


STASIS


Montreal
October 27—28,
2025

Istituto Italiano di Cultura



What Is to Be Done... with **Media**?



GRAMSCIAN PERSPECTIVES ON MEDIA IN A COUNTER- REVOLUTIONARY EPOCH

Gramsci Research Collective
Collectif de recherche gramscienne (GRC-CRG)
(formerly Rethinking Gramsci)

CALL FOR PAPERS

Proposals for papers may address, without being limited to, the following themes:

- The possible contributions of Gramsci's theories to the development of research on media in the human and social sciences (e.g. Cultural Studies, Cultural Marxism, Critical Theory, the Political Economy of Communication, etc.)
- Philological, philosophical, or socio-historical interpretations of both the pre-prison and prison writings on the media
- Empirical studies of past or present media phenomena using Gramscian categories (the political applications of digital media, the concentration of the press, etc.)
- Gramsci's own journalistic production
- The development of conservative and reactionary media in the context of so-called "right-wing Gramscianism".
- The role of media in building hegemony (or counter-hegemony) and shaping public opinion
- Media and mass culture.

What Is to Be Done... with the Media? is organized by Gramsci Research Collective – Collectif de recherche gramscienne (GRC-CRG), formerly *Rethinking Gramsci*, in partnership with the Istituto Italiano di Cultura and the Centre de recherche interuniversitaire sur la communication, l'information, et la société (CRICIS).

Please send your proposals, together with the title, an abstract of no more than 400 words, a short biography, and institutional affiliation to rethinkinggramsci@gmail.com before **May 1, 2025**.

KEYNOTES

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In the years since the conservative counter-revolution of the 1980s, the evolution of the media landscape in the West has taken some dramatic and quite concerning turns. The concentration of media outlets in the hands of a small number of oligarchs, the vertiginous proliferation of authoritarian discourses, the multiplication of far-right influencers, the normalization of counterrevolutionary political violence, the subordination of the media to the whims of the market, the erosion of public services, and the extension of the logic of the cultural industry to other areas of public life – all these factors have contributed to the creation of a historical context resolutely adverse to the emancipation of subaltern groups. In the face of this onslaught, left-wing media outlets are engaged in a trenchant resistance, alternative or participatory media are gaining a foothold, and forums of political discussion are proliferating online. The ray of hope, however, does not change the fact that recent shifts in the balance of power in the sphere of media, which is what concerns us here, are decidedly to the disadvantage of progressive forces. In order to analyze, and ultimately transform, such a historical-political predicament, we turn to the work of Antonio Gramsci. In both theory and practice, Gramsci was one of the Marxist intellectuals who insisted most on the "ethical-political" moment of power relations and, thus, on the question of the media. A prolific journalist before his imprisonment in 1926 (with at least 4,000 articles published) and founder of Communist weekly and daily periodicals (*L'Ordine Nuovo* and *L'Unità*), he paid constant attention to media phenomena. His *Prison Notebooks* owe their renown in part to their theoretical elaborations on culture and, more specifically, on the media (through notions such as "integral journalism", "organic or traditional intellectual", "hegemonic apparatus", "national-popular" or "intellectual and moral reform"). They also include numerous reflections on the history of Italian intellectuals, the written press, theater, literature, artistic movements and more. Simultaneously avoiding the pitfalls of both "culturalism" and "economism," Gramsci's approach has the virtue of grasping politically the media's function within the superstructure, in strategic and tactical terms, without ever losing sight of the dialectical unity of the structure and superstructure in a social formation.

This conference aims to provide the opportunity to reflect collectively on the possible contributions of Gramsci's work to the analysis and transformation of the media, understood in the broadest sense of the term, that is, as it refers to the written press, digital media, television, radio, cinema, digital broadcasting platforms, and so on.