

PSC/IR 259: Order, Violence, and the State

Tuesdays, Thursdays 11:00-12:20 Strong
Auditorium Room 011

Instructor

Scott Abramson
sabramso@ur.rochester.edu
Office Hours: Wednesday 10-12 am
Meet over Zoom
Harkness Hall 323

Course Description

Why are some societies plagued by endemic violence and others peaceful? How do peaceful, ordered societies emerge and persist? This course answers these questions by examining the origins of political order over a long-span of human history. Using the tools of modern social science as well as historical and anthropological material we will explore how states emerged from anarchy, how they have come to control the use of force, and the implications of political order for material well-being and prosperity.

Requirements

Reading for the week must be completed by all students before class. I will get in touch with you outside of class if I have concerns about your preparation for class or participation. All students are required to bring an internet capable device (phone, tablet, laptop) to class. If you do not have access to such a device please contact me and we can make alternative arrangements.

Grading

For non "W" Students:

33% In Class Quizzes

33% Midterm Examination

34% Final Examination For

"W" Students:

25% In Class Quizzes

25% Midterm Examination

25% Final Examination

25% Final Paper

The final paper provides “W” students with an opportunity to examine the topics discussed in class from the in-depth perspective of one or several empirical cases of their choosing (although other suitable projects may be substituted for this; for example, students may be allowed to write a paper that includes statistical analysis if they prefer). The paper will require students to cite at least six academic sources not among assigned readings for the class. You should meet with me before week eight of the semester to discuss a topic. More details about the final paper will be forthcoming in the first few weeks of class.

If you are entitled to examination accommodations, please coordinate these with the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in advance of the examination. Information is available at: <http://www.rochester.edu/college/disability/index.html>. Students will not be able to obtain special examination accommodations directly from the professor.

Re-grading

If a student wishes to challenge the grade assigned to all or part of an essay, the following steps must be taken:

- Students must email the professor a request for a re-grade within 72 hours of the exams being returned to the class.
- A request for a re-grade must explain which aspect(s) of the exam/quiz/paper the student believes should have been assigned a higher score. For each disputed aspect, students must justify why they should be given a higher grade and cite specific materials in the readings or lectures if applicable.

Readings

All materials are available electronically through the library. If they are not, they will be made available on Blackboard.

Academic honesty

Students and faculty at the University must agree to adhere to high standards of academic honesty in all of the work that we do. The College Board on Academic Honesty provides further information on our policies and procedures: www.rochester.edu/college/honesty.

In this course the following additional requirements are in effect: You are encouraged to discuss course readings and assignments with your fellow students. However, all written work and examinations must be done independently and not in collaboration with another. All written work must properly format quotations, use citations, and include a bibliography where necessary. Cases of plagiarism will be referred to the Academic Honesty Board.

Class schedule

Introduction to the course

Topic 1: Order Without the State *Reading*

for the topic:

Axelrod, Robert and W.D. Hamilton. 1981. "The Evolution of Cooperation." *Science* 211(4489).

Cohen, Dov and Richard E. Nisbett. 1994. "Self-protection and the culture of honor: Explaining Southern violence." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20(5).

Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. "Explaining interethnic cooperation." *American political science review* 90.4 (1996): 715-735.

Topic 2: Rationalist Explanations for Violence *Reading*

for the topic:

Fearon, James D. "Rationalist explanations for war." *International organization* 49.3 (1995): 379-414.

Topic 3: The State

Reading for the topic:

Boix, Carles. 2015. *Political Order and Inequality: Their Foundations and their Consequences for Human Welfare*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1–5.

Olson, Mancur. "Power and Prosperity: Outgrowing Communist and Capitalist Dictatorships" 2000. ch 1

Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War-making and state-making as organized crime." In Peter Evans et al., eds., *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge University Press.

Sanchez de la Sierra, Raul. "On the Origins of the State: Stationary Bandits and Taxation in Eastern Congo," *Journal of Political Economy*, forthcoming.

Topic 4a: Making the Territorial State

Reading for the topic:

Tilly, Charles. 1992. *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990–1992*. Blackwell. Chapters 1–4, 7.

Herbst, Jeffrey. 2000. *States and Power in Africa*. Princeton University Press. Chapters 1, 7, 8, 9.

Topic 4b: Alternatives to the Territorial State *Reading*

for the topic:

Abramson, Scott. 2017. "The Economic Origins of the Territorial State." *International Organization*, 71(1).

Spryut, Hendrick. 1994. *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors: An Analysis of Systems Change*. Princeton University Press. Chapters 1–3, 5, 6.

Topic 4c: Artificial States *Reading*

for the topic:

As a Benchmark:

Enrico Spolaore. "National Borders and the Size of Nations" in *Oxford Handbook of Political Economy*, edited by Barry Weingast and David Wittman Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006

Alesina, Alberto, William Easterly, and Janina Matuzeski. 2011. "Artificial States." *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 9(2).

Herbst, Jeffrey. "The creation and matintenance of national boundaries in Africa." *International Organization* 43.4 (1989): 673-692.

Topic 5a: State Capacity - Measurement

Reading for the topic:

Mann, Michael. "The autonomous power of the state: its origins, mechanisms and results." *European Journal of Sociology/Archives europeennes de sociologie* 25.2 (1984): 185-213.

Hendrix, Cullen S. "Measuring state capacity: Theoretical and empirical implications for the study of civil conflict." *Journal of peace research* 47.3 (2010): 273-285.

Lee, Melissa M., and Nan Zhang. "Legibility and the informational foundations of state capacity." *The Journal of Politics* 79.1 (2017): 118-132.

Topic 5b: State Capacity - Causes *Reading*

for the topic:

Brewer, John. 2002. *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688–1783*. Routledge. Selections TBD

Dincecco, Mark, and Mauricio Prado. "Warfare, fiscal capacity, and performance." *Journal of Economic Growth* 17.3 (2012): 171-203.

Dincecco, Mark, Giovanni Federico, and Andrea Vindigni. "Warfare, taxation, and political change: Evidence from the Italian Risorgimento." *The Journal of Economic History* 71.4 (2011): 887-914.

Queralt, D. (2019). War, International Finance, and Fiscal Capacity in the Long Run. *International Organization*, 73(4), 713-753.

Topic 6a: Constraining the State I *Reading*

for the topic:

North, Douglass C., and Barry R. Weingast. 1989. "Constitutions and commitment: the evolution of institutions governing public choice in seventeenth-century England." *The Journal of Economic History* 49(4).

Weingast, Barry R. 1997. "The political foundations of democracy and the rule of the law." *American Political Science Review*, 91(2).

Cox, Gary W. "Was the Glorious Revolution a constitutional watershed?." *The Journal of Economic History* 72.3 (2012): 567-600.

Topic 6b: Constraining the State II *Reading*

for the topic:

Epstein, Stephan R. 2002. *Freedom and Growth: The Rise of States and Markets in Europe, 1300–1750*. Routledge. Selection TBD

Clark, Gregory. 1996. "The Political Foundations of Modern Economic Growth, England 1540–1800." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 26(4).

Dincecco, Mark. 2010. "Fragmented authority from Ancien Regime to modernity: a quantitative analysis." *Journal of Institutional Economics*, 6(3).

Stasavage, David. "Credible commitment in early modern Europe: North and Weingast revisited." *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 18.1 (2002): 155-186.

Topic 7: Collective Action and Revolution

Reading for the topic:

Olson, Mancur. *The logic of collective action*. Vol. 124. Harvard University Press, 2009. Chapter 1

Kuran, Timur. 1991. "Now out of never: The element of surprise in the East European revolution of 1989." *World Politics*, 44(1).

Lohmann, Susanne. "The dynamics of informational cascades: The Monday demonstrations in Leipzig, East Germany, 1989–91." *World politics* 47.1 (1994): 42-101.

Topic 8: Democracy & Democratization

Reading for the topic:

Przeworski, Adam, and Fernando Limongi. "Modernization: Theories and facts." *World politics* 49.2 (1997): 155-183.

Ziblatt, Daniel. "How did Europe democratize?." *World Politics* 58.2 (2006): 311-338.

Boix, Carles. "Democracy, development, and the international system." *American Political Science Review* 105.4 (2011): 809-828.

Acemoglu, Daron, et al. "Income and democracy." *American Economic Review* 98.3 (2008): 808-42.

Topic 9: Ethnicity

Reading for the topic:

Alesina, Alberto, et al. "Fractionalization." *Journal of Economic growth* 8.2 (2003): 155-194.

Habyarimana, James, et al. "Why does ethnic diversity undermine public goods provision?." *American Political Science Review* 101.4 (2007): 709-725.

Alesina, Alberto, Reza Baqir, and William Easterly. "Public goods and ethnic divisions." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 114.4 (1999): 1243-1284.

Topic 10: Nationalism

Reading for the topic:

Ernest Gellner. 1983. *Nations and Nationalism*. Cornell University Press. Chapters 1-7.

Weber, Eugen. 1977. *Peasants into Frenchmen. The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914*. Stanford University Press. Chapters 1, 4, 6, 7, 17.

Balcells, Laia. 2013. "Mass schooling and Catalan nationalism." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 19(4).

Mylonas. 2016. "Threats to Territorial Integrity, National Mass Schooling, and Linguistic Commonality." *Comparative Political Studies*, 49(11).