

## **POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY (M.A. 4 credits)**

Dept. of Sociology and Social Anthropology, CEU  
Autumn 2015, Fridays 9:00-12:40

Professor Dorit Geva

Office Hours: Wednesday 9:30-11:30, by appointment only

This course surveys the development of the field of political sociology. We will first discuss some of the work of Karl Marx, whose writings on politics and the state were not well developed, but which proved to be greatly influential throughout the twentieth century. Max Weber's broad comparative work on law, politics and the state offered the first comprehensive framework for the sociological study of power and historical forms of domination.

However, the writings of Marx and Weber did not yet constitute a consciously defined subfield of study. In the 1970s a new generation of young theorists rediscovered Marx (and Antonio Gramsci), and of equal importance, identified the state as an object of inquiry unto itself. Moving away from explaining the rise of political regimes (e.g. dictatorship or democracy) as had been the case during the Cold War era, Nicos Poulantzas, Ralph Miliband, Fred Block, and Clause Offe sought to identify the nature of the capitalist state and its contradictions.

Shortly thereafter, in the 1980s, a new crop of scholars found that the Marxist view of the modern state as primarily a condensation of capitalist relations was partial. Scholars such as Theda Skocpol, Michael Mann, and Charles Tilly rather turned to Max Weber's corpus in order to explain the autonomous influence of state bureaucrats, the specific institutional matrix of a state, and the relationship between war-making and state-making in the Global North. Later work by scholars such as Suad Joseph, Mara Loveman, and Miguel Centeno has applied Weberian categories to make sense of state development outside the Global North.

Gøsta Esping-Andersen's work on the development of distinct welfare state regimes put the comparative study of welfare states on the map, a field which exploded during the 1990s. Feminist critiques of Marxist theories of the state, and of theories of welfare state development followed suit. Catharine MacKinnon and Wendy Brown sought to theorize the "male" or "masculinist" state, while Ann Orloff showed the blind spots in Esping-Andersen's typology of welfare regimes. Increased attention was also paid to the relationship between race, ethnicity, and the state.

Finally, as of the 1990s, the transition to post-socialist states in the CEE region led theorists to reconsider some of the assumptions of Western European-oriented theories of state-building. At the same time, welfare state retrenchment and neoliberal policy began unfolding globally, raising questions as to what is the nature of the neoliberal state (Bob Jessop), the institutional paths and limits to retrenchment (Paul Pierson), and the extent of state neoliberalization around the world, including in countries such as India (Poulami Roychowdhury).

A few words on what this course omits. As always, difficult choices needed to be made, and several themes have been left out. These include: revolutions, social movements (due to an entire seminar dedicated to this topic this semester), the European Union, political parties, voting, parliamentary politics, urban governance, and informal institutions.

**Goals & Learning Outcomes:** The goals of this course are to lay a foundation for understanding the history and the scope of political sociology, some of its keys theories, and some of the primary debates that animate the field. You will also survey the wide range of methods employed in this field.

**Participation:** Attendance and participation are mandatory. Your marks will suffer if you miss classes or fail to participate in class. You are expected to be conversant, to come to class having read the assigned reading, to offer critical commentary of the texts, to raise questions and concerns, and to engage in constructive conversation and debate with me and your class colleagues. Participation is assessed through a combination of attendance record and active, meaningful participation in class. By “meaningful” participation I mean contributions to class discussions that are based on having done the assigned readings, and which indicate genuine consideration of the ideas from the texts along with ideas raised in class.

If you miss **three** classes or more, you cannot pass the course.

**Online Critical Commentary:** In addition to regular attendance and active participation, you are required to contribute **SEVEN** comments to the course E-Learning site by the semester’s end. These need to be posted **by 8pm the night before class**. You can determine how you will pace those seven responses, but make sure to complete **seven by December 4**.

The responses should be critical responses to that day’s readings. They could raise questions you consider important. You could mention aspects that are genuinely puzzling to you, or comparisons or connections to prior readings. You could also respond to other people’s comments. I will read your comments in preparing for class, and they will help shape the direction class will take.

I do not recommend commenting on all the things that an author does not write about without explaining why that omission is important. For example, if you write, “Geva does not consider the capitalist state,” without explaining why Geva should consider the capitalist state, then you are not justifying why that’s an important critique. Additionally, “critical commentary” means that you should note the strengths of an argument, not just its weaknesses.

**Organization of Each Class (these are rough estimates):**

9:00 – 10:20	Discuss readings
10:20 – 10:40	Break
10:40 – 11:40	Discuss readings
11:40 – 12:00	Research scenario exercise: how do these theories illuminate, or fail to illuminate, specific research topics?
12:00 – end of class	Reconvene for closing class discuss

**Final Essay:** At the end of the semester you will submit a 3,500-word research essay. We will discuss the details later in the semester, but briefly, you will be required to identify, research, and analyze a key debate within the field of political sociology; or, if your M.A thesis is relevant to the course, you can write a research essay that draws from political sociology to analyze your field research. The final class of the semester will be dedicated to guided library research and honing in on a paper topic.

**The final grade will be composed of the following elements:**

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|---------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. General class participation        | 20% |
| 2. Seven online critical responses    | 15% |
| 3. Group Work                         | 15% |
| 4. Final Research Paper (3,500 words) | 50% |

**Class Schedule:**

\*\* All the readings, included recommended readings, will be on the course e-learning site

**September 25: Introduction**

**October 2: The Classics: Marx & Weber**

Marx, Karl (1978) "The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1950," in Robert C. Tucker ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: Norton, pp. 586-593.

Marx, Karl (1978) "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon," in Robert C. Tucker ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: Norton, pp. 604-617.

Weber, Max (1991) "Politics as a Vocation," in H. H. Gerth, C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, pp. 77-103.

**Recommended:**

Weber, Max (1978) *Economy and Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 1006 – 1015; 1028 – 1031; 1111–1117; 1121-1123

Weber, Max (1978) *Economy and Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 904-909; 956-975; 978-985; 987-994; 998-1005. (On forms of domination)

Gramsci, Antonio (1957) *The Modern Prince and Other Writings*. New York: International Publishers

**October 9: Marxist Theories of the State**

Poulantzas, Nicos (2008[1969]) "The Problem of the Capitalist State," in James Martin, ed., *The Poulantzas Reader: Marxism, Law and the State*. London: Verso, pp. 172-185.

Block, Fred (1987[1977]) "The Ruling Class Does not Rule: Notes on the Marxist Theory of the State," in *Revising State Theory: Essays in Politics and Postindustrialism*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 51-68.

Offe, Claus (1984) "Social Policy and the Theory of the State," in John Keane, ed., *Contradictions of the Welfare State*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, pp. 88-118.

Recommended:

Poulantzas, Nicos (2008[1977]) "The State and the Transition to Socialism," in James Martin, ed., *The Poulantzas Reader: Marxism, Law and the State*. London: Verso, pp. 334-360.

**October 16: Weber Rediscovered – State-Making in the Global North:**

Tilly, Charles (1993) "War-Making and State-Making as Organized Crime," in Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 169-191.

Mann, Michael (1984) "The Autonomous Power of the State." *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 25: 185-213.

Skocpol, Theda (1993) "The Potential Autonomy of the State," in *States and Social Revolutions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 24-33.

Skocpol, Theda (1993) "Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research," in Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the state back in*. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-37.

Recommended:

Poggi, Gianfranco (1978) *The Development of the Modern State*, Stanford University Press.

**October 23: Weber Rediscovered II – on state development beyond the Global North**

Centeno, Miguel (1997) "Blood and Debt: War and Taxation in Nineteenth Century Latin America." *American Journal of Sociology* 102(6): 1565-1605.

Joseph, Suad (2011) "Political Familism in Lebanon." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* July 2011 636: 150-163.

Loveman, Mara (2005) "The Modern State and the Primitive Accumulation of Symbolic Power." *American Journal of Sociology*, 110(6): 1651-83.

Kwan Lee and Yonghong Zhang (2013) "The Power of Instability: Unraveling the Microfoundations of Bargained Authoritarianism in China." *American Journal of Sociology*, 118(6): 1475-1508.

### **October 30: The Welfare State**

Marshall, T.H. (1950) "Citizenship and Social Class," in *Citizenship and Social Class, and Other Essays*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 10-85.

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta (1993) "The Three Political Economies of the Welfare State," and "De-Commodification in Social Policy," in *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, pp. 9-34; 35-54.

Orloff, Ann Shola (1993) "Gender and the Social Rights of Citizenship: The Comparative Analysis of Gender Relations and Welfare States." *American Sociological Review*, 58(3): 303-328.

Teo, Youyenn (2013) "Support for Deserving Families: Inventing the Anti-welfare Familialist State in Singapore." *Social Politics*, 20(3): 387-406.

#### Recommended:

Pontusson, Jonas (2005) *Inequality and Prosperity: Social Europe vs. Liberal America*. Cornell University Press.

### **Nov. 6: Gender and the State:**

Brown, Wendy (1992) "Finding the Man in the State." *Feminist Studies*, 18(1): 7-34.

Geva, Dorit (2015) "Selective Service, The Gendered-Ordered Family, and the Rationality Informality of the American State." *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 121 (1): 171-204.

Charrad, Mounira M. *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 17-27; 201-233.

#### Recommended:

MacKinnon, Catharine (1989) "The Problem of Marxism and Feminism"; "Attempts at Synthesis"; "The Liberal State"; and "Sex Equality: On Difference and Dominance," in *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, pp. 3-12; 60-80; 157-170; 215-234.

### **Nov. 13 – Class Cancelled**

### **Nov. 20: Race, Ethnicity, and the State**

Steinmetz, George (2008) "The Colonial State as a Social Field: Ethnographic Capital and Native Policy in the German Overseas Empire before 1914." *American Sociological Review*, 73: 589-612.

Bloemraad, Irene, Anna Korteweg, and Gökçe Yurdakul (2008) "Citizenship and Immigration: Multiculturalism, Assimilation, and Challenges to the Nation-State." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 34: 153-79.

Brubaker, Rogers (2011) "Nationalizing States Revisited: Projects and Processes of Nationalization in Post-Soviet States." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34(11): 1785-1814.

#### **Nov. 27: Post-socialist transitions**

Ganev, Venelin I. (2005) "Post-communism as an Episode of State-Building: A Reversed Tillyan Perspective." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 38(4): 425-445.

Darden, Keith (2008) "The Integrity of Corrupt States: Graft as an Informal State Institution." *Politics and Society* 36: 35-59.

Fodor, Éva and Christy Glass (2007) "From Public to Private Maternalism? Gender and Welfare in Poland and Hungary after 1989." *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*.

#### Recommended:

Cook, Linda J. (2007) "Negotiating Welfare in Postcommunist States." *Comparative Politics* 40(1): 41- 62.

Javornik, Jana (2014) "Measuring State De-Familialism: Contesting Post-Socialist Exceptionalism." *Journal of European Social Policy*, 24: 240-57.

#### **Dec. 4: The state and neoliberalism**

Jessop, Bob (1993) "Towards a Schumpeterian Workfare State?" *Studies in Political Economy* 40: 7-39.

Pierson, Paul (1994) "Interests, Institutions and Policy Feedback," and "Retrenchment in a Core Sector: Old-Age Pensions," in *Dismantling the Welfare State? Reagan, Thatcher, and the Politics of Retrenchment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 27-50; 53-73.

Roychowdhury, Poulami (2015) "Victims to Saviors: Governmentality and the Regendering of Citizenship in India." *Gender and Society*.

#### Recommended:

Peck, Jamie (2001) "Regulation: Workhouse/Welfare/Workfare," in *Workfare States*. New York: Guilford Press, pp. 31-82.

Korpi, Walter (2003) "Welfare-State Regress in Western Europe: Politics, Institutions, Globalization, Europeanization." *Annual Review of Sociology* 29: 589-609.

Prasad, Monica (2005) "Why is France so French? Culture, Institutions, and Neoliberalism, 1974-1981." *The American Journal of Sociology* 111(2): 357-407.

Pierson, Paul (2001) "Coping with Permanent Austerity," in *The New Politics of the Welfare State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 410-456.

#### **Dec. 11 – Library research for final paper**

Final essay due by email: **By noon (12:00), Monday, January 4, 2016**

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Your final essay assignment:

Please write a 3,500-word research essay. There are several approaches you can take to this essay. All essay topics must be approved by me.

1. You can identify and analyze a key debate within the field of political sociology. This can remain at the level of a literature review. However, for this assignment you will not merely summarize positions, but offer an interpretive intervention into the debate.
2. You can identify an empirical topic of interest to you (and which must be very focused). For example, a social policy reform in Hungary. You will then use texts from the syllabus, and related bibliographic resources from your own library research, in order to analyze the empirical case.
3. If your M.A. thesis is related to the course, you can write a research essay that draws from the course's themes, in addition to further bibliographic material from your own library research, to help advance your M.A. topic. This might be of particular interest for those of you who are about to embark on field research.