

The Modern Nation State and its Challenges (NPOL 3202A)

Fall 2007

Time: Wednesdays 6:00 – 7:50 p.m.

Location: Room 715, 66 West 12th Street

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Introduction

What are nations, states and civil societies? Why are these political forms seen as representative of modernity? How did they emerge historically, and with what consequences, in different parts of the world? This course addresses these questions by providing a critical survey of the origins, development and prospects of the modern nation-state in comparative historical perspective. We examine its emergence in Europe and the Americas and subsequent transformations in Asia and Africa. We analyze how modern states sought to establish their sovereignty over territories, markets, and societies against other forms of rule; the ways in which various nationalisms tried to incorporate historically subordinate groups based on class, gender, language, ethnicity and region, and why these groups sometimes resisted such attempts; and the manner in which civil societies emerged as spaces of liberty, power and exclusion vis-à-vis the modern state. Understanding these developments will allow us to analyze the extent to which processes of globalization are reshaping the prospects of nation states in different regions of the world today.

Requirements & Assessment

You must read all the set material for each section prior to each class. The success of the class depends on your active and informed participation. Being active means contributing your insights to, and asking questions in, class; being informed entails careful reading of the set material. To facilitate participation and discussion you will be required to come to each class with a set of questions or comments that arose from your engagement with the texts. Class participation is worth 10% of your final grade.

In addition, you are required to submit:

1. One short-paper (5 pages double-spaced – worth 20% of your final grade) that engages with issues emerging from the first section of the course: due October 10;
2. Another short-paper (5 pages double-spaced – worth 20% of your final grade) that addresses questions raised in the second part of the course: due November 14;

3. One take-home exam (10 pages double-spaced – worth 50% of your final grade) that seeks to synthesize your understanding of the entire course; due December 12.

Course Material

We will read the majority of three books for the course. The first is Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, 2nd edition (London: Verso, [1983] 1991), a classic text. The second book is Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994 [1983]), another famous study. The third book is Gianfranco Poggi, *The State: its nature, development and prospects* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), which provides a very useful overview of its subject. All three will be available for purchase at Barnes & Noble, 105 Fifth Avenue (at 18 Street). It should also be possible to find second-hand copies of several of them. However, if you do not wish to buy a copy, they will also be available at the reserve desk in the library.

All the other assigned readings will be available on reserve in the Fogelman Library, located in the basement of the Graduate Faculty building, 65 Fifth Avenue. If there is sufficient demand, a course reader will also be made available at Village Copier Services, 20 East 13 Street (Tel: 212-924-3456).

Schedule & Readings

Week 1 (September 5): Introduction to the course

Contested Meanings

Week 2 (September 12): The modern state

What is a modern state? What are its essential features? Is the state an 'elusive' concept?

- Quentin Skinner, "The state," in Terence Ball, James Farr and Russell L. Hanson (eds.), *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 90 – 131.
- Michael Mann, "The autonomous power of the state: its origins, mechanisms and results," in his *States, War and Capitalism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1992 [1988]), pp. 1-33.
- Gianfranco Poggi, "Social power and its political form" and "The nature of the modern state," in his *The State: its nature, development and prospects* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), pp. 3-19 and 19-34.

Recommended:

- Max Weber, "Bureaucracy," in Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (eds.), *Economy and Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978 [1963]), pp. 956-983.

Note: Rosh Hashonah – no class: readings to be introduced and discussed with 'Nations and nationalism' in Week 3.

Week 3 (September 19): Nations and nationalism

What are nations? Are they ancient or modern? In what sense do nations have 'cultural roots'?

- Benedict Anderson, "Introduction" and "Cultural roots," in his *Imagined Communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism, 2nd edition* (London: Verso, [1983] 1991), pp. 1-9 and 9-37.
- Ernest Gellner, "Introduction" and "Culture in agrarian society," in his *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994 [1983]), pp. 1-8 and 8-19.
- Eric J. Hobsbawm, "Introduction," in his *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: programme, myth, reality, 2nd Canto edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 1-14.

Week 4 (September 26): Civil society

What is a civil society? Is the notion of civility fundamental to every definition of civil society? Which definition do you find most illuminating?

- Ernest Gellner, “The importance of being modular,” in John A. Hall (ed.), *Civil Society: history, theory, comparison* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), pp. 32-56.
- Sunil Khilnani, “The development of civil society,” in Sunil Khilnani and Sudipta Kaviraj (eds.), *Civil Society: history and possibilities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 11-33.

Recommended:

- Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994 [1992])

The Genesis of the Modern Nation State: Europe and the Americas

Week 5 (October 3): The rise of the modern state

What factors led to the rise of the modern state in Europe? To what extent did war, commerce and trade influence its development? How did modern states shape the societies over which they sought to rule?

- Gianfranco Poggi, “The development of the modern state (1)” and “The development of the modern state (2),” in his *The State: its nature, development and prospects* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), pp. 34-52 and 52-69.
- James C. Scott, selections from “Nature and space” and “Cities, people and language,” in his *Seeing like a State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 22-33 and 53-84.
- Charles Tilly, “War making and state making as organized crime,” in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschermeyer and Theda Skocpol (eds.), *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 169-192.

Recommended:

- Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States: AD 990-1990* (Basil Blackwell 1990)

First Assignment Distributed

Week 6 (October 10): The emergence of nations and nationalism

What explains the emergence of nations in the modern world? What is the relationship between nations and nationalism? Is there a single theory of nationalism that can explain the rise of nations?

- Benedict Anderson, “The origins of national consciousness,” “Creole pioneers,” “Old languages, new models,” in his *Imagined Communities: reflections on the*

- origin and spread of nationalism, 2nd edition* (London: Verso, [1983] 1991), pp. 37-47, 47-67 and 67-83.
- Ernest Gellner, “Industrial society,” “The transition to an age of nationalism,” “What is a nation?” in his *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994 [1983]), pp. 19-39, 39-53 and 53-63.
 - John A. Hall, “Nationalisms, classified and explained,” in his *Coercion and Consent: studies on the modern state* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), pp. 124-149.

First Assignment Due

Week 7 (October 17): The constitution of civil society and the public sphere

What factors led to the constitution of civil society and the public sphere? In what ways was its emergence related to the rise of the modern state? Did nationalism play a role as well?

- Víctor Pérez-Díaz, “The possibility of civil society: traditions, character and challenges,” in John A. Hall (ed.), *Civil Society: history, theory, comparison* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), pp. 80-110.
- Geoff Eley, “Nations, publics and political cultures: placing Habermas in the nineteenth century,” in Craig Calhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 289-340.
- Mary P. Ryan, “Gender and public access: women’s politics in nineteenth century America,” in Craig Calhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 259-289.

Recommended:

- Charles S. Maier, “‘Fictitious bonds . . . of wealth and law’: on the theory and practice of representation,” in Suzanne Berger (ed.), *Organizing Interests in Western Europe: pluralism, corporatism and the transformation of politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983 [1981]), pp. 27-63.

Assessing the Modern Nation State

Week 8 (October 24): The apogee of the modern nation state

Was the modern nation state responsible for the unprecedented mass violence witnessed in the first half of the twentieth century? What factors explain the emergence of the welfare state in Europe and North America? Were these developments related to each other?

- Gianfranco Poggi, “Liberal democracy in the twentieth century (1)” and “Liberal democracy in the twentieth century (2)” in his *The State: its nature, development and prospects* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), pp. 109-127 and 128-144.

- Eric J. Hobsbawm, “The apogee of nationalism 1918-1950,” in his *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: programme, myth, reality, 2nd Canto edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 131-163.
- Gosta Esping-Andersen, “The three political economies of the welfare state,” in his *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 9-35.

Recommended:

- T.H. Marshall, “Citizenship and social class,” in his *Class, Citizenship and Social Development* (New York: Doubleday, 1976 [1963]), pp. 65-123.

Week 9 (October 31): Contesting the Past

To what extent are modern nation states based on ‘founding exclusions’? How did modern nation states invent the ‘traditions’ they were meant to defend? Is ‘forgetting the past’ as important as ‘remembering the past’?

- Anthony Marx, “Founding exclusions,” in his *Faith in Nation: exclusionary origins of nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 73-113.
- Eric Hobsbawm, “Mass-producing traditions: Europe, 1870-1914,” in Terence Ranger and Eric Hobsbawm (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition, Canto edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992 [1983]), 263-309.
- Rogers Brubaker, “Myths and misconceptions in the study of nationalism,” in John A. Hall (ed.), *The State of the Nation: Ernest Gellner and the theory of nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000 [1998]), pp. 272-307.

Second Assignment Distributed

Encounter and Transformation in the Postcolonial World: Asia and Africa

Week 10 (November 7): The modern postcolonial state

What factors explain the development of the modern state in many parts of Asia and Africa? In what sense was the modern postcolonial state ‘weak’? Why?

- Sudipta Kaviraj, “On state, society and discourse in India,” in James Manor (ed.), *Rethinking Third World Politics* (London: Longman, 1991), pp. 72-100.
- Joel S. Migdal, “A model of state-society relations” and “Conclusion,” in his *Strong Societies and Weak States: state-society relations and state capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. 10-42 and 269-278.
- Geoffrey Hawthorn, “Waiting for a text?” in James Manor (ed.), *Rethinking Third World Politics* (London and New York: Longman, 1991), pp. 24-51.

Second Assignment Due

Week 11 (November 14): Nationalism in the ‘Third World’

What factors led to the emergence of nationalist movements in the previously colonized world? To what extent was ‘Third World’ nationalism a result and reflection of prior European and American experiences? Were postcolonial nation states ‘inclusive’?

- Clifford Geertz, “The integrative revolution: primordial sentiments and civil politics in the new states,” in his edited volume, *Old Societies and New States: the quest for modernity in Asia and Africa* (New York: The Free Press, 1963), pp. 105-158; also in his *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 255-311.
- Benedict Anderson, “Official nationalism and imperialism,” “The last wave,” “Census, map, museum,” in his *Imagined Communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism, 2nd edition* (London: Verso, [1983] 1991), pp. 83-113, 113-141, 163-187.
- Partha Chatterjee, “Whose Imagined Community?” “The nation and its peasants,” “Communities and the nation,” in his *The Nation and its Fragments: colonial and postcolonial histories* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994 [1993]), pp. 3-14, 158-173, and 220-241.

Week 12 (November 21): Postcolonial civil society

What factors explain the development of civil society in the postcolonial world? What distinguishes it from the advanced industrial world? Is postcolonial civil society a realm of freedom or space of exclusion?

- Nicos Mouzelis, “Modernity, late development and civil society,” in John A. Hall (ed.), *Civil Society: theory, history, comparison* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), pp. 224-250.
- Jean-Francois Bayart, “Civil society in Africa,” in Patrick Chabal (ed.), *Political Domination in Africa: reflections on the limits of power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 109-126.
- Mahmood Mamdani, “Introduction: thinking through Africa’s impasse,” in his *Citizen and Subject: contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 4-34.

Globalization: demise of the nation state?

Week 13 (November 28): The diffusion of state power

What factors explain the ‘globalization’ of the economy? How does economic globalization affect the capacity, authority and legitimacy of states? Does globalization signal the demise of the modern state?

- Gianfranco Poggi, “Contemporary challenges to the state,” in his *The State: its nature, development and prospects* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), pp. 173-196.
- Peter Evans, “The eclipse of the state? reflections on stateness in an era of globalization,” *World Politics* 50 (1) 1997: 62-87.

- Susan Strange, “The defective state,” *Daedalus* 124 (Spring 1995): 55-75.

Recommended:

- Achille Mbembe, “At the edge of the world: boundaries, territoriality and sovereignty in Africa,” *Public Culture*, Volume 12, Number 1, Winter 2000: 259-285.

Week 14 (December 5): Localization, transnationalism and the emergence of ethnoscares

What factors explain the globalization of culture? Does cultural globalization threaten the modern nation state? How should we assess its impact?

- Eric J. Hobsbawm, “Nationalism in the late twentieth century,” in his *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: programme, myth, reality, 2nd Canto edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 163-192.
- Benedict Anderson, “Long-distance nationalism,” in his *The Spectre of Comparisons: nationalism, Southeast Asia and the world* (London: Verso, 2002 [1998]), pp. 58-77.
- Arjun Appadurai, “Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy,” in his *Modernity at Large: cultural dimensions of globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1996), pp. 27-48.

Recommended:

- Saskia Sassen, “The de facto transnationalizing of immigration policy,” in her *Globalization and its Discontents: essays on the new mobility of people and money*, with a foreword by K. Anthony Appiah (New York: The New Press, 1998), pp. 5-31.

Final Exam Distributed

Week 15 (December 12): Global civil society

What is ‘global civil society’? What explains its recent emergence? What impact does it have on modern nation states?

- Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, “Transnational advocacy networks in international politics,” in their *Activists Beyond Borders: advocacy networks in international politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), pp. 1-39.
- John Keane, “Global civil society?” in Helmut Anheier, Marlies Glasius and Mary Kaldor (eds.), *Global Civil Society 2001* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 23-47.
- Naomi Klein, ‘Reclaiming the commons’; Michael Hardt, “Today’s Bandung?”; Tom Mertes, “Grass-roots globalism”; in Tom Mertes (ed.), *A Movement of Movements: is another world really possible?* (London: Verso, 2004), pp. 219-248.

Final Exam Due