

**SOC 309 Political Sociology :**  
**Rethinking Democratic Participation in Pluralistic Societies**  
Grégoire Mallard

**Course Description:** This course focuses on the sociological understanding of states, bureaucracies and social movements. We will begin with classical readings on the process of state formation, consolidation and revolution and the role of bureaucracies in modern states (from Max Weber to Charles Tilly), and then explore more recent approaches to the study of citizens' participation in social movements. For a long time, political sociologists have focused on the study of the state, conceived as the legitimate actor having a monopoly to legally exercise legitimate violence. They have asked such as questions: Does the state concentrate coercive powers in society? Is the state an instrument of the dominant social classes? Do state bureaucracies have enough autonomy to check social forces? Is this bureaucratic autonomy threatening to society? In this course, we will broaden the traditional perspective to encompass questions of democratic participation in polities that fall within and outside the nation-state. We will pay particular attention to the ways by which social movements can challenge and subvert the truths created by states and the ways through which social movements can balance the power of bureaucracies when political checks on their powers malfunction. Students will be encouraged to develop an original approach to the topic and to illustrate their approach by researching cases of interest to them.

**Assessment:** This course is a seminar and requires active participation from all members during class and every week. The assessment of students' performance will be broken down into four criteria: participation in class (20% of the grade), three short exercises (15%), mid-term paper (30%), final paper (35%). The various assessments used during the class are not only meant to test students' skills, they are also meant to help students work toward the achievement of their final paper and make some progress along the way.

The four short exercises will consist in the following pair of exercises. 1) *Twice during the quarter* and during two different weeks, students will choose *one* of the required readings of the week, and they will analyze its analytic structure: they will break down its argument into a maximum of twenty bullet points; then, they will show where the text's logic is faulty, or where evidence for the bullet point are missing (max. 2 pages). 2) In addition, *once during the quarter*, students will be asked to *pair with another student*, and to present how *two articles/book chapters* read during the same week help them understand a contemporary issue that is relevant to the texts, although not discussed by the readings. They will present their results *during* class (max. 5 minutes).

In the middle of the quarter, students will be asked to write a mid-term paper, which consists in two short answers to two questions (max 6 pages in total, 3 pages per answer). Students will prepare their response at home for 48 hours (consultation of the texts is allowed). I will send them two questions by email, and students will have to send me back their response electronically 48 hours later. Students will be asked to illustrate their response to the two questions with an analysis of the issue that they want to analyze in their final paper.

The final paper will consist in the analysis of a political issue, which the readings in class help illuminate. It will involve some research with primary and/or second-hand documents: archives, interviews, observations, press analysis, academic works. It will not be longer than 10 pages.

Students who plagiarize will fail the class.

Students will not be allowed to use laptops in class.

## **SCHEDULE OF READINGS**

All of the readings will be available on Blackboard for the students enrolled in the class.

## **CONSTITUTING A DEMOCRATIC POLITY**

### **WEEK 1: Violence and the Making of Political Communities**

Marx, Karl. 1991 [1869]. Chapters 1 and 2, Pp. 13-41. *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. New York: International Publishers.

Gerald Runkle. 1964. "Karl Marx and the American Civil War." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. 6(2):117-141.

Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." Pp. 169-192 in *Bringing the State Back In*, edited by Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschmeyer, and Theda Skocpol. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*Recommended :*

Miguel Centeno. Part of Chapter 3: "Making States," Pp.100-150, in *Blood and Debt: War and the Nation-State in Latin America*. Philadelphia. Penn State Press.

### **WEEK 2: Holding Political Communities Together**

Lipset, Martin. 1959. "Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy." *The American Political Science Review*. 53(1):69-105.

Putnam, Robert D. 1993. Part of the Introduction, Pp. 1-11, and Chapter 3 and Part of Chapter 4, Pp. 83-149. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

*Recommended :*

Meyer, John W., John Boli, George M. Thomas, and Francisco O. Ramirez. 1997. "World Society and the Nation State." *American Journal of Sociology*, 103(1):144-181.

### **WEEK 3: The Architecture of Political Communities: Dreams and Realities**

Bruce Ackerman. "The New Separation of Powers." *Harvard Law Review*. Vol. 113, No. 3 (Jan., 2000), pp. 633-729; on the international diffusion of constitutions.

Kim Lane Scheppele. 2006. "Guardians of the Constitution: Constitutional Court Presidents and the Struggle for the Rule of Law in Post-Soviet Europe." *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*. 154:1757-1850.

Jean-Philippe Heurtin. 2005. "The Circle of Discussion and the Semicircle of Criticism." Pp. 754-769 in Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel. *Making Things Public. Atmospheres of Democracy*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

## **MAKING BUREAUCRACIES WORK... DEMOCRATICALLY**

### **WEEK 4: Bureaucracies Gone Wild**

Weber, Max. 1978 [1913]. Pp 1393-1405; Part of Appendix I on Bureaucracy and Political Leadership. *Economy and Society. Vol. II.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hannah Arendt. 1951. Chapter 7. Pp.185-221. "Race and Bureaucracy," in *The Origins of Totalitarianism: Imperialism (vol. 2)*. New York: HBJ Books.

W.E.B. Du Bois. Chapter 11. "Of the Dawn of Freedom." Pp.13-35 in *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York: Penguin Books.

*Recommended :*

Theodore Lowi. Part of Chapter 10: "The State of Permanent Receivership," Pp. 271-281 in *The End of Liberalism: The Second Republic of the United States*. New York. W. W. Norton & Company.

### **WEEK 5: How Bureaucracies Think: Expert Knowledge as a Form of State Control**

Scott, James C. 1998. Introduction Pp.1-8, and Chapters 3 and 4, Pp. 87-146. And Conclusion. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

George Steinmetz. 2008. "The Colonial State as a Social Field." *American Sociological Review*. 73(4): pp. 589–612.

*Recommended :*

Benedict Anderson. 1983. "Preface of the Second Edition", Pp. xi-xv, "Introduction", pp.1-7; Chapter 7 "The Last Wave", Pp.113-141, Chapter 10, "Census, Map, Museum," Pp. 163-187. In *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso.

### **WEEK 6: Reclaiming Power from Bureaucracy: When 'Experts' Rise from Society**

Michel Foucault. 1995. Part 1, part of Chapter 1, "The body of the Condemned" Pp. 3-14; Part Three "Disciplines," part of Chapter 1, "Docile Bodies", Pp.135-146 + scan of pictures between pp.169-170; part of Chapter 2, "The Means of Correct Training", Pp.170-177, Chapter 3, "Panopticism" Pp.195-228. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books.

Steve Epstein. 1995. "The Construction of Lay Expertise: AIDS Activism and the Forging of Credibility in Clinical AIDS Trials." *Science, Technology and Human Values*. 20(4):408-437.

*Recommended :*

Dezalay, Yves and Bryant Garth. 2008. "National usages for a 'global' science: The dissemination of new economic paradigms as strategy for the reproduction of governing elites." Pp. 155-180 in *Global Science and National Sovereignty: Studies in Historical Sociology of Science*, edited by Grégoire Mallard, Catherine Paradeise and Ashveen Peerbaye. New York: Routledge.

## **THE POLITICS OF TRUTH AND MEMORY**

## **WEEK 7: 'The State has its Own Truth that is not Ours': Telling the Peoples' Histories as an Act of Resistance**

Michel Foucault. 2003. Pp.46-73; Pp. 98-106; and Pp. 141-156 in *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*. Translated by David Macey. New York: Picador Editions.

Howard Zinn. 1980. Pp.1-11, in *A People's History of the United States: 1492 to present*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins. 1998. "Social Memory Studies: From 'Collective Memory' to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices." *Annual Review of Sociology*. 24:105-14.

### *Recommended :*

Dario Gamboni. 2005. "Composing the Body Politic: Composite Images and Political Representation, 1651-2004." Pp. 162-196 in Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel. *Making Things Public. Atmospheres of Democracy*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

## **WEEK 8: Revealing the Truth to Bring Social Justice?**

Elizabeth Stanley. "Evaluating the Truth and Reconciliation Commission." *The Journal of Modern African Studies*. 39(3):525-546.

Rhoda E. Howard-Hassman. 2004. "Getting to Reparations: Japanese Americans and African Americans." *Social Forces*. 83(2):823-840.

### *Recommended :*

Anne E. Kane. 1997. "Theorizing Meaning Construction in Social Movements: Symbolic Structures and Interpretation during the Irish Land War, 1879-1882." *Sociological Theory*. 15(3):249-276.

## **WEEK 9: Hiding the Truth to Bring Social Peace?**

Eliasoph, Nina. 1999. "'Everyday Racism' in a Culture of Political Avoidance: Civil Society, Speech, and Taboo." *Social Problems*. 46: 479-502.

Francesca Polletta. 1998. "Legacies and Liabilities of an Insurgent Past: Remembering Martin Luther King Jr. on the House and Senate Floor." *Social Science History*. 22(4):479-512.

### *Recommended :*

Habermas, Jürgen. 1995. "Reconciliation Through the Public Use of Reason: Remarks on John Rawls's Political Liberalism." *Journal of Philosophy* 92(3):109-131.

David Hollinger. 1996. Chapter 4 "Pluralism, Cosmopolitanism and the Diversification of Diversity." Pp. 79-104. *Post-ethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism*. New York: Basic Books.