

Political Economy and Political Science  
Fall 2012

Mark Blyth  
Department of Political Science  
Brown University  
Location: PS seminar room  
Class Meets: Tuesday 1:30-4pm  
Office Hours: W 10-12 and by appointment  
Tel: 3-1567  
E-mail: [mark\\_blyth@brown.edu](mailto:mark_blyth@brown.edu)

This class is intended to give graduate students a thorough grounding in the field of political economy as it is practiced in political science. On one level this claim is immediately fatuous. What comprises political economy is a chimera. For some scholars, political economy is microeconomics, for others it is rational choice theory, while for still others it is an historical, institutional, and even constructivist endeavor. The distinction between IPE and CPE is increasingly blurry while the core concerns of PE cross all subfields of political science. Moreover, since its boundaries extend well beyond political science any 'cut' that is made is bound to be both partial and subjective. Realizing this, I have designed this course to give a student from any subfield or related discipline a working familiarity with some of the main 'currents' of political economy. The course is divided up historically and thematically so that you are exposed to as many different variants of political economy as possible. The alternative, to give an overview of 'what's hot' is, in my opinion, problematic.

There are of course many more things not covered in this selection than there are covered. Partly this is a function of space and time or lack thereof. However, it is also a judgment call in so far as I think that these thematics and approaches are among the most interesting, (or at least the most hyped) approaches in political economy. As such, even if you disagree with these approaches you must know what they are all about and why you disagree with them.

The first part of the course is a 'crash course' in Classical, Marxian/Polanyian and Keynesian, understandings of the economy. Each of these texts serves as an introduction to the main contemporary currents of thought around today. Classical approaches foreshadow modern neoclassical/rational choice models, Marxian/Polanyian approaches foreshadow contemporary historical and institutional works, Keynesian approaches foreshadow contemporary constructivist approaches.

Following this introduction we engage what many scholars argue is *the* major approach in political economy: rational choice theory. We spend this part of the course on a variety of rational choice theories and their extensions in order to become familiar with this core perspective. The next section stands in somewhat of a contrast to the rationalist tradition, that being the historical tradition. Though sharing a similar conception of behavior, such

approaches tend to operate at a more macro level and focus upon classes and other such collective actors. Building upon the historical tradition we next delve into institutionalist approaches. Such an approach can perhaps be thought of as a disaggregating of historical work and opening up the space for more agency. From there, we end up with more evolutionary and constructivist understandings of political economy.

### *Requirements*

Each participant shall complete a 25 page-ish paper. Its can take three forms. First, the application of a specific theory (or theories) to an empirical problem, as in a classic 'journal article.' Second, one can take one of the works we will read as emblematic of a school of thought (e.g. North on institutions) and one can juxtapose two or three other authors to this piece to make an argument, as in the classic 'review article.' Third, one can take one or more bodies of theory from the syllabus and extend those theories, as in the classic 'theory chapter' of a dissertation/book. Do the one that is most useful for you. Papers are due back three weeks after the semester ends - not before. Texts are available at the library and for purchase. If we use a lot of the text, buy it. If not, you should be able to download the relevant bits from the library.

### *Texts for Purchase*

Giovanni Arrighi *Adam Smith in Beijing: Lineages of the Twenty-First Century* (London: Verso 2007)

Robert H. Bates *Markets and States in Tropical Africa: the Political Basis of Agricultural Policies* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1981)

Robert Bates (et al.) *Analytic Narratives* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1998)

Gosta Esping Anderson *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1990)

Pepper Culpepper, *Quiet Politics and Business Power: Corporate Control in Europe and Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010)

Marion Fourcade, *Economists and Societies: Discipline and Profession in the United States, Britain and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2010)

Peter A. Gourevitch *Politics in Hard Times: Comparative Responses to International Economic Crises* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1986)

Avner Grief, *Institutions and the Path to the Modern Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2006)

Peter A. Hall *Governing the Economy: the Politics of State Intervention in Britain and France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1986)

Fredrich A. Hayek *The Road to Serfdom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1994)

Michael Hiscox *International Trade and Political Conflict: Commerce, Coalitions, and Mobility* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2002)

Peter Katzenstein *A World of Regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 2005)

Peter Katzenstein *Small States in World Markets* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1986)

John Maynard Keynes *The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money* (New York: Harcourt Brace 1964)

John Locke *Second Treatise on Government* (Indianapolis: Hackett 1980)  
 Donald McKenzie, *An Engine Not a Camera: How Financial Models Shape Markets* (Cambridge: MIT Press 2006)  
 Elinor Ostrom *Understanding Institutional Diversity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2009)  
 Karl Polanyi *The Great Transformation* (Boston Beacon Press 1944)  
 David Ricardo *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (Amherst NY: Prometheus Books 1996)  
 Dani Rodrik, *One Economics, Many Recipes: Globalization, Institutions, and Economic Growth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2008)  
 Vivien Schmidt, *The Futures of European Capitalism* (New York: Oxford University Press 2002)  
 Adam Smith *In Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Indianapolis: Hackett 1993).  
 Sven Steinmo, *The Evolution of Modern States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010)  
 Kathleen Thelen *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skill Formation in Germany, Britain, The United States and Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2004.)  
 Kathleen Thelen and James Mahoney (eds.), *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency and Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2009)  
 Robert Tucker (ed.) *The Marx-Engels Reader* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co. 1984)

### *Class Schedule*

#### **Class One: September 10<sup>th</sup>**

No readings – intro and overview of course

**NB: Make up day and time – one day early at 6pm Poli sci seminar room**

### *Part One: Political Economy – Old School*

#### **Class Two: September 18<sup>th</sup>**

##### *Liberal Classics*

John Locke *Second Treatise on Government* (all).

Adam Smith *In Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (All of the Hackett edition or Book 1 chs 1-4, 7 &8, Book 2 1-3, Book 3 1-5, Book 5 chs. 1-3).

David Ricardo *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (if Prometheus edition pp. 17-108 (on rent - Taxes on Raw Produce), pp. 183-200 (Poor rates - effects of accumulation on Profits and Interest), and pp. 259-278 (the comparative value of gold, corn and labor... On Machinery.)

**Class Three: September 25<sup>th</sup>**

***Anti-Liberal Classics***

Robert Tucker (ed.) *Marx-Engels Reader* (pp. 146-200, pp. 203-218, 303-361, 388-403, 419-431, 439-465)

John Maynard Keynes *The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money*  
pp. 4-23, 46-52, 89-186, 245-257, 372-385.

Michal Kalecki, "Political Aspects of Full Employment," in Michal Kalecki *Selected Essays on the Dynamics of the Capitalist Economy* (1971), or original *Political Quarterly* piece from Oct-Dec issue 1943(4).

**Class Four: October 2<sup>nd</sup>**

***States versus Markets***

Fredrick Von Heyek *The Road to Serfdom* (pp. 13-80 & 132-168)

Karl Polanyi *The Great Transformation* (pp. 3-177, 192-200, 223-236, 249-258B)

**Part Two: Political Economy – New (Rational) School**

**Class Five: October 9<sup>th</sup>**

***Rational Choice Classics***

Mancur Olson *The Logic of Collective Action* Chs. 1 and 2

Robert Bates *Markets and States in Tropical Africa* (All)

Ronald Rogowski *Commerce and Coalitions* Ch.1

Peter Gourevitch *Politics in Hard Times* Chs. 1, 2 and 6.

**Class Six: October 16<sup>th</sup> – No Class – Conference Absence**

**Class Seven: October 23<sup>rd</sup>**

***Rational Choice Extensions 1***

Michael Hiscox *International Trade and Political Conflict* Chs. 1-3

Jack Knight *Institutions and Social Conflict* Chs. 1, 2.

Peter Hall and David Soskice, *Varieties of Capitalism* Ch. 1

Carles Boix *Democracy and Redistribution* Chs 1 and 7

**Class Eight: October 30<sup>th</sup>**

***Rational Choice Extensions 2***

Elinor Ostrom *Understanding Institutional Diversity* Chs. 1-4

Avner Grief, *Institutions and the Path to the Modern Economy*, Chs. 1, 5, 6, 7.

Bates (et al.) *Analytic Narratives* Chs. Intro and 5

Jon Elster "Rational Choice History: A Case of Excessive Ambition," *American Political Science Review*, September 2000

Jon Elster, 2010 “Excessive Ambitions” available at  
<http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/cas.2009.4.2/cas.2009.4.2.1055/cas.2009.4.2.1055.xml>

### **Part Three: Political Economy – New Old School and Beyond**

#### **Class Nine: November 6<sup>th</sup>**

##### ***Historical Political Economy***

Giovanni Arrighi *Adam Smith in Beijing* Parts 1 and 4

Peter Katzenstein *A World of Regions*, Chs, 1, 2, 3, 7.

#### **Class Ten: November 13<sup>th</sup>**

##### ***Institutionalist Political Economy - Foundations***

Peter Katzenstein *Small States in World Markets* Chs. 1 and 4

Esping Anderson *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, Chs. 1, 2

Peter A. Hall *Governing the Economy* Chs. 1, 2, 9, 10.

Vivien Schmidt, *The Futures of European Capitalism*, Chs. 1, 3, 6

#### **Class Eleven: November 20<sup>th</sup>**

**No Class – Conference absence. Classes extended till December 11<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Class Twelve: November 27<sup>th</sup>**

##### ***Institutionalist Political Economy – Extensions***

Pepper Culpepper, *Quiet Politics and Business Power*, 1, 2, 7.

Kathleen Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve*, Chs. 1, 6

Kathleen Thelen and Wolfgang Streek, *Beyond Continuity*, Ch. 1

Kathleen Thelen and James Mahoney, *Explaining Institutional Change*, Chs. 1, 7.

#### **Class Thirteen: December 4<sup>th</sup>**

##### ***Evolutionary and Performative Political Economy***

Sven Steinmo, *The Evolution of Modern States* (all)

Donald McKenzie, *An Engine not a Camera* (all)

#### **Class Fourteen: December 11<sup>th</sup>**

##### **A Sociology of Economics or One Economics and Many Recipes**

Marion Fourcade, *Economists and Societies* (all)

Dani Rodrik, *One Economics, Many Recipes* (all)