

STATE AND SOCIETY

Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, CEU
Mandatory course for MA in Sociology and Social Anthropology
Winter Semester AY 2024-2025
4 Credits/8 ECTS

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Office hours: ..., room ..., by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course introduces students to some of the most important concepts and debates in state theory and research. At the end of the course, students will have a deeper understanding of the ways in which the nature and functioning of modern states has been understood in sociology, anthropology, and critical theory. The readings are mainly theoretical, but class discussions will always address the issue of applicability of these concepts to empirical cases, both historical and current. The aim of this class is to help students develop the capacity for critical thinking about the state, as they encounter it in the scholarly literature, as well as in the real-world, including in their own everyday lives.

The course is designed as a (certainly partial) survey of the major topics and debates concerning the modern state, and its relationship with society. We will discuss a wide range of topics: the debate on the autonomy of the state; the ideological work behind the idea of the state; bureaucracy and the bureaucratic logic of the modern state; political power beyond the state; the mechanisms of knowledge production underlying the functioning of the modern state; the redistributive aims and practices of welfare states; the relationship between capital accumulation, imperialism, and the state; state violence; the issue of rights; and the “invention” of the nation-state. We will end the semester with a discussion of authoritarianism (past and present).

The PEDAGOGICAL GOALS of this course are to:

- Build a strong knowledge foundation for students' current and future inquiries that concern the state in its manifold manifestations;
- Familiarize students with the basic concepts and concerns of sociology and anthropology of the state;
- Understand some of the ongoing tensions and contradictions within the broad field of state theory and research;
- Develop students' oral and written argumentation skills;
- Deepen students' critical analysis and interpretation skills.

GRADING

(1) **CLASS PARTICIPATION (20%)**: All students are encouraged to participate in class discussions and ask questions based on the assigned readings.

(2) **READING NOTES (15%)**: Students will write and submit reading notes for all classes between week 2 and week 10. The reading notes will be submitted two hours before the class starts at the latest (. . .). The notes will be half-page to one page long (Times New Roman 12, single spaced). They will have to (a) summarize the argument of *one* of the mandatory readings assigned (1-2 sentences); (b) select and define the main concepts used by the author; (c) note if there were things the student could not understand. The lecturer will make sure to clarify the difficult points in class.

*The notes do not have to be polished. They are meant to help students better understand what they read and to monitor their comprehension progress during the semester. Try your best and don't worry too much about the form.

(3) **CONCEPT DICTIONARY (15%)**: Students will be required to submit a personal dictionary with the definitions of the main concepts they select from the text (the ones they should also add in the reading notes, plus the ones they encounter in the other texts, and the ones we discuss in class). Please use complete references, with pages, so you can use the definitions as a direct quote when needed.

***Due date:**

(4) **FINAL PAPER (50%)**: Students will be required to write a final paper of 3,000 words on any topic discussed in class. Mandatory *and* optional readings for that particular topic should be discussed in the paper. Discussing relevant titles beyond the class readings is encouraged, especially if students aim for high grades (A- and A). The papers can be purely theoretical, or you can use theoretical concepts to discuss a social process, phenomenon, or problem from the past or present. Choosing topics that are connected to your Master thesis is most helpful (but not mandatory).

*Please feel free to consult with me about the paper during the semester.

*Please start thinking about the topic of the paper early!

***Due date for the final paper:**

Email policy

Please treat email as a form of professional communication and always use your CEU email address. Substantive issues concerning course materials should be raised during office hours with the course instructor. Email should not be used as an alternative to meeting with the instructor.

Policy for the late assignments

Late assignments will be accepted with a late penalty of 5% per day (including weekends). If you have a legitimate excuse for a late assignment, please send justificatory documents when asking for an extension.

Academic integrity

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from Central European University is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. Potential offences in papers and assignments include, but are not limited to:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.
- Using Chat GPT or similar types of aid for entirely or partly writing your assignments.

***Please read CEU's plagiarism policy: <https://documents.ceu.edu/documents/p-1405-1>

Accessibility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. Please feel free to approach me to arrange the necessary accommodations.

WEEK 1: The case for the autonomy of the state: The (neo)Weberian position

- Weber, Max. 1978 [1922]. "The types of legitimate domination", and "Domination by economic power and by authority". In *Economy and society*, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, p. 956-963, 990-992. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Michael Mann. 1984. "The autonomous power of the state: Its origins, mechanisms, and results". *European Journal of Sociology* 25(2): 185-213.

Further reading

- Peter Evans, Theda Skocpol, and Dietrich Rueschmeyer. 1985. "On the road toward a more adequate understanding of the state". In *Putting the state back in*, edited by Peter Evans, Theda Skocpol, and Dietrich Rueschmeyer, p. 347-366. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Seymour Martin Lipset. 1999. "Introduction". In *Political parties: A sociological study of the oligarchical tendencies of modern democracy*, by Robert Michels, p. 15-39. London: Routledge.
- Bruce Carruthers. 1994. "When is the state autonomous? Culture, organization theory and the political sociology of the state". *Sociological Theory* 12(1): 19-44.

WEEK 2: The case against the autonomy of the state: Classical Marxist debates

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. 1978 [1845-1859]. "Preface to contribution to the critique of political economy," "The relation of state and law to property," "Origins of the family, private property and the state". In *The Marx-Engels reader*, edited by Robert Tucker, p. 146-175, 186-188, 203-217. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Nicos Poulantzas. 1969. "The problem of the capitalist state." *New Left Review* 58: 67-78.

- Ralph Miliband. 1983 [1970]. "The capitalist state: Two exchanges with Nicos Poulantzas". In *Class power and state power*, p. 26-35. London: Verso.
- Nicos Poulantzas. 1976. "The capitalist state: A reply to Miliband and Laclau." *New Left Review* 95: 63-83.

Further reading

- Bob Jessop. 2011. "Miliband–Poulantzas debate". In *Encyclopedia of power. Thousand Oaks*, edited by Keith Dowding, p. 416–417. California: SAGE Publications.
- Bob Jessop . 1990. "Marxism, economic determinism, and relativism" (Chapter 3), and "Capitalist states and bourgeois rule" (Chapter 5). In *State theory: Putting the capitalist state in its place*, p. Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Fred Block. 1977. "The ruling class does not rule: Notes on the Marxist theory of the state". *Socialist Revolution* 33: 6-28.
- Ralph Miliband. 1969. *The state in capitalist society*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.
- Heide Gerstenberger. 1978. "Class conflict, competition and state functions". In *State and capital: A Marxist debate*, edited by John Holloway and Sol Picciotto, p. 148-159. London: Edward Arnold.

WEEK 3: State as ideological work

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. 1978 [1845-1859]. *The German ideology* (selections). In *The Marx-Engels reader*, edited by Robert Tucker, p. 3-6. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Antonio Gramsci. 1971. "State and the civil society", p. 206-275; "Problems of Marxism: Economy and ideology", p. 407-409; "The formation of intellectuals", p. 5-14; "The modern prince", p.123-202. In *Selections from the prison notebooks*. New York: International Publishers.
- Louis Althusser. 1971. "Ideology and ideological state apparatuses (Notes toward an investigation.)" In *Lenin and philosophy and other essays*, p. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Further reading

- Jurgen Habermas. 1991. "The public sphere, the state and the social contract". In *The structural transformation of the public sphere*, p.
- Hannah Arendt. 1958. "The Human condition" and "The public and private realm". In *The Human condition*, p. 7-77. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Chantal Mouffe. 1979. "Hegemony and ideology in Gramsci". In *Gramsci and Marxist theory*, edited by Chantal Mouffe, p. 168-204. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Craig Calhoun. 1993. "Introduction". In *Habermas and the public sphere*, p. 1-14. Boston: MIT Press.
- Jürgen Habermas and Luke Goode. 2005. *Democracy and the public sphere*. London: Pluto Press.

- Nicos Poulantzas. 2008 [1965]. "Preliminaries to the study of hegemony in the state". In *The Poulantzas reader: Marxism, law and the state*, edited by James Martin, p. 74-119. London: Verso.
- Claus Offe. 1974. "Structural problems of the capitalist state: Class rule and the political system. On the selectiveness of political institutions." *German Political Studies* 1: 31-57.

WEEK 4: State / culture

- Philip Abrams. 1988. "Notes on the difficulty of studying the state". *Journal of Historical Sociology* 1 (1): 58-89.

Further reading

- J. P. Nettl. 1968. "The state as a conceptual variable." *World Politics* 20: 559-592.
- George Steinmetz. 1999. "Introduction: Culture and the state". In *State/culture: State-formation after the cultural turn*, edited by George Steinmetz, p. 1-49. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Akhil Gupta. 1995. "Blurred boundaries: The discourse of corruption, the culture of politics and the imagined state". *American Ethnologist* 22:2, 375-402.
- John Meyer and Peter Rowan. 2004 [1977]. "Formal organization as myth and ceremony". In *The new economic sociology*, edited by A reader. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Philip Corrigan and Derek Sayer. 1985. "Introduction". In *The great arch: English state formation as cultural revolution*. P. 1-14. London: Blackwell.
- William Roseberry. "Hegemony and the language of contention," Sayer, D. "Everyday Forms of State Formation: Hegemony." In *Everyday forms of state formation: Revolution and the negotiation of rule in Modern Mexico*, edited by Joseph, G. and David Nugent. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Clifford Geertz. 1980. *Negara: The theatre state in nineteenth century Bali*, p. 121-136. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Raymond Williams. 1976. "Hegemony." In *Key Words*, p. 117-118.

WEEK 5: State bureaucracy and the bureaucratic logic

- Weber, Max. 1978 [1922]. "Characteristics of modern bureaucracy"; "The power position of the bureaucracy". In *Economy and society*, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, p. 956-963, 990-992. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Pierre Bourdieu. 1994. "Rethinking the state: Genesis and structure of the bureaucratic field". *Sociological Theory* 12 (1): 1-18.
- Michael Herzfeld. 1992. "Introduction". In *The social production of indifference: Exploring the symbolic roots of Western bureaucracy*, p. 1-16. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Further reading

- Charles Perrow. 1986. "Why bureaucracy?". In *Complex organizations*, p. 1-48. New York: McGraw-Hill.

- Claus Offe. 1975. "The capitalist state and the problem of policy formation". In *Stress and contradiction in contemporary capitalism*, edited by Leon Lindberg, , p. 125-144. D.C. Heath.

WEEK 6: De-centering the state

- Michel Foucault. 1991. "Governmentality". In *The Foucault effect: Studies in governmentality*, edited by Graham Buchell, Collin Gordon, and Peter Miller, p. 87-104. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Timothy Mitchell. 1991. "The limits of the state: Beyond statist approaches and their critics". *American Political Science Review* 85(1): 77-96.
- Akhil Gupta. 2015. "Viewing states from the Global South". In *State theory and Andean politics: New approaches to the study of rule*, edited by Christopher Krupa and David Nugent, p. 267-278. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Further reading

- Gurminder K. Bhambra. 2016. "Comparative historical sociology and the state: Problems of method". *Cultural Sociology* 10 (3): 335-351.
- Jacques Donzelot. "Introduction", and Chapter 2 – "Government through family". In *Policing the family*, p. 3-8, and p. 48-57. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Lynne Haney. 2010. "State therapeutics: Training women what to want". In *Offending women: Power, punishment, and the regulation of desire*, p. 115-149. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

Week 7: "Seeing like a state": State as knowledge production

- James Scott. 1999. "Introduction", p. 1-8; "Thin simplifications and practical knowledge: Metis" (Chapter 9), p. 309- 341. In *Seeing like a state: How certain schemes to improve human condition have failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Alina-Sandra Cucu. "'Hidden reserves of productivity' and the quest for knowledge". In *Planning labour: Time and the foundations of industrial socialism in Romania*, p. 148-177. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- Christopher Krupa. "Cadastral politics: Property wars and state realism in Highland Ecuador". 2015. In *State theory and Andean politics: New approaches to the study of rule*, edited by Christopher Krupa and David Nugent, p. 99-126. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Further reading

- Sheldon Garon. 1996. "Social knowledge and the state in the industrial relations of Japan (1882-1940) and Great Britain (1870-1914)". In *States, social knowledge, and the origins of modern social policies*, edited by Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, p. 264-295. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Anson Rabinbach. 1996. "Social knowledge, social risk, and the politics of industrial accidents in Germany and France". In *States, social knowledge, and the*

origins of modern social policies, edited by Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, p. 48-89. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Tania Li. 2005. "Beyond 'the State' and Failed Schemes". *American Anthropologist* 107(3): 383-389.
- Chris Shore and Susan Wright. 2015. "Governing by numbers: Audit culture, rankings and the new world order". *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale* 23 (1): 22-28.

WEEK 8: Welfare, redistribution, and the social contract

- Gosta Esping Andersen. 2006. *The three worlds of welfare capitalism* (selection). In *The welfare state reader*, edited by Christopher Pierson and F.G. Castles, p. 154-169.
- Lynne Haney. "Introduction". In *Inventing the needy: Gender and the politics of welfare in Hungary*, p. 1-24. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Nicholas Rose and Peter Miller. 1992. "Political power beyond the state". *British Journal of Sociology* 43(1): 173-205.

Further reading

- Evelyne Huber and John D. Stephens. 1999. "Welfare state and production regimes in the era of retrenchment". Working paper no. 1.
- Ann Orloff. 1996. "Gender in the welfare state" *American Review of Sociology* 22:52-78.
- Achille Mbembe. 2001. "Of commandement". In *On the postcolony*, p. 24-65. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Partha Chatterjee. 2004. "The politics of the governed". In *The politics of the governed*, p. 53-78. New York: Columbia University Press.
- James Ferguson. 2015. "Introduction". In *Give a man a fish: Reflections on the new politics of distribution*, p. 1-34. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Jamie Peck. "Introduction: States of workfare". In *States of workfare*, p. 9-23.
- Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. 2009. "The multitude of the poor". In *Commonwealth* . p. 39-55. Belknap.

WEEK 9: State and scales of accumulation

- Hannes Lacher. 2006. "Incongruent spaces: National states and global accumulation". In *Beyond globalization: Capitalism, territoriality and the international relations of modernity*, p. 99-118. London and New York: Routledge.
- Ching Kwan Lee. 2017. "Unnatural capital: Chinese state investment and its travails in Africa". In *The spectre of global China: Politics, labor, and foreign investment in Africa*, p. 1-30. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Further reading

- William G. Roy, *Socializing capital: The rise of the large corporation in America*, 1997, pp. 1-6, 10-18, 41, 44-49, 76-77. [reprinted in Dobbin, *New Economic Sociology*, p. 433-456].
- Evans, Peter. 1995. *Embedded autonomy: States and industrial transformation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter 2, pp. 21-42 ["A Comparative Institutional Approach"].
- Charles Perrow, "Organizing America" in Dobbin, SOE, pp. 29-42.
- Dobbin, Frank. 1994. *Forging Industrial Policy: The U.S., Britain and France in the Railway Age*. Cambridge University Press.
- Michel Rolph Trouillot. 2001. "The anthropology of the state in the age of globalization". *Current Anthropology* 42 (1): 125-138.

WEEK 10: State /space / territory

- Neil Brenner . 1997. Lefebvre on Space in *Public Culture*
- John Agnew and Stuart Corbridge (1995) "The Territorial trap" (chap. 4) in *Mastering Space: Hegemony, Territory and International Political Economy*. New York: Routledge, pp. 78-100.
- Neil Smith in McLeod et al., *State/Space*, pp 30-52.
- Roger Keil, "Globalization makes states: perspectives on local governance in the age of the world city" in McLeod et al., *State/Space*, pp 227-238, 278-295.
- Neil Brenner (2004) *New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta. 2002. "Spatializing states: Governmentality in Africa and India". *American Ethnologist* 29(4): 981-1002.

WEEK 11: State/ coercion/violence

- Charles Tilly. 1985. "War making and state making as organized crime". In *Bringing the state back in*, edited by Dietrich Rueschmeyer et al eds., p. 167-191. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Veena Das. 2006. "Sexual violence, discursive formations, and the state". In *States of violence*, edited by Fernando Coronil and Julie Skurski, p. 392-424. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- Julie Skurski and Fernando Coronil. 2006. "Introduction: States of violence and the violence of states". In *States of violence*, edited by Fernando Coronil and Julie Skurski. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Further reading

- Fernando Coronil and Julie Skurski. 2006. "Dismembering and remembering the nation: The semantics of political violence in Venezuela". In *States of violence*, edited by Fernando Coronil and Julie Skurski, p. 83-152. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

- David B. Edwards. 2006. "Mad Mullahs and Englishmen. Discourse in the colonial encounter". *States of violence*, edited by Fernando Coronil and Julie Skurski, p. 153-178. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- Perry Anderson. 1974. *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, London: Verso. p. 15-42 and 195-220
- Charles Tilly (1992) *Coercion, Capital and European States*, Cambridge Mass: Blackwell. pp. 1-5, 16-37, 161-191.
- Anthony Giddens (1987) *The nation-state and violence*. University of California Press. (Chap. 6: Capitalism and the State: From absolutism to the nation-state; chap. 10: The nation-state in the global state system)
- Norbert Elias (1937) "Sociogenesis of the State" in *The Civilizing Process, Vol. II*. 909 ELI, pp. 187-194, 312-344.
- Anthony Giddens. 1987. *The nation-state and violence*, p. 22-31, 103-116, 222-254. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- William Robinson and responses by Philip McMichael, Fred Block and Walter Goldfrank, *Theory and Society* 30(2):223-236.

WEEK 12: Order and rights

- Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff. "Introduction". In *Law and disorder in the postcolony*
- Saskia Sassen. *Territory, authority, rights*.
- Mounira Charrad (2001) *States and Women's rights: The making of postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco*, University of California Press, p. 87-113, 1-13, 233-241.
- Fredrick Cooper (1996) *Decolonization and African Society. The Labor Question French and British Africa*, Cambridge UP. (Introduction; chap. 7 and 8: The imagining of a working class; chap. 10-12: Devolving power and abdicating responsibility)

Further reading (selections to be specified later)

- Mahmoud Mamdani (1996) *Citizen and subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of late colonialism*, Princeton: Princeton UP.
- Ranajit Guha (1999) *Elementary aspects of peasant insurgency in colonial India* Durham, NC : Duke University Press.
- Partha Chatterjee. 1994. *The Nation and its fragments: Colonial and post-colonial histories*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein. 1991. *Race, class, nation: Ambiguous identities*, London: Verso.
- Terence Ranger. 1983. "The invention of tradition in colonial Africa". In Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The invention of tradition*. Cambridge University Press.
- Benedict Anderson (1996) *The Specter of Comparisons (Nationalism studies)* .29-74, 265-284

- Michael Burawoy (1981) "The State in South Africa: Marxist and Sociological Perspectives on race and class" *Political Power and Social Theory*, 2: 279-335.

WEEK 13: Authoritarian states (under construction)

- Ching Kwan Lee. 2013. "The power of instability: Unraveling the microfoundations of Bargained authoritarianism in China". *American Journal of Sociology* 118(6): 1476-1508.
- James Scott. 1998. "Authoritarian High Modernism". In *Seeing like a state: How certain schemes for improving human condition have failed*, p. 87-102. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Wendy Brown. 2019. *In the ruins of neoliberalism: The rise of anti-democratic politics in the West* .

Authoritarianism: Three Inquiries in Critical Theory

Further reading:

Adorno: The authoritarian personality

William Reich. *The mass psychology of fascism*.

Wendy Brown. 1995. *States of injury: Power and freedom in late modernity (1995)*

Wendy Brown. 2010. *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty (2010)*

- Victor Cova. 2021. "On the Marxist use of psychoanalysis to understand fascism". <https://platypus1917.org/2021/10/01/on-the-marxist-use-of-psychoanalysis-to-understand-fascism/>