

# WWS 300 DEMOCRACY

Spring 2009

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## Course Description

This course introduces students to the following topics, among others: theoretical conceptions of democracy, the formation of the state, democratic transitions and democratic consolidation, electoral representation and political accountability, the relationship between democracy and redistribution, welfare and democracy, and colonialism/globalism and democracy.

Here is a sample of the questions we will examine in the course: Why are there states? Under what conditions do countries become democratic? What is the role of civil society in democratic performance? What are the politics of democratic governance? What is the relation of liberalism to democracy?

In the first part of the course we will study the development of early modern theories of the state. We will begin with Hobbes, the first of the modern theorists, and move on to Locke, the primary liberal theorist. We will then examine the radically skeptical views of Jean Jacques Rousseau, who challenged what had become Lockean orthodoxy, before taking a look at the conservative approach of Edmund Burke and the radical challenge of Karl Marx. This will set the stage for the study of contemporary problems of democracy.

In the second part of the course we turn our attention to explore the twin problems of economic development and political liberalization. Why do countries differ in their level of economic development? Why is democracy absent in a broad swathe of the world? Does democracy matter? Can democratic governments shape the economy according to their political preferences or electoral commitments? Or are they constrained by any 'exogenous' forces?

We first explore why economic development has been elusive in most of the globe. After showing the limitations of purely economic models of growth, we consider how political institutions, social norms, the distribution of wealth and the inheritance of colonialism shape growth rates. This discussion of the political and institutional sources of growth also includes an analysis of the historical forces that shaped, in turn, those institutions. We finally consider the extent to which elections and politicians shape the economy in the short run in democratic countries. We close the course by looking at the formation of welfare states across countries – here we pay special attention to differences in the internal structure of public spending between the United States and Europe.

## **Organization**

The course will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 to 10:50 a.m., and each student will also be assigned to a precept. Most of the class meetings will be lectures, but there will also be frequent class discussions.

Required materials will include a few books to be purchased which are available at Labyrinth Bookstore and material on e-reserve through the Stokes Library. Books to be purchased are listed on the syllabus and noted by the symbol (\*).

There will be an in-class final examination. Each student will also be expected to submit two four-page response papers, one in lieu of the mid-term examination, the other later in the term. Grading will be based 45% on the final exam, 40% on the two short papers, and 15% on class participation.

**PART I. (Weeks 1-6). THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY.**

**Week 1 & 2. Foundations of State Power.**

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Introduction and Chapters 1-7, 10-22, 24, 28-31. (\*)

**Week 3. Foundations of Liberal Institutions.**

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*. Indianapolis: Hackett. Chapters 1-19. (\*)

**Week 4 & 5. Foundations of Economic Justice.**

J.J. Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*. Entire. (\*)

J.J. Rousseau. *The Social Contract*. Parts I and II. (\*)

**Week 6. Two Critiques of Liberal Democracy.**

Burke, selections from the *Conservative Reader*.

Karl Marx. *On the Jewish Question*. (&)

Karl Marx. *The Communist Manifesto*. (&)

## **PART II. (Weeks 7-12). THE TWIN PROBLEMS OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT.**

### **Week 7. Economic Development: Technology or “Institutions”?**

#### Required Reading

William Easterly. 2001. *The Elusive Quest for Growth*. The MIT Press. Chapters 3 & 4. (or, for those with some technical know-how or curiosity: Barro, Robert. 1997. *Macroeconomics*. Fifth edition. Chapter 11.)

Douglass North. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pages 1-69. (\*)

#### Further Reading

Robert Barro. 1997. *Determinants of Economic Growth*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press. Chapter 1

### **Week 8. Political Institutions and Growth: The Problem of Building a State and Controlling It.**

#### Required Reading

*The Problem of Political Order*

Douglass North. 1981. *Structure and Change in Economic History*. New York: Norton. Chapter 7.

Olson, Mancur. 2000. *Power and Prosperity*. New York: Basic Books. Chapter 1.

*Constitutions and Credible Commitment*

North, Douglass C. And Barry R. Weingast, 1989. “Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutional Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England,” *The Journal of Economic History* 49, (December): 803-832.

DeLong, Bradford J. and Andrei Shleifer. 1993. “Princes and Merchants: European City Growth before the Industrial Revolution,” *Journal of Law and Economics* 36 (October): 671-702.

*Dictatorships and Democracy*

Przeworski, Adam. 2000. *Democracy and Development*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 3.

### **Week 9. Social Norms, Political Culture and Growth**

#### Required Reading

Robert Putnam. 1993. *Making Democracy Work*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. (\*)

Alexis de Tocqueville. *Democracy in America*. Volume 1 part 1, chapters 5-6 (“The Need to Study What Happens in the States Before...”, “Judicial Power in the United States and Its Effect...”); vol 1., part 1, last 3 sections of ch. 8 “The Federal Constitution” (“What distinguishes...” “Advantages of the Federal System” “Why the Federal System is Not Within the Reach of All Nations”); vol. 1 part 2 ch, 6 sec 2-4 “The Real Advantages Derived...” (read “Public Spirit,” “The Idea of Rights,” and “Respect for Law”); ch. 8 “What Tempers the Tyranny of the Majority...”.

Alexis de Tocqueville. *Democracy in America*. Volume 2, part 2, ch 1-3 “Why Democratic Nations Show a More Ardent and Enduring Love for Equality Than for Liberty”, “Of Individualism”, “How Individualism is More Pronounced at the End...”, “How the Americans Combat the Effects of Individualism...”; vol. 2, part 3, ch 1-4 “How Mores Become More Gentle...”, “How Democracy Leads to Ease and Simplicity”, “Why Americans are So Hard to Offend in their Own Country And So Easily Offended in Ours”, “Consequences...”; vol 2, part 3, chapters 13-14 “How Equality Naturally Divides the Americans into a Multitude of Small Private Circles”, “Some Reflections of American Manners”

## **Week 10. One World or Many Worlds? Colonialism, Inequality and Economic Stagnation.**

### Required Reading

Lucas, Robert. 2000. “Some Macroeconomics for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 14 (Winter): 159-168.

Paul Bairoch. *Economics and World History: Myths and Paradoxes*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Chapters 5, 6 and 8. (\*)

Engerman, Stanley L. and Sokoloff, Kenneth L. 2002. “Factor Endowments, Inequality, and Paths of Development among New World Economies,” *Economia*, 3: 41-102.

Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. 2001. “The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation,” *American Economic Review* 91 (December): 1369-1401. (E)

Robert Wade. 1992. “East Asia’s Economic Success: Conflicting Perspectives, Partial Insights, Shaky Evidence,” *World Politics* 44: 270-320. Read pages 310-20 only.

## **Week 11. Creating Liberal States and Democratic Regimes.**

### Required Reading

Boix, Carles. 2006. “The Roots of Democracy” *Policy Review*.

Anderson, Perry. 1974. *Lineages of the Absolutist State*. Verso. Conclusions. Pages 397-431.

E. L. Jones. 1987. *The European Miracle*. Cambridge. Second edition. Chapter 6.

## **Week 12. The Politics of Democratic Governance. Can Governments Manage Market Economies?**

### Required Reading

Alberto Alesina and Edward L. Glaeser. 2004. *Fighting Poverty in the US and Europe: A World of Difference*. Oxford University Press. Chapters to be announced. (\*).

Boix. 2003. *Democracy and Redistribution*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 5.

Przeworski, Adam and Michael Wallerstein. 1986. "Democratic Capitalism at the Crossroads," in A. Przeworski. *Capitalism and Social Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 205-211.

Keech, William . 1995. *Economic Politics. The Costs of Democracy*.(New York: Cambridge University Press), chapter 2, pp. 22-44.

[For someone preferring a somewhat more advanced exposition of macroeconomic theory, see either N. Gregory Mankiw. 1992. *Macroeconomics*. (New York: Worth Publishers), chapters 4, 8-12; or Wendy Carlin and David Soskice. 1990. *Macroeconomics and the Wage Bargain. A Modern Approach to Employment, Inflation and the Exchange Rate*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapters 1-4, 6-7.]

Alberto Alesina. 1989. "Politics and Business Cycles in Industrial Democracies," *Economic Policy*, 8, pp. 57-98. Read only through page 78.