

**Agenda for Discussion. Session #4. Poulantzas/Miliband debate
October 5, 2011**

1. Relative autonomy of the state
 - Alternative meanings of relative autonomy – for Poulantzas and for Miliband. (Joao, Ayca)
 - What is the connection between the idea of the separation of the political and the economic, and the idea of the relative autonomy of the state? (Lindsey)
 - Why does Poulantzas claim the specific people, including elected officials, in the state are irrelevant? (Taylan,)
 - Are motivations of actors with the state important? (Billeaux)
2. Functionalism
 - How should we understand the functionalism in Poulantzas's analysis? How does it connect to resistance, agency, contradiction? (Paul)
 - How does the state as a factor of cohesion work? What really does this mean? (Aliza, Mitch)
 - Can Poulantzas's functional handle crisis? It seems different from Offe's arguments about the impossibility of the state fulfilling all of its functions simultaneously. (Yotaro)
3. The state is the site of class struggle: what does this mean for Poulantzas? How does class struggle shape the state's activities? (Alex, Chris)
4. What does "Overdetermination" mean in the analysis of the state? (Ayca)
5. The Miliband state/capital Partnership model: Does this resolve any issues? Does globalization disrupt this? (Joao)
6. The problem of state forms – dictatorship, bourgeois democracy, fascism, etc.: How does Miliband understand state forms? How does it differ from Poulantzas? (Emmanuel)
7. Ideology & the state
 - How would Poulantzas, Miliband, and us locate ideological power and ideological apparatus in relation to the state? (Matt, Aliza)
 - How does internationalization affect Poulantzas' model of ideological apparatuses and repressive apparatus (Naama)
8. What would be the main criticisms against Miliband's position? (Sarah)
9. Logics of transition: How does the state function when there are coexisting modes of production? (Katheryn)
10. How should we understand Poulantzas's idea that the state dissolves Class identities into individual identities? (Bob)

Some additional issues (not directly in the interrogations)

1. What does it really mean to say the State is a *relation* rather than a *thing* or a *subject*?
2. What precisely is the object of explanation in Poulantzas's theory of the state? What is the explanatory problem? One issue here is the contrast between (a) explaining why capitalism persists and socialism is blocked versus (b) explaining the more fine-grained variations in state policies.
3. Miliband's proposes a fairly bold hypothesis about conditions determining the degree of relative autonomy (p61, 1983 essay): "The degree of autonomy which the state enjoys for most purposes in relation to social forces in capitalist society depends above all on the extent to which class struggle and pressure from below challenge the hegemony of the class which is dominant in such a society." Is this plausible? What other hypotheses might there be?