

SYLLABUS (Autumn 2024)

Public Sphere and Civil Society in the EU

Karel B. Müller

karel.muller@vsci.cz, www.karelmuller.eu

Office hours: Any time after appointment

The lecturer reserves the right to alter the syllabus during the term if necessary.

AIMS and OBJECTIVES

Our discussions will be mostly framed within the pivotal theoretical concepts of **public sphere**, **collective identity**, and **bordering**. These theoretical concepts will also be introduced and discussed in relation to a transnational European level. Main objectives of the course are to acquaint students with the similarities and differences of contemporary civil societies in the EU. We will examine the role of cultural, social, and political factors during the processes of the formation of European nation states, their public spheres and collective identities. Emphasis will be placed on explaining the variety of contemporary European civil societies. The course will help students to understand the main historical roots of European plurality, including the political, socioeconomic, and cultural processes that engendered such plurality. We will further discuss main cultural and political preconditions (including policies) accompanying and guaranteeing the process of Europeanization. Special attention will also be paid to the role of borders, bordering and its transformation in the EU. By the end of the course, students will have gained (1) understanding of variety of civil societies in the EU; (2) theoretical orientation in debates on the European public sphere and a European civil society formation; (3) empirical knowledge of the key factors of European public sphere/s and civil society formations; (4) competence in discussing perspectives of further development of the public sphere, collective identity and civil society in the EU.

GRADING POLICY

| | |
|---|------|
| Quality participation (one absence only is tolerated, each excessive absence subtracts 3 points from the final evaluation): | 20 % |
| Presentation (10 min) on a relevant European topic: | 20% |
| Final test (5 to 8 open questions): | 60% |

TOPICS

Selected topics (should come from European studies field, i.e. also political science, sociology, anthropology, international relations, history) should be problem oriented. Students must register their topics and the date of presentation with me (either via email or in person) before the end of fourth week. Registrations after this date will not be accepted.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND READINGS

Week 1: Examining European diversity – syllabus as required reading (:

Week 2: Defining Europe and the Concept of Nation in European Cultures (anthropological and historical perspectives)

Shils, Edward (1975). Center and Periphery, The University of Chicago Press, pp. 111-126.

Delanty, G. (1995). *Inventing Europe*, London: Macmillan Press, chapters 2, 3, pp.16-47

Week 3: European Modernities

Held, D. (1992). "The Development of the Modern State", in Hall and Gieben (eds). *Formations of Modernity*, Polity press & The Open University, pp. 71-125.

Giddens, A. (1990). *Consequences of Modernity*. Polity Press, pp. 10-29.

Week 4: Models of Nation/Civil Society Formation

Gellner, E. (1997). *Nationalism*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, chapters 6 and 7, pp. 37 – 57.

Week 5: Exploring roads towards the war in Ukraine. Thomas L. Friedman (2023), A Trip to Ukraine Clarified the Stakes. And They're Huge. The New York Times Opinion Columnist, reporting from Kyiv. Sept. 15, 2023

Week 6: Central Europe and Post-communist Civil Societies

Holy, L. (1996). *The Little Czech and the Great Czech Nation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, chapter „The private and the public in socialist Czechoslovakia“, pp. 17–27.

Sztompka, P. (1998). „Mistrusting Civility. Predicaments of Post-Communist Society“, in Alexander, J. (ed.), *Real Civil Societies. Dilemmas of Institutionalization*. London: Sage, pp. 191–210.

Week 7: The Concept of Public Sphere

Müller, B. K. (2006). The Civil Society-State Relationship in Contemporary Discourse: A Complementary Account from Giddens' Perspective. *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 2006, 8 (2), pp. 311–330.

Week 8: Beyond the Nation State. Civil Societies in Europe or European civil society?

Müller, K. B. (2014). European Civil Society Conundrum, in *Central European Journal of International & Security Studies*; 2014, 8 (1).

Week 9: Europe as the Sphere of Publics and Active Borders?

Risse, T. (2010). *A Community of Europeans*, London: Cornell University Press, pp. 107-126.

Week 10: Active Borders as a Form of European Public Sphere

Müller, K. B. (2018). Active Borders and Transnationalization of the Public Sphere in Europe: Examining Territorial and Symbolic Borders as a Source of Democratic Integration, Positive Identity, and Civic Learning. *Alternatives* vol. 43, no. 3, p. 119–136.

Week 11: Europe as a Community of Memory?

Assmann A. (2009). From Collective Violence to the Common Future: Four Models for Dealing with the Traumatic Past, in Wodak, Ruth; Gertraud Auer Borea d'Olmo (ed.). *Justice and Memory – Confronting Traumatic Pasts. An International Comparison*. Wien: Passagen Verlag, pp. 31–48

Assmann A. (2007). Europe: A Community of Memory? *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute*, Spring 40: 11–38.

Week 12: Final Test