Factory of Strategy
Antonio Negri

This book is both a systematic inquiry into the development of Vladimir Lenin’s thought and an encapsulation of a critical shift in theoretical trajectory of its author, Antonio Negri. It is the last of Negri’s major political works to be translated into English. It explains that Lenin is the only prominent politician of the modern era to seriously question the “withering away” and “extinction” of the state, and that, like Karl Marx, he recognized the link between capitalism and modern sovereignty and the need to destroy capitalism and reconfigure the state. The book refrains from portraying Lenin as a ferocious dictator enforcing the proletariat’s reappropriation of wealth, nor does it depict him as a mere military tool of a vanguard opposed to the Ancien Régime. Instead, the book champions Leninism’s ability to adapt to different working-class configurations in Russia, China, Latin America and elsewhere. It argues that Lenin developed a new political figuration in and beyond modernity and an effective organization capable of absorbing different historical conditions. The book ultimately urges readers to recognize both the universal application of Leninism today and its potential to institutionally—not anarchically—dismantle centralized power.

Hermeneutic Communism
Gianni Vattimo and Santiago Zabala

Having lost much of its political clout and theoretical power, communism no longer represents an appealing alternative to capitalism. In its original Marxist formulation, communism promised an ideal of development, but only through a logic of war, and while a number of reformist
governments still promote this ideology, their legitimacy has steadily declined since the fall of the Berlin wall. Separating communism from its metaphysical foundations, which include an abiding faith in the immutable laws of history and an almost holy conception of the proletariat, this text recasts Marx's theories at a time when capitalism's metaphysical moorings—in technology, empire, and industrialization—are buckling. While Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri call for a return of the revolutionary left, this text expresses a fear that this would lead only to more violence and failed political policy. Instead, it adopts an antifoundationalist stance drawn from the hermeneutic thought of Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida, and Richard Rorty. Hermeneutic communism leaves aside the ideal of development and the general call for revolution; it relies on interpretation rather than truth and proves more flexible in different contexts. Hermeneutic communism motivates a resistance to capitalism's inequalities yet intervenes against violence.

Radical Democracy and Political Theology
Jeffrey Robbins

Alexis de Tocqueville once wrote that “the people reign over the American political world like God over the universe,” unwittingly casting democracy as the political instantiation of the death of God. According to this book, Tocqueville's assessment remains an apt observation of modern democratic power, which does not rest with a sovereign authority but operates as a diffuse social force. By linking radical democratic theory to a contemporary fascination with political theology, the book envisions the modern experience of democracy as a social, cultural, and political force transforming the nature of sovereign power and political authority. The text joins this work with Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s radical conception of “network power,” as well as Sheldon Wolin's notion of “fugitive democracy,” to fashion a political theology that captures modern democracy's social and cultural torment. This approach has profound implications not only for the nature of contemporary religious belief and practice but also for the reconceptualization of the proper relationship between religion and politics. Challenging the modern, liberal, and secular assumption of a neutral public space, this text conceives of a postsecular politics for contemporary society that inextricably links religion to the political. While effectively recasting the tradition of radical theology as a political theology, this book also develops a comprehensive critique of the political theology bequeathed by Carl Schmitt.
This book offers a straightforward explanation of Baruch Spinoza's elaborate arguments and a persuasive case for his ongoing relevance. Responding to a resurgent interest in Spinoza's thought and its potential application to contemporary global issues, the book demonstrates the thinker's special value to politics, philosophy, and related disciplines. This book defends understanding of the philosopher as a proto-postmodernist, or a thinker who is just now, with the advent of the postmodern, becoming contemporary. The book connects Spinoza's theories to recent trends in political philosophy, particularly the reengagement with Carl Schmitt's "political theology," and the history of philosophy, including the argument that Spinoza belongs to a "radical enlightenment." By positioning Spinoza as a contemporary revolutionary intellectual, the book addresses and effectively defeats twentieth-century critiques of the thinker waged by Jacques Derrida, Alain Badiou, and Giorgio Agamben.