

'Ideology and Social Science: Rousseau, Sieyès and Modern Politics'

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Introduction

The long argument about the significance of the French Revolution - and the enduring range of assumptions about how much of a turning point the French Revolution might have been - have made it hard to get back to the political thought of the 1780s and 1790s, or, put summarily, to political thought after Rousseau. Rousseau's attack on the state-centred modern natural jurisprudence of Grotius, Hobbes and Pufendorf is well known. But what happened to modern natural jurisprudence after Rousseau is still not very well known. The aim of this paper is to try to show how and why it turned into what Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès called "social science" and the bearing that this Rousseau-inspired transformation has on making sense of ideology, or the moral and political thought of the late eighteenth-century French ideologues.

Bibliography

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Biography

Michael Sonenscher is Fellow and Director of Studies in History at King's College, Cambridge. His chief publications include:

- *Sans-Culottes: An Eighteenth-Century Emblem in the French Revolution* (Princeton University Press, 2008)
- *Before the Deluge: Public Debt, Inequality, and the Intellectual Origins of the French Revolution* (Princeton University Press, 2007)
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