This seminar will explore a wide range of issues around complex relationships among three critical domains: state(s), market(s), and society(ies). This is not a survey course, organized in terms of a systematic sequence of connected topics. Rather, this seminar is organized as a collective reading course of what I consider to be contemporary classics (i.e., foundational texts that have constantly inspired scholars) and exemplary studies in the humanities and social sciences on a relatively scattered set of specific topics: e.g., the formation of the state and market, ideology and nationalism, the state and civil society under capitalist democracy, societal (in)actions and movements, and globalization and neoliberalization. While the purpose of this seminar is to actively engage in academic discussions on these topics, our ultimate aim is to search for a “better” political socio-economic organization in the real world.

By reading classics and exemplary studies, we will be exposed to diverse epistemological and ontological traditions of scholarship. “Reading” here is a three-fold operation. The first reading is analytical in that we attempt to “accurately” understand the author’s main arguments and logical trajectory that reaches the conclusion. We pay particular attention to conceptual formulations, methodology, and tools that the author employs and develops. The second reading is to relate the author’s entire argumentation to his/her contemporary polemics/literature and to situate the text in a specific historical situation. In the third reading, we conduct a critical assessment of the text by finding out what (part or totality of the text) we can adopt (as applicability or inspiration) and discard (as “bullshit” à la Frankfurt or reliefs). “Reading” means open to all kinds of possibilities and potentialities. We proceed behind a veil of ignorance, amicable to various positions, methods, ideologies, cultures, religions, and cults. As such, the only approach is Bayesian, and the sole goal is to understand (as a corollary, possibly change) the world.

This is an advanced graduate seminar. A “seminar” is a forum for a collaborative exploration of ideas, focusing on identifying what we do not know and on theoretical and empirical formulations for finding out. The pace of the course will depend on our understanding of topics; we will stop and think of new approaches if there is no satisfying answer given by existing scholars. Hence, this seminar will probably contribute little to your academic career if you already have a dogmatic faith in the same methods and same models safely used by everyone else. Class meetings will combine lectures, student presentations, and discussions.

**REQUIREMENTS**

1) **Weekly memos (reaction papers) on the required books (200-500 words)**

It is important for students to engage each week’s book in a written memo prior to the seminar sessions. Memos on the reading are not mini-papers. Rather, they are meant to be think pieces, reflecting your own intellectual engagement with the book: identifying some core idea/argument, method, and position; specifying what is obscure, hidden, or confusing in the book; exploring some interesting implications of the book. They do not have to be profound or brilliant but need to address some issue(s) you like to talk about in class. These memos will be a substantial basis for the seminar discussions. Memos should be emailed to me by noon on the day before the seminar meets (i.e., Sunday noon). I will then merge them with my brief comments into a single file, and send them to all the seminar participants by late Monday. Everyone should try to read all the memos before coming to class. Because memos are meant to improve the quality of seminar discussions, late memos will not be accepted. Failing to hand in memos will affect your grade. If you have to miss a class, you are still expected to email a memo to me by Sunday noon.
2) Term paper/project (6000-10,000 words)

Students are expected to write a term paper on the state and society. The paper may take a variety of forms. It may be an empirically informed research paper in which a research question is posed, a hypothesized answer is advanced, and the plausibility of that answer is evaluated with some evidence (N.b.: theoretical discussions must be incorporated even in a heavily empirical paper). The paper may be a critical review essay in which some body of work is reviewed with avenues for future research identified. The paper may also take the form of a research proposal in which the significance of a problem is explained, existing attempts to address it are reviewed, and a research design to address the problem is developed. A warning: The least satisfactory paper would be either the one that has little to do with the spirit/topics of the seminar or the one that tries to synthesize too much, too abstractly, and too pretentiously. Whatever format is chosen, students should frequently discuss their papers with me.

The process of writing a term paper is as follows: 1) consult with me about your topic early in the semester, 2) hand in a hard copy of your paper proposal (one-page single-spaced) by March 4 in class, 3) circulate your draft (email it to all the participants) by Friday noon, three days before your paper presentation (either April 19 or April 26) in a mini-conference, and 4) revise your paper based on comments from a mini-conference and hand in a hard copy of your final draft by May 6 (Monday). Late papers will not be accepted unless arrangements have been made in advance.

3) Presentations (brief presentation on weekly book, paper presenter and discussant in a mini-conference)

First, students are expected to make a brief presentation on that week’s assigned book (at least once throughout the semester). This presentation should provide the necessary background for questions or points of discussion to be directed to your fellow seminar participants. Second, students are expected to make an “academic” presentation of your term paper in a mini-conference at the end of the semester. In addition, students are expected to serve as a paper discussant in a mini-conference. The nature and organization of the mini-conference will be discussed in class.

GRADING

A basic principle of grading is as follows: I put more emphasis on good faith, serious effort on the part of students than on sheer brilliance. If a student does all of the assignments seriously, then they will almost certainly receive at least a B for the course regardless of the “quality” of the work. The weekly memos will not be graded for quality, although I will keep track of whether or not they were completed.

BOOKS

Many social science courses assign a lot of little bits and pieces from many sources: a chapter here, an article there, sometime even parts of chapters and articles. Articles are valuable forms of scholarly work (and you will write one in this seminar), and some kind of research is best published in this form. In my opinion, however, the most important aspect of one’s intellectual life is reading books. Books are usually not just long articles, nor series of several articles. They are essentially different intellectual products in which an extended argument can be developed and crafted. Reading a book is not just a simple operation to understand an author’s main idea. I think that the real excitement of reading scholarly work lies in the details as much as in the main arguments. Thus, for most of this seminar, we will read the entire book in this semester.

The following books have been ordered as required books at LSU Bookstore. They are all worth having in your permanent library.

## OUTLINE OF THE SEMINAR

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/14</td>
<td>Nature of “Political Socio-Economics”</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1/21</td>
<td>MLK holiday – No class</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1/28</td>
<td>Polanyi’s <em>The Great Transformation</em></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>2/04</td>
<td>Tilly’s <em>Coercion, Capital and European States</em></td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>Mardi Gras holiday – No class</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>2/18</td>
<td>Centeno’s <em>Blood and Debt</em></td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>2/25</td>
<td>Anderson’s <em>Imagined Communities</em></td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>3/04</td>
<td>Scott’s <em>The Art of Not Being Governed</em></td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>3/11</td>
<td>Tarrow’s <em>Power in Movement</em></td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>3/18</td>
<td>Slater’s <em>Ordering Power</em></td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>3/25</td>
<td>Berman’s <em>The Primacy of Politics</em></td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>4/01</td>
<td>Spring break – No class</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>4/08</td>
<td>Cardoso and Faletto’s <em>Dependency and Development in LA</em></td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>4/15</td>
<td>Przeworski’s <em>Democracy and the Limits of Self-Government</em></td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>4/22</td>
<td>Mini-conference I</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>4/29</td>
<td>Mini-conference II</td>
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Note that the schedule and outline of the seminar are subject to change.
WEEK 1. “TRINITY OF STATE-MARKET-SOCIETY” AND POLITICAL SOCIO-ECONOMICS

Reading concerning this week’s topic:
Karatani, Kojin. 2005. *Transcritique: On Kant and Marx*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press. This work is heavily philosophical (his conception of “parallax” has influenced many scholars including Žižek), but some of Karatani’s brilliant analysis is relevant for us; “trinity of capital-nation-state” is taken from him. See also his *世界共和国へ* (Sekaihyouwakoku e), (2006), Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, and his recent article that summarizes his core idea, “Beyond Capital-Nation-State,” *Rethinking Marxism* 20: 569-595.


Remedy (general reading, book-length survey and study materials on the state and society):


WEEK 2. MLK HOLIDAY – NO CLASS

WEEK 3. MARKET-SOCIETY DYNAMICS AND DISCOVERY OF “ACTIVE SOCIETY”

Required reading:


Recommended reading:

Further reading on capitalism.

We must be familiar to our origins: the historical formation of capitalism and the nature of the capitalist system. Some of the important books selected from the vast literature are as follows:

Braudel, Fernand. 1992[1972]. *Civilization & Capitalism 15th-18th Century*. Three volumes. Berkeley: University of California Press (I think this is truly monumental work, the most important achievement in the field of the history of capitalism. Three volumes together contain about 2,000 pages, but the good news is that there is a short-version (only 120 pages) neatly summarized by Braudel himself, *La dynamique du capitalisme* (1985), Paris: Arthaud).


Wallerstein, Immanuel. 2006. *World-Systems Analysis*. Durham: Duke University Press. [Here Wallerstein provides a succinct account of his famous three volumes of *The Modern World-System*; the fourth volume has been published recently in 2011 – see further reading under Week 4]


**Further reading on The Great Transformation:**


**WEEK 4. THE RISE OF LEVIATHAN: STATE FORMATION IN EUROPE**


**Required reading:**


**Background and further reading:**


**WEEK 5. MARDI GRAS HOLIDAY – NO CLASS**

**WEEK 6. THE RISE BEHEMOTH: STATE BUILDING OUTSIDE EUROPE**


**Required reading:**

Recommended reading:


Background and further reading on state-building in the non-European context:


WEEK 7. RECOVERY OF SOCIETY: NATIONS AND NATIONALISMS


Required reading:

**Recommended reading:**


**Background and further reading:**


WEEK 8. STATELESS PEOPLE’S STRUGGLES: ESCAPING FROM THE CAPITAL-NATION-STATE

Required reading:

Background reading on hegemony and subaltern:


Further reading:


Skocpol, Theda. 1979. States and Revolutions. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.


WEEK 9. EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS AND COLLECTIVE (IN)ACTIONS


Required reading:


Recommended reading:


Recommended film:

Pontecorvo, Gillo. 1966. *The Battle of Algiers* (Great visual representation of nuts and bolts about movements and insurgency, the most significant political film ever).

Further reading:


WEEK 10. CONTENTIOUS POLITICS, STATE CAPACITY, AND POLITICAL REGIME DYNAMICS


Required reading:


Recommended reading (if you haven't read these books, you should):


Further reading on the conceptualization and measurements of the regime:


**Further reading on the regime transitions:**


WEEK 11. PRIMACY OF ECONOMICS VS. PRIMACY OF POLITICS: ROLE OF IDEOLOGY


Required reading:


Recommended reading:


Further reading on the European history of socialism:


Further reading on the capitalist state:

I think that Miliband-Poulantzas debates about the nature of the capitalist state almost forty years ago are still fascinating, although some of their discussions were eccentrically and unnecessarily convoluted.


Further reading on social cleavages, class voting, and representation in the capitalist democracy:


If you have time, read Marx’s trilogy of class politics: Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850 (1850), The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (1852), and Civil War in France (1871).

WEEK 12. SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS

WEEK 13. GLOBALIZATION-INDUCED CLASS POLITICS AND SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT


Required reading:

Recommended reading:


For the recent symposium on Dependency and Development in Latin America, see special issue at Studies in Comparative International Development 44(4), December, 2009.

Selected reading on globalization and neoliberalization:


WEEK 14. WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHAT SHOULD WE EXPECT OF DEMOCRACY?

For background and further readings on the regime type and its dynamics, see references under Week 10. Trinity of the capital-nation-state revisited. Is there an alternative? Course wrap-up.

Required reading:


WEEK 15-16. MINI-CONFERENCE