the Management Department of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. He received his PhD in Sociology from Stanford University.

His research focuses on questions relating to how social and organizational processes (for example, social networks, hiring and recruiting efforts, performance-reward systems, and managerial roles) influence key employment outcomes for individuals and organizations over time. He formulates and answers his research questions in a variety of research settings, making use of field studies and diverse research methodologies. His work has appeared in *American Journal of Sociology*, *American Sociological Review*, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Organization Science*, and *ILR Review*, among many. He is currently on the

editorial board of *Work and Occupations*, and is associate editor of *Management Science* (Organizations section) and the *ILR Review*. Castilla has also taught in various degree programs at MIT Sloan, and at a number of other international universities.

To attend, please [register](#).

Multidisciplinary Workshops Abstracts 2019-2018

Living with Others: Religious Tolerance and its Enemies - CANCELLED DUE TO COVID - Stephen Greenblatt (Harvard University) - 6 April 2020, 17:00-18:30 - Badia, Refettorio

Abstract

My focus is a little-known dialogue from the year 192 CE that depicts three friends taking a walk along the beach in Ostia. One of the friends casually blows a kiss toward the statue of a god, and his companions, both Christian, undertake to “save” him from worshipping the god of his choice. The issue is not a form of behavior that violates a social norm: orgies, cannibalism, ritual scarring, genital mutilation, animal sacrifice, and the like. The act that the Christians want to stop is altogether personal and seemingly harmless. But it will, they are convinced, destroy his soul, and in the end they succeed in getting him to convert. I argue that in this tiny initial shift – an attempt to help a friend – one can witness the whole Roman world beginning to change. Empire-wide, pluralistic absorption of every god and all cults is eventually displaced by massive, single-minded persecution in the name of the one true god. The change is often attributed to the conversion of the emperor Constantine, but it is, I argue, already visible in what the dialogue depicts as an act of love.

About the speaker

Stephen Greenblatt is Cogan University Professor of the Humanities at Harvard University. He is the author of fourteen books, including *Tyrant: Shakespeare on Politics*; *The Rise and Fall of Adam and Eve*; *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern*; *Shakespeare's Freedom*; *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*; *Hamlet in Purgatory*; *Marvelous Possessions*; and *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*. He is General Editor of *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* and of *The Norton Shakespeare*, has edited seven collections of criticism, and is a founding editor of the journal *Representations*. His honors include the 2016 Holberg Prize from the Norwegian Parliament, the 2012 Pulitzer Prize and the 2011 National Book Award for *The Swerve*, MLA's James Russell Lowell Prize (twice), Harvard University's Cabot Fellowship, the Distinguished Humanist Award from the Mellon Foundation, Yale's Wilbur Cross Medal, the William Shakespeare Award for Classical Theatre, the Erasmus Institute Prize, two Guggenheim Fellowships and the Distinguished Teaching Award from the University of California, Berkeley. Among his named lecture series are the Adorno Lectures in Frankfurt, the University Lectures at Princeton, and the

Clarendon Lectures at Oxford, and he has held visiting professorships at universities in Beijing, Kyoto, London, Paris, Florence, Torino, Trieste, and Bologna, as well as the Renaissance residency at the American Academy in Rome. He was president of the Modern Language Association of America and a long-term fellow of the Institute for Advanced Study in Berlin. He has been elected to membership in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the American Philosophical Society, and the Italian literary academy Accademia degli Arcadi.

"Marx's politics of freedom"

Special Lecture to mark the 200th anniversary of Karl Marx's birth - William Clare Roberts (McGill University) - 6 November 2018, 17:00-18:30 - Badia, Emeroteca

Chair: Bruno Leipold (MWF-SPS)

Abstract

This talk examines and evaluates Marx's commitments to three notions of freedom: (1) freedom as non-domination, (2) freedom as open-ended self-development, and (3) freedom as self-determination or autonomy.

I argue that the first notion, freedom as non-domination, motivates Marx's mature critique of capitalism and his embrace of the international workers' movement. His commitment to the second notion, freedom as self-development or self-realization, is fundamentally a vision of ethical perfection, and plays only a tightly circumscribed role in Marx's political thought.

Finally, the notion of freedom as self-determination is, despite a long interpretive tradition, at odds with Marx's understanding and endorsement of democracy.

Contrary to 150 years of Marx reception, Marx's most distinctive and powerful contributions are not to the theorization of "positive liberty," but to the pursuit of freedom from domination.

About the speaker

[William Clare Roberts](#) is associate professor of political science at McGill University. His book, [Marx's Inferno: The Political Theory of Capital](#) (Princeton, 2017), won the 2017 Isaac and Tamara Deutscher Memorial Prize for exemplifying the best and most innovative new writing in or about the Marxist tradition

Watch the [lecture](#).

Watch William Roberts [in conversation with](#) MW Fellows

"The Archipelago? Writing a History of Post-War Italy"

John Foot (University of Bristol, Fernand Braudel Fellow EUI) - 20 November 2018, 17:00-18:30 - Badia, Sala del Capitolo

Chair: Lucy Riall (HEC Professor)

Abstract

How can we understand and tell the story of post-war Italy? How can we transmit our academic learning and expertise to a wider, non-specialist audience? Is there a master-key for understanding individual countries and their trajectories since 1945?

This talk will aim to address these questions through an analysis of the methodologies and analyses adopted for the book *The Archipelago. Italy since 1945* (Bloomsbury, 2018. Laterza (Forthcoming) 2019). It will look at typical tropes used when trying to understand Italy - Italy as 'backward', Italy as 'marginal', Italy as 'lacking' various aspects often attributed to other states - legality, national identity, efficiency, unity.

The talk will also look at the debates between micro- and macro- history, and at academic and non-academic forms of writing and communication. A further key area will be that of chronologies - when are the 'breaks' in national histories and when are the moments of continuity?

The talk will be in the context of an understanding of previous attempts to write histories or studies of post-war Italy, and the dominant influence of Gramscian theory within the formation of many historians both within Italy and abroad.

Academic pressures in many universities preclude or even punish general works aimed at a wider public, and these institutional features driving research and publication. Thus, one of the key ways in which academics and the wider world have been able to interact is being closed down, institutionally, despite emphasis on 'impact' and 'public engagement'. This talk will also provide some reflections on these trends and their influence on academic research.

About the speaker

[John Foot](#) is a British historian specialised on Italian History. His research covers a number of aspects of Italian social history.

He has published on the Italian Labour Movement after WWI, popular cultures related to sport (football and cycle racing), the history and memory of the radical psychiatry movement in Italy which eventually closed down the asylums, and more.

“All the demagogue’s men,” or: how a liberal democracy disintegrates”

A joint event with the Legal and Political Theory Working Group

Shmuel Nili (Northwestern University and Australian National University)

Introduction: Richard Bellamy (MWP Director) - 8 January 2019, 17:00-18:30 - Badia, Emeroteca

Abstract

In previous work, I have argued that a liberal democracy can have its own morally important integrity, paralleling the integrity of an individual person. In this talk, I discuss the relationship between a liberal democracy’s collective integrity and the individual integrity of elected

leaders of a particular sort.

These leaders, whom I label “media demagogues,” are distinguished by their combination of dangerous populism, systematic lies and manipulation, and an overwhelming reliance on media activity as a substitute for substantive government work.

Using Donald Trump, Silvio Berlusconi, and Binyamin Netanyahu as my running examples, I begin by arguing that the language of integrity – and the charge of lacking even minimal integrity - is extremely well-suited to characterizing, and condemning, media demagogues. I then lay out multiple, media-driven connections, between media demagogues’ glaring failures of personal integrity, and the predictable threats they pose to the liberal polity’s integrity. Having a clear picture of these integrity connections is important in and of itself, as a way of obtaining a holistic understanding of the kinds of moral dangers brought about by the “mediatization” of politics. But these links are also important as a way of understanding the moral stakes involved in the decisions of those who are considering whether to serve or ally with media demagogues.

About the speaker

Shmuel Nili is an assistant professor of political science at Northwestern University and a research fellow at Australian National University’s School of Philosophy (Research School of the Social Sciences). His current work explores the moral value of integrity in politics, and the practical role of political philosophy in the face of obvious moral failures in public policy. Nili’s first book, *The People’s Duty* (forthcoming with Cambridge University Press), examines the sovereign people as an owner of public property, and as an agent with its own moral integrity. Nili’s scholarly articles have been published in a wide range of leading journals in political science (including *The American Political Science Review*, *the American Journal of Political Science*, and *The Journal of Politics*), contemporary political philosophy (including *Ethics* and *Journal of Political Philosophy*), and the history of ideas (*History of Political Thought*, *Review of Politics*). Nili earned a PhD in political science at Yale University (2016).

"Decolonizing Self-determination"

A joint lecture with the Legal and Political Theory Working Group - [Catherine Lu](#) - (McGill University) - 6 February 2019, 17:00-18:30 - Badia, Emeroteca

Chair: Eniola Soyemi (SPS)

Abstract:

This talk examines what decolonization may entail with regard to formulating the concept and principle of self-determination as a component of global justice, and the implications for international and transnational order.

The 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) extends the decolonization process started in the 1960s to indigenous peoples, recognizing a right to indigenous self-determination. This extension is not as straightforward as it appears, and I argue that the self-determination claims of indigenous peoples force us to

rethink the traditional prerogatives of a state's jurisdictional authority and territorial rights, deriving from considerations of both justice and reconciliation.

First, if self-determination is constitutive of political justice, then the self-determination of indigenous peoples requires making international state boundaries more porous, in order to develop a states system that facilitates rather than hinders the legitimate self-determination claims of substate transnational and transboundary agents. An international order that facilitates indigenous self-determination in these respects is one that is more basically just than one that does not.

Second, if existential alienation is the legacy of acts and practices of genocide, dispossession, and cultural destruction that have marked the interaction of indigenous peoples with the modern interstate order, overcoming such existential alienation requires the states system to accommodate the self-determination claims of indigenous peoples in ways that do not reproduce conditions of alienated agency. The good of nonalienation is an essential supporting condition for indigenous peoples to engage meaningfully in struggles for justice and reconciliation in modern conditions.

'Justice in Trade: From Philosophy to Law'

Jointly with the Legal and Political Philosophy Working Group - Oisín Suttle (Queen's University, Belfast) - 5 June 2019, 17:00-18:30 - Badia, Emeroteca

Chair: Anna Knapps (MWF-RSC)

Abstract

In this lecture, Dr Suttle will address, without claiming to comprehensively answer, three linked questions. First, what does justice demand in the regulation of international trade? Second, what implications does our answer to that question have for thinking about the existing positive law of international trade? And third, what implications might the existence and content of that positive law in turn have for how we answer the question of justice? Claims of justice in trade are not new. As political slogans, they featured prominently in post-colonial campaigns for a New International Economic Order, in the post-Cold War anti-globalisation movement, and in the (very different) post-financial-crisis attacks on the liberal trading system. In the past few years political theorists have begun to take these claims seriously, engaging analytically and critically with the distinctive moral features of international trade and its regulation. However, to date there has been limited engagement between political theorists working on trade justice, and more applied scholarship and practice on the trade regime, including in particular by international economic lawyers. This lecture, and Dr Suttle's wider research agenda for the past few years, contributes towards bridging that gap.

Multidisciplinary Workshops Abstracts 2017-2018

'When and Why is Freedom of Movement Worth Defending?'

Andrea Sangiovanni (King's College London) - Jointly with the Legal and Political Philosophy Working Group - 22 November 2017, 17:00-18:30 - Badia, Emeroteca

Abstract:

We often hear that the free movement of persons in the EU is 'non-negotiable', a 'foundational pillar of the European project'. But why? I will consider some common answers to this question and point out some difficulties they face. I will then argue that the free movement of persons is best understood as a demand of justice and, indeed, of solidarity among member state peoples.

'Interpretation and homonymous activities'

Timothy Endicott (University of Oxford) - 14 December 2017, 17:00-18:30 - Badia, Emeroteca

Abstract

Interpretation is a process of reasoning to support an answer to a question as to the meaning of some object.

How, then, can we explain the modern practice of lawyers and judges, who sometimes offer something that they call an 'interpretation' in support of a conclusion that is incompatible with the meaning of the object that they purport to interpret?

In such a case, whether the interpreter is (1) aiming to help the lawmaker to achieve the lawmaker's real purpose, or (2) opposing the policy of the lawmaker, it would be accurate to describe what they are doing as reasoning to support a departure from the act of the lawmaker.

But I will argue that the common modern practice of calling such reasoning processes 'interpretation' is not necessarily deceitful or misconceived. It is to be understood by the analogies between such reasoning processes, and the core instances of interpretation. That is, the word 'interpretation' is used analogically, or homonymously.

The implication, which I will address, is that the word 'meaning' is, likewise, homonymous.

About the Speaker

Timothy Endicott has been Professor of Legal Philosophy since 2006, and a Fellow in Law at Balliol College since 1999. Professor Endicott writes on Jurisprudence and Constitutional and Administrative Law, with special interests in law and language and interpretation. He served as the Dean of the Faculty of Law for two terms, from October 2007 to September 2015.

He is the author of *Vagueness in Law* (OUP 2000), and *Administrative Law*, 3rd ed (OUP 2015).

After graduating with the AB in Classics and English, summa cum laude, from Harvard, he completed the MPhil in Comparative Philology in Oxford, studied Law at the University of Toronto, and practised as a litigation lawyer in Toronto. He completed the DPhil in Law in Oxford in 1998. He was appointed by Universidad Carlos III de Madrid to a Cátedra de Excelencia during 2016.

From commons to capital and back.

The turning point in private law

Ugo Mattei (UC Hastings) - Chair: Marta Morvillo (MWF-LAW) - 3 May 2018, 17:00-18:30;
Baia, Emeroteca

Abstract

This lecture will discuss the necessary steps to transform the role and the function of private law in order to put in tune with the requirements of ecological survival.

About the speaker

Ugo Mattei is the Alfred and Hanna Fromm Distinguished Professor at U C Hastings in San Francisco, a full professor of civil law at the university of Turin and the Academic Coordinator of the International University College of Turin. He has been General Editor of the Oxford Journal of Legal Studies since 2015.

Watch the [lecture!](#)

'Brexit and “Constitutional Requirements”’: What Happens When an Under-Constitutionalised State Leaves an Over-Constitutionalised EU?’

Kenneth Armstrong - (University of Cambridge) - 8 June 2018, 17:30

About the speaker:

Kenneth Armstrong is Professor of European Law and Director of the Cambridge Centre of European Legal Studies at the University of Cambridge. Before joining the Faculty of Law of the University of Cambridge, Kenneth was Professor of EU law at Queen Mary, University of London. He has also held positions at Keele University and the University of Manchester. He has held visiting positions at Edinburgh University, the European University Institute and at New York University School of Law. He is a Fellow of Sidney Sussex College.

He is editor in chief of the Cambridge Yearbook of European Legal Studies.

Kenneth has written extensively in the field of European Union law and policy, with a particular focus on the evolving governance and institutional structures of the EU. His book *Governing Social Inclusion: Europeanization through Policy Coordination* was published by Oxford University Press in 2010 and won the 2011 UACES Best Book Prize. His new book called *Brexit Time: Leaving the EU - Why, How and When?* is published by Cambridge University Press. He writes a blog at brexittime.com.

Kenneth has been awarded a Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship to analyse the dynamics of regulatory alignment and divergence after Brexit. The project will run from 2018-21.

'National Welfare and International Human Rights'

11 June 2018, 17:00-18:30 - Samuel Moyn (Yale Law School) - Badia, Emeroteca

Abstract

This talk will take up the transition in the history of political economy from national welfare states to neoliberal globalization, and how international human rights law relates to both.

About the Speaker

Samuel Moyn is professor of law and professor of history at Yale University. He received a doctorate in modern European history from the University of California-Berkeley in 2000 and a law degree from Harvard University in 2001. He spent thirteen years in the Columbia University history department, where he was most recently James Bryce Professor of European Legal History, and three at Harvard University, where he was Jeremiah Smith, Jr. Professor in the law school as well as professor in the department of history.

He has written several books in his fields of European intellectual history and human rights history, including *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Harvard University Press, 2010), and edited or coedited a number of others. His most recent book, based on Mellon Distinguished Lectures at the University of Pennsylvania in fall 2014, is *Christian Human Rights* (2015). His new book, *Not Enough: Human Rights in an Unequal World*, is forthcoming from Harvard University Press in April 2018.

Watch the [lecture!](#)

Multidisciplinary Workshops Abstracts 2016-2017

Emergencies and Human Rights

David Dyzenhaus (University of Toronto) - 7 December 2016, 17:30-19:00 - Badia, Emeroteca

Abstract:

“Salus populi suprema lex esto”—let the safety of the people be the supreme law. If Cicero’s maxim is correct, human rights do have limits. In an emergency situation, when the safety of the people is under threat the law that governs is not the law of human rights, but a judgment about what it takes to secure the safety of the people.

I shall argue that the juridical concept of the safety of the people includes respect for the human rights of the individuals who make up what we can think of as the ‘jural community’ of ‘the people’.

It follows that emergencies do not so much expose limits to human rights as show how human rights constitute the jural community. Far from emergencies telling us primarily how human rights will or may legitimately be limited, they tell us why human rights limit—or better shape—the way in which states respond to emergencies, when they respond as states.

About the speaker:

David Dyzenhaus is University Professor of Law and Philosophy at the University of Toronto, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.

This year he is a fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin.

He is the author of 'Hard Cases in Wicked Legal Systems: South African Law in the Perspective of Legality', 'Legality and Legitimacy: Carl Schmitt, Hans Kelsen, and Hermann Heller in Weimar', 'Judging the Judges', 'Judging Ourselves: Truth, Reconciliation and the Apartheid Legal Order', and 'The Constitution of Law: Legality in a Time of Emergency'.

Is Modernization dead? Why developments in world politics place an epistemic challenge for social scientists

Hilton Root (George Mason University) - 16 March 2017 - Badia, Emeroteca

Abstract

Modernization theory has postulated a strong relationship between socio-economic development and democratization. The pivotal work of Seymour Martin Lipset triggered decades of empirical research into the causes of development and democratization. Working within this epistemic framework a group of economists in the New Institutional Approach (NIE) sought to refine claims about the direction of causality in the relationship between socioeconomic development and democratic change. While the earlier literature argues that socioeconomic development leads to consolidated democratic systems, NIE's claim is that good institutions with the observance of the rule of law promote economic growth, which is likely to trigger a path to democracy (most notably, Rodrik 2007 and Acemoglu and Robinson 2012 developing Douglass North's theory). Recent developments cast a heavy shadow of doubt on these predictions. China's authoritarian path to development, Turkey's descent to one-party hegemony despite its notable economic growth, and the rise of authoritarianism and populism in parts of Europe are key indications of remarkable divergence and variety in institutional trajectories.

Drawing on his experience as a policy adviser and fieldwork in directing development projects in five Muslim-majority countries, Professor Hilton Root critiques this linear approach which has become a dominant trend in the social sciences. He also questions whether the key assumptions of the equilibrium models of the senior branch of economic analysis are the prudent way to describe political and economic developments. His book 'Dynamics Among Nations' (2013, MIT Press), provides an alternative framework for understanding how structures form and change over time. Instead of focusing on variables independently by 'holding all things constant', so that cause and effect could be determined, he argues human societies should be seen as complex systems made up of networks of interacting agents – families, ruling coalitions, governmental bureaucracies, markets, unions – that influence each other within the larger system. The behaviour of one agent affects the behaviour of another, and the resulting dynamics produce novel and powerful self-organizing behavioural patterns that change the system, and create a spiral of feedback loops and linked responses. No equilibrium exists in the sense that is commonly understood in

economics. Social actors change their behaviour as the system evolves, and their adaptations cause changes in the system as well. The coevolution of behaviour, function, and structure constitutes the traits of a particular system, and in their interactions the actors form networks that are in constant flux.

With this alternative analytic framework for the study of institution building, governance, and economic policy reform, Root challenges New Institutionalism and modernization theory, and sheds light on the divergent trajectories of China, Turkey, and Korea.

About the speaker:

Dr. Hilton Root is a policy specialist in international political economy and development, and a member of the faculty at the George Mason University Schar School of Policy and Government. His current research examines three related areas: (1) global power transition and the challenge of legitimacy; (2) the comparative and historical dynamics of state-building; and (3) the use of complexity models to understand the evolution of social institutions.

The Hobbesian Project: Science, Politics, Worship

Alan Cromartie (University of Reading) - 27 April 2017, 17:00-19:00

Abstract

Hobbes was by any standards a late developer: by his own account, his efforts to do 'Philosophy' did not begin till he was 47.

As might have been expected, though, he had attitudes and assumptions that developed earlier and that continuously shaped his philosophic efforts. A surprising amount can be deduced about these attitudes.

A biographical investigation illuminates the character of what he set out to achieve, and thus, at least to some extent, the strengths and weaknesses of the political ideas that he has given us. It enables us to see contrasts between his early thinking and that of most of his contemporaries, but also to see interesting continuities with the Aristotelian scholasticism he affected to despise. It is particularly informative on the relationship between deterministic science and his attempts to understand the passions. The result is a helpful perspective on the science of politics.

About the speaker

Alan Cromartie is Professor of the History of Political Thought at the University of Reading. He is the author of 'Sir Matthew Hale: law, religion and natural philosophy' (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) and 'The constitutionalist revolution: an essay on the history of England' (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), and the editor of 'A dialogue between a philosopher and a student, of the common laws of England' for the Clarendon Edition of the Works of Thomas Hobbes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

He was also the Director of the Leverhulme Trust Liberal Way of War Programme, for which he edited *Liberal Wars: Anglo-American strategy, ideology and practice* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015).

Genealogies of Translation Theory: Schleiermacher

Lawrence Venuti (Temple University) - 17 May 2017, 17:00-18:30

Abstract

This lecture first provides an account of the structure of translation commentary: one or more theoretical concepts concerning a translation (concepts that define its relative autonomy from the source text, the relation of correspondence that it establishes to that text, and the function that it performs) are usually linked to one or more discursive strategies, so that a strategy is seen as a practical realization of a concept.

This account is illustrated by concepts drawn from two influential twentieth-century theorists, Eugene Nida (“dynamic equivalence”) and Gideon Toury (“translation norms”), whose incomplete and somewhat inconsistent formulations point to underlying models of language and translation, either instrumental or hermeneutic. On the empiricist assumption that language is direct expression or reference, the instrumental model treats translation as the reproduction or transfer of an invariant which the source text contains or causes, typically described as its form, its meaning or its effect. On the materialist assumption that language is creation thickly mediated by linguistic and cultural determinants, the hermeneutic model treats translation as an interpretation of the source text whose form, meaning, and effect are seen as variable, subject to inevitable transformation during the translating process.

The lecture then deploys the account of translation commentary in a detailed analysis of Friedrich Schleiermacher’s lecture, “On the Different Methods of Translating” (1813), in which omissions and inconsistencies expose the limitations of his theoretical concepts and discursive strategies. Schleiermacher sets forth a hermeneutic understanding of translation, but it is preempted by a residual empiricism that detaches the interpretive act from its cultural and social context while privileging the values of a cultural elite in the service of Prussian nationalism.

The aim of the lecture is to argue that translation research and practice cannot advance until empiricist-based instrumentalism is replaced by an understanding of translation that is based on a more sophisticated version of the hermeneutic model. The version of that model presented here conceives of translation as an interpretive act that potentially initiates a mutual interrogation--of the source text and culture and of the translation and its cultural situation. This hermeneutic approach is illustrated through an analysis of Susan Bernofsky’s 2004 English translation of Schleiermacher’s lecture, in which she employs various Gallicisms in diction that point to the French genealogy of the German thinker’s concepts and put into question their nationalistic force.

About the speaker

Lawrence Venuti, professor of English at Temple University, is a translation theorist and historian as well as a translator from Italian, French, and Catalan. He is, most recently, the author of *Translation Changes Everything: Theory and Practice* (2013) as well as the editor of *Teaching Translation: Programs, Courses, Pedagogies* (2017). His latest translation is J. Rodolfo Wilcock's collection of real and imaginary biographies, *The Temple of Iconoclasts* (2014).

Multidisciplinary Workshops Abstracts 2015-2016

[David Laitin](#)

Stanford University - Why Muslim Integration Fails in Christian-Heritage Societies - 21 January 2016, 17:00 - MWP Common Room

Abstract

Amid mounting fears of Islamic extremism, many Europeans ask whether Muslim immigrants can integrate into historically Christian countries without putting host populations at risk. In a groundbreaking ethnographic investigation of France's Muslim migrant population, *Why Muslim Integration Fails in Christian-Heritage Societies* (Harvard Press, January 2016) explores this complex question. The authors conclude that both Muslim and non-Muslim French must share responsibility for the slow progress of Muslim integration.

Claire L. Adida, David D. Laitin, and Marie-Anne Valfort found that in France, Muslims are widely perceived as threatening, based in large part on cultural differences between Muslim and rooted French that feed both rational and non-rational Islamophobia. Relying on a unique methodology to isolate the religious component of discrimination, the authors identify a discriminatory equilibrium in which both Muslim immigrants and native French act negatively toward one another in a self-perpetuating, vicious circle.

In their outline for public policy solutions aimed at promoting religious diversity in fair-minded host societies, the authors hold that disentangling the rational and irrational threads of Islamophobia is essential. Muslim immigrants must adjust several of their cultural practices that abet discrimination, the authors hold, and Europeans must acknowledge and correct the anti-Islam sentiments and practices that sustain that discrimination.

Multidisciplinary Workshops Abstracts 2014-2015

Recent Italian Politics in Historical Perspective

Paul Ginsborg - (University of Florence) - 14 January 2015, 17:00-19:00 - Villa Schifanoia, Sala Europa

About the Speaker:

Paul Ginsborg is a leading authority on contemporary Italy. He taught European Politics at Cambridge University, before moving to Italy in 1992 to take up the chair of contemporary European History at the University of Florence. His impressive bibliography on Italian history starts in 1978 with a book on Daniele Manin and the Italian Risorgimento (*Daniele Manin e la*

rivoluzione veneziana del 1848-49, Milano, [Feltrinelli](#), 1978; Torino). He wrote extensively on the Italian Republic stressing how social structures as the family were of crucial importance to the understanding of the specificity of Italian history. His focus moved on Silvio Berlusconi more recently and the political destiny of Italy is at the core of the present lecture.

Abstract:

By whatever measuring rod one cares to adopt – economic, political, cultural – the Italian Republic has undoubtedly been in increasing difficulty since the early 1990s. The long dominion of Silvio Berlusconi in Italian politics has been only one, albeit highly significant, expression of a general decline, which has been accelerated by the global crisis from 2008 onwards.

Faced with this situation, many distinguished commentators, both internal and external, have expressed doom-laden sentiments about Italy's destiny. It is difficult to disagree with much of what they say, but I would like to urge caution. The Italian Republic – references to a second or third Republic seem to me to be rather spurious – has shown a remarkable capacity to survive.

To explain why this is so, I intend to adopt a predominantly historical perspective, concentrating on three areas of enquiry: Italy's cultural specificity as a Catholic and Mediterranean country; the perennial role of strong families acting as buffers against crises of varying dimensions; and the long-term European performance of Italy in relation to what Edward Thompson once called 'the great arch of bourgeois revolution'. The picture that emerges is neither comforting nor cataclysmic.

The Rhetoric and Reality of Class Politics in Machiavelli's "Istorie Fiorentine"

John McCormick (University of Chicago) - 16 March 2015, 17:30-19:30 - MW Common Room

About the Speaker:

John P. McCormick is professor of political science at the University of Chicago. He has been a Fulbright Scholar at Bremen University, Germany (1994-95); a Jean Monnet Fellow at the European University Institute, Florence, Italy (1995-96); a Radcliffe Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University (2008-09); and a Residence Fellow at the Rockefeller Center, Bellagio, Italy (April 2013).

Prof. McCormick is the author of "Machiavellian Democracy" (Cambridge University Press, 2011); "Carl Schmitt's Critique of Liberalism: Against Politics as Technology" (Cambridge University Press, 1997); and "Weber, Habermas and Transformations of the European State: Constitutional, Social and Supranational Democracy" (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

He is presently working on a book titled, "The People's Princes: Machiavelli, Leadership and Liberty".

Abstract:

In this talk, I hope to demonstrate that the specific details of Machiavelli's historical account of the respective actions of the Florentine people and nobles within the Histories decisively undermine any general, evaluative statements on Machiavelli's part that overtly criticize the people and that signal a newfound sympathy for the nobles.

I suggest, therefore, that proponents of the “late-conservative Machiavelli” thesis err when they rely overwhelmingly on the latter to the utter neglect of the former in their analyses of the Histories. They consistently ignore the blatant discontinuity between: on the one hand, Machiavelli’s demonstration of how peoples and nobles behave throughout the book, and, on the other, what he says about the behavior of these respective groups in the work.

I will argue that the former contravene the latter, and that the literary-rhetorical method deployed by Machiavelli in the Histories—a mode of writing through which, even more so than in *The Prince* and the Discourses, deeds trump words--serves to substantially reinforce, rather than in any way undermine, Machiavelli’s previously expressed democratic republicanism in his later, seemingly more conservative, political writings.

Paper available to download ([pdf](#))

Is Liberalism Secular?

Cecile Laborde (University College London) - 23 April 2015, 17:00-19:00 - MWP Common Room

Abstract:

In this talk, I ask whether liberal legitimacy requires secularism – or separation between state and religion -, and which. I argue that the best way to answer this question is to ‘disaggregate’ religion into four constituent elements; and I argue that the liberal state is secular in four distinct senses. The aim is to identify a universal minimal secularism, one not tied to a particular western history of secularization, yet one that meets basic liberal democratic desiderata.

About the Speaker:

[Cécile Laborde](#) is Professor of Political Theory at University College London and a Fellow of the British Academy. She has held visiting positions in Paris and Princeton. She has published extensively in the areas of republicanism and toleration, theories of law and the state, and global justice. She has published 4 books and has written articles in major journals of political science and political theory.

Her last book is *Critical Republicanism. The Hijab Controversy in Political Philosophy* (Oxford University Press 2008). In 2011, Laborde was awarded an ERC grant for a 5-year project on ‘Is Religion Special?’. She is the Director of UCL’s [Religion and Political Theory Centre](#). She is currently writing a book for Harvard University Press, entitled *Liberalism’s Religion*.

The Postsecular Turn: Enlightenment, Tradition, Revolution

Jointly organized with the project [ReligioWest](#) - Agata Bielik-Robson (University of Nottingham) - 14 May 2015, 17:00-19:00 - Badia, Emeroteca

Abstract:

The aim of this lecture is to give a general and accessible overview of the so called ‘post-secular’ turn in contemporary humanities.

The main idea behind the post-secular turn is that it constitutes an answer to the crisis of secular grand narratives of modernity: in Rosenzweig's case – the Hegelian narrative of the immanent progress of the Spirit; and in case of Adorno, Horkheimer, and Habermas (all representatives of the Frankfurt School) – the Enlightenment narrative of universal emancipation. All these thinkers want to rethink the place of religion in the seemingly secularized modern paradigm and see if revelation can cooperate with Enlightenment, i.e. whether it can support Enlightenment values in times of their 'crisis of legitimacy.'

But this is not the only meaning of late-modern post-secularism. A parallel interpretation, coined more or less at the same time as Habermas, by John Milbank and his pupils, Philip Blond and Conor Cunningham insists on the return of theology in the hard-core version of Radical Orthodoxy. Radical Orthodoxy's merit lies in gathering all theologico-conservative critiques of modern nihilism under the one heading of the post-secular reconquest of the West in the name of tradition.

And, finally, the third use of religious terminology today: this time in favour of the revolution. This variant of the post-secular debate, which revolves mostly around the 'revolutionary figure' of Saint Paul (Taubes, Agamben, Badiou, Zizek), constitutes a radically left answer to the crisis of Marxism as the allegedly scientific insight into the objective laws of history.

Despite irreconcilable differences between these three options, there is also a clear sense of affinity: in all three cases, religion is recollected in order to counteract the detrimental tendency, characteristic of a purely secular modernity, to reduce human existence to a monotonous quasi-natural cycle of life and death in which radically new political decisions either count for nothing or simply become impossible. But the post-secular use of religion may also be accused of such reductive instrumentality itself, summoning elements of transcendent faith merely in order to change the immanent conditions of our social life. It will also be my aim to assess this objection and see if such a pragmatic use of transcendence for the sake of immanence, which post-secular thought advocates, can be justified from the theological point of view.

About the speaker:

Agata Bielik-Robson is a Professor of Jewish Studies at The University of Nottingham and a Professor of Philosophy at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences. She specializes in all areas of Jewish philosophy with special emphasis paid to modern Jewish thought, from Spinoza to Derrida. Her field of expertise is also contemporary philosophy, particularly when in a dialogue (or polemic) with theology.

Prof. Bielik-Robson's newest book *Jewish Cryptotheologies of Late Modernity: Philosophical Marranos* was published in 2014 by Routledge.

Worlds of Civil War: Globalizing Civil War in the Late Twentieth Century

DAVID ARMITAGE - Lloyd C. Blankfein Professor of History, Harvard University - Jointly organized with HEC

Abstract:

This paper critically examines the "globalization" of civil war in three distinct, but overlapping, ways. First, civil wars became global phenomena, seemingly distributed across all parts of the world and then gradually coming to supplant international or inter-state wars as the most characteristic form of large-scale organized violence around the globe. Second, and closely related to the first, civil war was increasingly brought under the jurisdiction of international

and global institutions, especially international humanitarian law. And third, the communities within which civil wars were imagined as taking place became ever wider and more capacious, expanding from “European civil war” to various conceptions of “global civil war” early in the twentieth century.

Paper ([PDF](#))

About the speaker:

DAVID ARMITAGE is the Lloyd C. Blankfein Professor of History and Chair (2012-14, 2015-16) of the Department of History at Harvard University, where he teaches international history and intellectual history.

He is an Affiliated Professor in the Harvard Government Department and at Harvard Law School and is also an Honorary Professor of History at the University of Sydney.

Among his fifteen books are *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), *The Declaration of Independence: A Global History* (Harvard University Press, 2007), (co-ed.) *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c. 1760-1840* (2010) (Palgrave, 2010), *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), (co-auth.) *The History Manifesto* (Cambridge University press, 2014), (co-ed.) *Pacific Histories: Ocean, Land, People* (Palgrave, 2014).

His next book "Civil War: A History in Ideas" is forthcoming in 2016 by Alfred A. Knopf.

Citizenship Between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa, 1956-1960

Fred Cooper - New York University - Tuesday 9 June 2015, 14:00-17:00 - Villa Schifanoia, Sala Triaria

A round table discussion organized within the framework of the Max Weber theme group on Citizenship and Migration

Abstract

As the French public debates its present diversity and its colonial past, few remember that between 1946 and 1960 the inhabitants of French colonies possessed the rights of French citizens. Moreover, they did not have to conform to the French civil code that regulated marriage and inheritance. One could, in principle, be a citizen and different too. "Citizenship Between Empire and Nation" examines momentous changes in notions of citizenship, sovereignty, nation, state and empire in a time of uncertainty about the future of a world that had earlier been divided into colonial empires.

Discussant: MW Fellow Michael Kozakowski (HEC)

Readings in preparation of the roundtable:

- Claiming Citizenship ([PDF](#))
- Citizenship between Empire and Nation ([PDF](#))
- Defining Citizenship ([PDF](#))

