

in the United States and our arguable overabundance of elections. Certainly, this is a true challenge to busy people.

The piece is in dialogue with a number of ongoing conversations with the broad literature on democratic theory.

For example, by taking seriously the notion of the mundane reality that most people are busy, and therefore have finite resources to commit to democratic citizenship, Elliot addresses some long-standing views on apathy. Specifically, he notes that many theorists, like Dahl and Huntington (among others), have argued that lack of participation, or even apathy, on the part of citizens is either a legitimate choice or even a method by which demands on the systems are kept at manageable levels. Elliot argues that apathy means citizens are not fulfilling their basic obligations in a democratic system so argues for ways to make democracy more accessible for the busy instead of endorsing apathy and non-participation.

The discussions of how apathy can lead to instability (such as in support of non-democratic government) is certainly a warning in this present moment in American politics (indeed, globally, as we see a rising tide of illiberalism).

The work also directly engages the literature on deliberative democracy that emerged in 1980s and 1990s (such as the work of Fishkin). Elliot argues, persuasively in my view, that the time demands of the deliberative framework as such that they diminish the chances of citizens broadly engaging in their citizenship.

Overall, the book engages in a deeply theoretical discussion of the role of citizenry, and some of the institutional barriers that stand in the way of those citizens being engaged in democracy. It is also a highly accessible text and an easy read. I believe it is a worthy addition to the current broader discourse on American democracy and is a contribution to the democratic theory literature.

**Hegel's World Revolutions.** By Richard Bourke. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2023. 344p. \$29.95 cloth.  
doi:10.1017/S1537592724001506

— Terry Pinkard , Georgetown University  
terry.pinkard@georgetown.edu

After Benedetto Croce's landmark 1907 book, *What is Living and What is Dead of the Philosophy of Hegel*, just about every book on Hegel could also have had that title. Richard Bourke's book is the latest in that line. Like many others, he more or less ignores Hegel's speculative logic in favor of looking to Hegel for insight into some pressing problems in political theory. Although it is more typical for scholars in the Marxist tradition in political theory to look to Hegel for guidance, Bourke looks instead to Hegel's "contextualist" and developmental approach to political theory. Moreover, unlike those influenced by Heidegger and by Quentin Skinner's late views about the

goodness of the idea of "Roman freedom," we should follow Hegel's lead and seek to understand why "among other things, political theory is a study in how values become superannuated," (p. 193) and thus "instead of inviting the ancients to speak for us, we need to understand why their patterns of thought became impossible" (p. 280).

To show that, Bourke puts his strengths as a historian and political theorist to good use. Hegel's great theme of history was that of freedom and how, via a very zigzag path, we had arrived at a moment when freedom had turned into the formula for the modern world. In the shorthand Hegel provided for his students, the world and not just Europe had progressed from the idea that one (e.g., the emperor) was free, to some (aristocratic males) were free, all the way to the modern principle that all are free. In the process, societies had developed institutions and practices that made this abstraction into something real in the lives of those living in its shadows. Bourke in effect vouches for this grand view and, among other things, seeks to show how this should provide the proper counterweight to certain contemporary trends in political thought that can only see hidden practices of domination and exploitation behind the modern institutions that Hegel thought made freedom real. To demonstrate this, he gives us an account of Hegel's world revolutions, of the history of the reception of Hegel's thought, and of Hegel's own development, offering a kind of "Hegelian" critique of the various contemporary attempts to come to terms with history in political theory found in the Cambridge School (John Dunn, J.G.A. Pocock, Skinner) and the Frankfurt School (Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Jürgen Habermas).

Against the obvious charge that any such a view nowadays is absurdly optimistic, Bourke retorts that "despite his reputation for premature optimism, Hegel's verdict was a product of profound scepticism" (p. xv), and that the actualization of freedom in the modern world was hard fought and remains fragile. This requires us to take Hegel in a reduced form which keeps the limitations of Hegel's own circumstances in full view. Although Marx is not his specific guide to those views, Bourke nonetheless takes Marx's basic question—"How do we stand as regards the Hegelian dialectic?"—as having to do with "the overarching Hegelian vision rather than just Hegel's method of proceeding" (p. 193). By and large, having that "vision" means looking to the big view of history as the slow and incremental development of the world ever so gradually moving to the position of the freedom and equality of all. (Marx himself, of course, thought it was about revolution and its necessary concomitant violence.)

It is not clear just how Hegelian this "overall vision" Bourke defends really is. Along with two other great nineteenth century thinkers—J. S. Mill and Alexis de Tocqueville—Hegel worried about how and whether freedom could be actualized, and all of them shared certain worries about the character of the new citizens of that

modern order. But neither Mill nor Tocqueville were willing to speak of the progressive self-revelation of the Absolute, whereas Hegel had no trouble with it. Moreover, keeping to Hegel's "overall vision" risks diluting Hegel's views into something more a kind of composite of Fernand Braudel's *longue durée* with Tocqueville's analysis in *The Old Regime and the Revolution*.

How to navigate that? Obviously, one turns to Hegel's views on the French Revolution, an event he lived through as a teenaged student into his early twenties. Bourke dismisses the idea that Hegel never changed his early admiration for the revolution. Evidence that he might well have done just that (e.g., in the way he celebrated every July 14 with a toast) are dismissed: "The meaning of the gesture is less frequently examined, let alone contextualised" (p. 114). But as it turns out, the contextualization offered is just Bourke's alternative interpretation. (Not mentioned are other events such as Hegel's going out of his way in the 1820s to visit Lazare Carnot—the main author of the *levée en masse*—who was under house arrest in Magdeburg, a visit which Hegel warmly remembered in a letter to his wife.) Now, there is no doubt that Hegel was strongly opposed to the Jacobin interlude and he was more impressed than he should have been with Napoleon's rule, but in his lectures on the philosophy of history in the 1820s and shortly before his death in 1831, he seemed to praise the Revolution while blaming French Catholicism for the fanatical turn it took. One cannot have a Revolution without a Reformation, he told his students, offering that along with his claim that genuine reform has to come from above (as in the reform period in Prussia and under Napoleon's rule in France). He praised the violent Dutch revolt against

the Spanish in no uncertain terms in his lectures on the philosophy of art, and he also remarked there that it was because the Dutch had undergone the Reformation that they were able to succeed. In all of this, Hegel emerged as the kind of authoritarian liberal extolling reform from above—a characteristic shared by much other nineteenth century liberalism.

Bourke notes that Hegel held the same negative views about the Reformation as he did of the French Revolution: "Each of these adventures had misfired, Hegel contended, because they pitted an awakening of moral conscience against existing means of improving ethical life" (p. xiii). However, if anything is clearer than Hegel's great admiration for the Protestant Reformation, it is hard to know what it might be. Moreover, when Bourke says that "[t]his led Hegel to place the individual will at the centre of his political philosophy" (p. 168), he seems to be ignoring Hegel's signature dramatic insistence that one cannot *separate* the individual will from the universal will, even though one can clearly *distinguish* them. That is the essence of Hegel's dialectic, and the basis for his defining *Geist*, Spirit, as the "I that is a We," and a "We that is an I."

Finally, coming back to Marx—What Marx praised in Hegel was the "method" for embodying the idea of dialectical self-transformation. Namely, he thought Hegel captured the way in which a form of life breaks down under its own weight, becomes unable to reform itself and must instead transform itself into something new that both preserves the part of the past that was so successful while jettisoning all the elements that had led to its failure. Can one really hold onto Hegel's world revolutions without that idea of dialectical self-transformation, as Bourke's book seems to imply?

---

## AMERICAN POLITICS

**Lyman Trumbull and the Second Founding of the United States.** By Paul M. Rego. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2022. 336p. \$54.95 cloth.  
doi:10.1017/S153759272400118X

— Robert C. Lieberman, *Johns Hopkins University*,  
rlieberman@jhu.edu

Among the major political figures of the Reconstruction era, Lyman Trumbull tends to get short shrift. Less flamboyant than Charles Sumner, less pugnacious than Thaddeus Stevens, and less statesmanlike than John Bingham, Trumbull tends to fade unjustifiably into the shadows. A scion of two prominent New England families, the Trumbulls and the Mathers, Trumbull settled in Illinois, where he practiced law while climbing through the state's Democratic Party establishment. Elected to

the U.S. Senate in 1854 as a critic of the Kansas–Nebraska Act and its "popular sovereignty" approach to the extension of slavery, Trumbull joined the Republican Party in 1857 and allied himself with another rising Illinois Republican, Abraham Lincoln. As chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee from 1861 until he left the Senate in 1873, Trumbull was at the center of many of the critical legislative and constitutional developments of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

The arc of Trumbull's senatorial career is something of an enigma. As a committed abolitionist, he was a strong supporter of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments. He sponsored two of the key building blocks of Congressional Reconstruction—the Freedman's Bureau Act and the Civil Rights Act of 1866—which both passed over President Andrew Johnson's vetoes and served as important pillars of the attempt to reconstitute federal authority to enforce democratic rights and advance racial equality in