

## **The Nation-State and Its Discontents**

Wednesdays 16:00-18:00, Seminarhaus 4.107

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### **The Main Idea**

The world we live in is a world divided into units called "nation-states." So natural is this order of things to us, that it is hard to imagine it being any other way. Indeed, the idea of the nation-state is one of the most powerful ideas in the modern world. It is the site of democratic community, law, and government; it provides its citizens with rights, protections, a sense of identity, belonging, and even purpose; it instills in its members a willingness to sacrifice their own lives for it or to take the lives of others; it provides governments with the rationale for exclusion, war, conquest, and even genocide. In short, the modern nation-state is the site of some of the greatest political achievements and the most horrifying atrocities in all of human history. In this class, we will explore various aspects of this paradoxical form of political organization. We will look at its historical origins in Europe and its eventual spread around the globe; at the various ideas, ideologies, and forms of social power that made its rise possible; at the ways the development of the nation-state is tied to that of capitalism, imperialism, culture, exclusion, and control. We will also inquire about the future of the nation-state in the present age of globalization, mass immigration, and supranational governance.

### **Progress and Assessment**

Everyone is responsible for attending all classes, keeping up with the weekly readings, and participating actively in our discussions. Weekly attendance will be recorded and it is expected that you will miss no more than 2 sessions during the semester.

In addition, there will be several written assignments during the semester, which will give you the opportunity to develop and flesh out your own ideas, positions, and arguments:

- **Reflection papers (40% of final grade):** Five times during the semester, you will write a brief reflection paper of 450-550 words (about 2 pages). For each of these I will ask you to reflect on some aspect of our ongoing discussions and readings from the previous weeks. You are free in these papers to write on a topic of your choosing, and you will be evaluated on the basis of your ability to (1) present a clear, organized argument of your own and (2) demonstrate comprehension of the major concepts and arguments of the readings. For those pursuing a *Leistungsschein*: Each paper will be graded and will figure as 10% of the final grade for the course. The paper with the lowest grade will be dropped, but you will be required to receive a passing grade (3,0) on each of the five papers to pass the course. Those pursuing a *Teilnahmeschein* are required to receive a passing grade (3,0) on each of the five papers.
- **Final paper (50% of final grade):** At the conclusion of the semester, you will write a research paper of about 3000-4500 words (about 10-15 pages), which will be due **no later than 29 September, 2017**. You are free to write the paper on any topic you wish, so long as your topic is based on the central themes of the course. *You are strongly encouraged to meet with me at least once to discuss your paper.* When writing, you should approach your final paper as a serious piece of scholarly research, complete with citations and bibliography: you should develop a clear central thesis; you should demonstrate knowledge of your topic; you should engage the material in a critical and thoughtful manner; you should be able to back up your arguments with reasons, evidence, and examples; and you should strive to show readers what conclusions they can draw from your efforts. For those pursuing a *Leistungsschein*: The final paper will count as 50% of the final grade. Those pursuing a *Teilnahmeschein* are not required to submit a final paper.

The remaining 10% of the final grade will be awarded on the basis of active and thoughtful class participation.

All papers must be double-spaced, in 12-point type, with one-inch margins, using a normal-sized font, and must be submitted to me via email at:

**brian.m.milstein@gmail.com**

Unfortunately, I will not be able to accept assignments not written in English.

For all papers, you will be expected to adhere to proper conventions of scholarly attribution. Any work quoted or otherwise referenced must be appropriately and fully cited. Any idea, argument, information, or quotation that you might employ from an external source must likewise be accompanied by full citation. You are free to use any bibliographic citation style you wish, but you should apply it consistently. Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in automatic failure of the course.

**Week 1 (19 April) / Introduction**

No required reading

**Week 2 (26 April) / What Is a “Nation”?**

Primary reading:

- David Miller (1995) *On Nationality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp17–47 OLAT

Supplementary reading:

- Guiseppe Mazzini (1995 [1861]) “The Duties of Man” in Omar Dahbour and Micheline R. Ishay (eds), *The Nationalism Reader* (New York: Humanity Books), pp87–97 OLAT
- Ernest Renan (1995 [1882]) “What Is a Nation?” in Omar Dahbour and Micheline R. Ishay (eds), *The Nationalism Reader* (New York: Humanity Books), pp143–55 OLAT
- Otto Bauer (1995 [1907]) “The Nationalities Question and Social Democracy” in Omar Dahbour and Micheline R. Ishay (eds), *The Nationalism Reader* (New York: Humanity Books), pp183–191 OLAT

••• Reflection paper n° 1 due Tuesday, 2 May, at 12 noon •••

**Week 3 (3 May) / Nationalism I: Imagined Communities**

Primary reading:

- Benedict Anderson (2006 [1983]) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso), pp9–46 OLAT

Supplementary reading:

- The entire book is highly recommended:
  - Benedict Anderson (2006 [1983]) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso) OLAT
- A well-known postcolonial critique (we’ll be reading this later):
  - Partha Chatterjee (1995 [1993]) “Whose Imagined Community?” in Gopal Balakrishnan (ed), *Mapping the Nation* (London: Verso), pp214–25 OLAT
- The key rival of theorists like Anderson, Gellner, and others who argue that nationality as we know it today is a modern construction. Smith was a leading proponent of the “perennialist” or “primaevalist” school of theorizing nationalism, according to which modern nations are built upon pre-existing “*ethnie*”:
  - Anthony D. Smith (1986), *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell)

## Week 4 (10 May) / Nationalism II: Capitalism and Industrialism

### Primary reading:

- Ernest Gellner (1995 [1993]) “The Coming of Nationalism and Its Interpretation: The Myths of Nation and Class” in Gopal Balakrishnan (ed), *Mapping the Nation* (London: Verso), pp98–145 [OLAT](#)

### Supplementary reading:

- The longer work of which this week’s reading is a summary and extension:
  - Ernest Gellner (1983) *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press) [OLAT](#)
- Critical assessments of Gellner’s thesis:
  - Daniele Conversi (2007) “Homogenisation, Nationalism, and War: Should We Still Read Ernest Gellner?,” *Nations and Nationalism* 13(3): 371–94 [OLAT](#)
  - Brendan O’Leary (1997) “On the Nature of Nationalism: An Appraisal of Ernest Gellner’s Writings on Nationalism,” *British Journal of Political Science* 27(2): 191–222 [OLAT](#)
- The critique to which Gellner is responding in this week’s reading:
  - Miroslav Hroch (1995 [1993]) “From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation: The Nation-Building Process in Europe” in Gopal Balakrishnan (ed), *Mapping the Nation* (London: Verso), pp78–97 [OLAT](#)
- Additional key thinkers:
  - Eric Hobsbawm (1992) *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press)

## Week 5 (17 May) / Nationalism III: Postcolonialism

### Primary reading:

- Frantz Fanon (1995 [1962]) “The Wretched of the Earth” in Omar Dahbour and Micheline R. Ishay (eds), *The Nationalism Reader* (Amherst: Humanity Books), pp274–83 [OLAT](#)
- Partha Chatterjee (1995 [1993]) “Whose Imagined Community?” in Gopal Balakrishnan (ed), *Mapping the Nation* (London: Verso), pp214–25 [OLAT](#)

### Supplementary reading:

- Our primary readings are excerpted from these two books, both of which are highly recommended:
  - Frantz Fanon (2004 [1961]) *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press) [OLAT](#)
  - Partha Chatterjee (1993) *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press) [OLAT](#)
- A third crucial book on postcolonial thinking we sadly do not have time to cover:

- Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000) *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press) [Introduction on OLAT](#)

••• Reflection paper n° 2 due Monday, 22 May, at 12 noon •••

### Week 6 (24 May) / The State I: War Makes States...

Primary reading:

- Charles Tilly (1985) “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime” in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol (eds), *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp169–91 [OLAT](#)

Supplementary reading:

- Tilly’s original (and most famous) formulation of the “war makes states” argument:
  - Charles Tilly (1975) “Reflections on the History of European State-Making” in Charles Tilly (ed), *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp3–83 [OLAT](#)
- His 1990 revised account:
  - Charles Tilly (1990) *Coercion, Capital, and European States, ad 990–1990* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell)
- An alternative account that follows similar lines:
  - Anthony Giddens (1985) *The Nation-State and Violence* (Berkeley: University of California Press)
- A key alternative account of the rise of the sovereign state:
  - Hendrik Spruyt (1994) “Institutional Selection in International Relations: State Anarchy as Order,” *International Organization* 48(4): 527-57 [OLAT](#)
- The book-length account is *highly* recommended:
  - Hendrik Spruyt (1994) *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors* (Princeton: Princeton University Press)

### Week 7 (31 May) / The State II: ...and States Make Societies

Primary reading:

- James C. Scott (1998) *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press), pp53–83 [OLAT](#)
- John Torpey (2000) *The Invention of the Passport* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp4–20 [OLAT](#)

Supplementary reading:

- The remainder of the books from which this week’s primary reading is excerpted:

- James C. Scott (1998) *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press) First and last chapters on OLAT
- John Torpey (2000) *The Invention of the Passport* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) Chapter 2 and Conclusion on OLAT
- An early but still immensely influential study of the role of the state in “reorganizing” society:
  - Eugen Weber (1976) *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France 1870–1914* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press)

### Week 8 (7 June) / Statelessness

Primary reading:

- Hannah Arendt (1968) *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, new ed. (San Diego: Harvest Books), pp267–302 OLAT

Supplementary reading:

- Seyla Benhabib (1999) “Hannah Arendt and the ‘Right to Have Rights,’” *Hannah Arendt Newsletter* 2(1): 5–14 OLAT
- James Ingram (2008) “What Is a ‘Right to Have Rights’? Three Images of the Politics of Human Rights,” *American Political Science Review* 102(4): 401–16 OLAT
- Michael Mann (1999) “The Dark Side of Democracy: The Modern Tradition of Ethnic and Political Cleansing,” *New Left Review* 235: 18–45 OLAT
- Giorgio Agamben (1998) *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press)
- Ayten Gündoğdu (2015) *Rightlessness in an Age of Rights: Hannah Arendt and the Contemporary Struggles of Migrants* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Jacques Rancière (2004) “Who Is the Subject of the Rights of Man?,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 103(2/3): 297–310 OLAT

••• Reflection paper n° 3 due Monday, 12 June, at 12 noon •••

### Week 9 (14 June) / Liberal Nationalism

Primary reading:

- Yael Tamir (1993) *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp13–34 and pp57–77 OLAT

Supplementary reading:

- Yael Tamir (1993) *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), entire OLAT
- Key statements on liberal nationalism:

- Charles Taylor (1995) “The Politics of Recognition” in Amy Gutmann (ed), *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp25–73 OLAT
- Michael Walzer (1983) *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality* (New York: Basic Books), pp31–63
- David Miller (1995) *On Nationality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) OLAT
- Margaret Canovan (1996) *Nationhood and Political Theory* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar)
- Martha Nussbaum et al (2002 [1996]) *For the Love of Country?* (Boston: Beacon Press)

### Week 10 (21 June) / Borders and Control I

Primary reading:

- Arash Abizadeh (2008) “Democratic Theory and Border Coercion: No Right to Unilaterally Control Your Own Borders,” *Political Theory* 36(1): 37–65 OLAT

Supplementary reading:

- Miller and Abizadeh’s famous 2010 exchange over Abizadeh’s assertions:
  - David Miller (2010) “Why Immigration Controls Are Not Coercive: A Reply to Abizadeh,” *Political Theory* 38(1): 111–20 OLAT
  - Arash Abizadeh (2010) “Democratic Legitimacy and State Coercion: A Reply to David Miller,” *Political Theory* 38(1): 121–30 OLAT
- Further work by Abizadeh:
  - Arash Abizadeh (2002) “Does Liberal Democracy Presuppose a Cultural Nation? Four Arguments,” *American Political Science Review* 96(3): 495–509 OLAT
  - Arash Abizadeh (2005) “Does Collective Identity Presuppose an Other? On the Alleged Incoherence of Global Solidarity,” *American Political Science Review* 99(1): 45–60 OLAT
  - Arash Abizadeh (2012) “On the Demos and Its Kin: Nationalism, Democracy, and the Boundary Problem,” *American Political Science Review* 106(4): 867–82 OLAT

### Week 11 (28 June) / Borders and Control II

Primary reading:

- David Miller (2008) “Immigrants, Nations, and Citizenship,” *Journal of Political Philosophy* 16(4): 371–90 OLAT

Supplementary reading:

- Miller’s recent book on the topic of immigration:
  - David Miller (2016) *Strangers in Our Midst: The Political Philosophy of Immigration* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press)
- The most prominent moral argument for open borders:

- Joseph Carens (2013) *The Ethics of Immigration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

••• Reflection paper n° 4 due Monday, 3 July, at 12 noon •••

## Week 12 (5 July) / After the Nation-State(?) I

Primary reading:

- Jürgen Habermas (1998) “The European Nation-State: On the Past and Future of Sovereignty and Citizenship” in Ciaran Cronin and Pablo De Greiff (eds), *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), pp105–27 [OLAT](#)
- Also available in German:
  - Jürgen Habermas (1996) “Der europäische Nationalstaat—Zu Vergangenheit und Zukunft von Souveränität und Staatsbürgerschaft” in *Die Einbeziehung des Anderen: Studien zur politischen Theorie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag), pp128–53 [OLAT](#)

Supplementary reading:

- Jürgen Habermas (2001) “The Postnational Constellation and the Future of Democracy” in Max Pensky (trans and ed), *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), pp58–112 [OLAT](#)
- Also available in German:
  - Jürgen Habermas (1998) “Die postnationale Konstellation und die Zukunft der Demokratie” in *Die postnationale Konstellation: Politische Essays* (Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag), pp91–169 [OLAT](#)

## Week 13 (12 July) / After the Nation-State(?) II

Primary reading:

- Mary Kaldor (2008) *Human Security: Reflections on Globalization and Intervention* (Cambridge, UK: Polity), pp101–133 [OLAT](#)

Supplementary reading:

- Mary Kaldor (2012) *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in the Global Era*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press)
- An alternative interpretation of conflict in the 12<sup>th</sup> century:
  - Samuel P. Huntington (1993) “A Clash of Civilizations?,” *Foreign Affairs* 72(3): 22–49 [OLAT](#)
  - The book-length version of Huntington’s argument:
    - Samuel P. Huntington (1997) *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Free Press)



**Week 14 (19 July) / After the Nation-State(?) III**

Primary reading:

- Kalypso Nicolaidis (2013) "The Idea of European Democracy" in Julie Dickson and Pavlos Eleftheriadis (eds), *Philosophical Foundations of European Union Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp247–74 OLAT

**••• Reflection paper n° 5 due Monday, 24 July, at 12 noon •••**

**••• Final paper due Friday, 29 September, at 12 noon •••**