



Revolutionaries

Eric Hobsbawm

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“One of the few genuinely great historians of our century” according to the *New Republic*, Eric Hobsbawm has produced a canon of landmark books—including *The Age of Capital*, *The Age of Revolution*, *Bandits*, and *The Age of Extremes*—that has both set the standard for radical scholarship and influenced historical thinking across the political spectrum.

Now back in print after thirty years, *Revolutionaries* is vintage Hobsbawm, written masterfully amid one of the century’s most intense periods of political and social upheaval, putting those events in historical context. Few observers were as astute as Hobsbawm at probing, criticizing, and clarifying radical movements, whether in Beijing or Berkeley. Ranging from historical investigations into communism to contemporary appraisals of revolutionary movements and meditations on Marxism, Hobsbawm’s commentaries are essential guides to ideas and people that changed the face of the twentieth century.

Hobsbawm’s essays retain a freshness that speaks both to his brilliance as a writer and scholar, as well as to the perennial importance of his subjects. At a time when the very concept of revolution has been largely discredited, these essays remind us of the enduring importance of radical investigations into—and solutions to—society’s persistent inequalities and injustices.

Revolutionaries Details

Date : Published September 1st 2001 by The New Press (first published January 1st 1973)

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Author : Eric Hobsbawm

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From Reader Review Revolutionaries for online ebook

Thought_Criminal says

Offers a pretty straightforward analysis of revolutions and how/why they tend to fail in 20th century. Good stuff thus far. Hobsbawm is an admittedly Marxist dude, but is able to present a rather unbias account of Marxism and Communism in a realistic sense rather than ranting on about how great Communism is or is not. Good honest historic writer and simple language to understand! He tells of the difference between Marxism and Communism, interesting points on anarchism and Lenin too. Not that anyone cares, too think of it, does anyone even think about revolutions as a real possibility nowadays; or is it just a full blown delusion at this point??? Isn't it just easier to buy a "Che" t shirt, an Ipod, and label yourself a revolutionary against the system in your close knit of "politically conscious" friends?? Don't you get way more "street cred" and increase your chances of getting laid because you "care about things"??? Meh whatever..I hate everything....I need a drink...

I got bored and stopped reading it 75% through. Whatever, didnt keep my attention much...you finish it

Stephen McQuiggan says

A series of essays on the principle of hope, Vietnam, and revolutionary fervor amongst student bodies. Parts of this are so lucid and clear you want to shake the author's hand - the sections on guerrilla warfare and the aristocracy of labour are absolutely fantastic - parts of it are so bogged down in acronyms and Marxist theory it becomes a minefield for the uninitiated. A real eye opener nonetheless.

Ico Maly says

insightful, thorough and funny

Paco says

Serie de ensayos, críticas y conferencias en torno al tema de las revoluciones. Casi todos son de finales de los 60s y principios de los 70s, por lo que varios de ellos se sienten fuera de tiempo. Muy erudito, muy intelectual, por momentos difícil. Aporta muchos datos interesantes sobre el marxismo, el anarquismo y el comunismo. Algunos de los ensayos son de plano aburridos, pero al final es una lectura útil.

Kris McCracken says

a collection of reviews and essays by Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm written through the 1960s. I have read most of these before, but not much since Henry has been around.

There's no doubt that Hobsbawm's style is among the most accessible and lively of historians, and *Revolutionaries* covers all sorts of topics related to revolution, high politics and (of course) socialism. As with any such collection, the quality varies a bit, but it is generally high. Obviously the content is somewhat dated (the world has changed a little since 1968), but there remain some really pertinent points.

For example, the essay on Vietnam – first published in 1965 just as the United States was escalating its commitment of troops – succinctly and presciently maps out the reasons why the victory of the Vietnamese Communists was inevitable. In many respects, *some* of this logic can be extended to the Afghanistan situation today.

So, if you are into that sort of thing, this should be well worth picking up and giving a go.

Malcolm says

I first read this collection about 25 years ago and felt the need to revisit it in its revised form (which is a bit of a misnomer – there are two new essays and some minor adjustments to others). What really impresses me is that although the vast majority of these papers were written in between 1964 and 1974, most have retained their freshness and relevance, and of the 25 of that age no more than five have aged badly. Hobsbawm's pithiness is in places marvellous – I really liked the idea in his discussion of sex & revolution that the bourgeoisie is more easily offended than overthrown. There are a couple of papers that didn't connect – his essay on Karl Korsch for instance reflects a debate from 40 years ago that seems to have gone away now, which is probably a sign of political Marxism's weakness. Several of these papers however remain the classic statements on the historical issue (Marx & the British Labour Movement, Lenin and the Aristocracy of Labour) others such as his discussion of hope are inspiring, while his attack on the revisionist (especially Francois Furet) denigration of importance of revolution (one of the new essays) made me want to cheer loudly. Hobsbawm is one of Europe's great historians – these essays show why.

Trond Sjöström says

Hobsbawm probably knows his French, and for the thoroughly initiated this book probably has a generous share of gems and diamonds. But alas, for me, it's mostly just words and sand and dust. I've noticed this before when reading Hobsbawm that his prose is thicker than most. Not due to an exceptionally use of hard words etc. but rather due to a lack of sense of rhythm and comprehensiveness that quickly induces headache and double-sightedness. I almost get the feeling that Hobsbawm only writes half of what's in his head thereby leaving essentials outside of the text.

This book is no exception. Though having read it I am hard pressed to explain what the book is about. There are no memorable chapters. It is a collection of essays on revolution and what it is to be revolutionary. Marxist in scope it focuses on movements and collective struggle, from the October Revolution and onward. The lack of individual protagonists might be a part of the problem for me, although I am the first to admit that this, in itself, is no lack in the author or the analysis, but only in me. It's kind of like a case of "whatever floats your boat" and in my case this sinks.

Titus Hjelm says

A collection of Hobsbawm's writing, mostly book reviews, from the 1960s (a couple of more recent ones as well). Commentary on Marxism, anarchism, revolution. The best bits are the last two longer pieces about France in 1968 and the role of intellectuals in revolution.
