**Pols 600 Seminar in Political Theory**

**Spring 2023**

**Tuesday 11:00-14:00 (JF 507)**

**Nedim Nomer**

**Précis:**

This seminar a survey of philosophical approaches to collectivities. It starts with a general discussion of the ontological status of collectivities, that is, the kinds of things collectivies are, and the ways in which they take shape. The second part of the seminar looks at political-philosophical accounts that explore the possibilities of the emergence and exercise of collective agency. Here special attention is paid to discussions of popular government from Aristotle to Dewey. The final part of the seminar focuses on theories of collective beliefs, how such beliefs get to be formed and revised.

**Requirements:**

1. Attendance of all sessions
2. A short presentation on any topic or text
3. Research (and ideally publishable) paper due the end of the semester

**Plan of the seminar:**

**I. SOCIAL ONTOLOGY: BASIC CONCEPTS**

**Feb 27 \***Epstein, B (2021). "Social Ontology." The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2021/entries/social-ontology/>.

\*Searle, J.R. (1998). "Social Ontology and the Philosophy of Society." Analyse & Kritik, 20(2).

\*Baker, LR (2019). "Just What is Social Ontology?" Journal of Social Ontology, 5(1).

\*Ritchie, K (2015). “The Metaphysics of Social Groups. Philosophy Compass, 10.

**March 7 \***Lawson, T. (2014). "A conception of social ontology." In Social ontology and modern economics, Stephen Pratten (ed), Routledge.

\*Stahl, T., 2011. “Institutional Power, Collective Acceptance, And Recognition.” In Recognition and social ontology, Heikki Ikaheimo & Arto Laitinen (ed), Brill.

\*Haslanger, S., 1995. “Ontology and social construction.” Philosophical topics, *23*(2).

\*Gilbert, M., 1997. “Concerning sociality: The plural subject as paradigm.” In The mark of the social. Discovery or invention*,* J.D.Greenwood (ed). Rowman & Littlefield.

**II. COLLECTIVE POWER AND AGENCY -----a historical survey**

**March 14 \***Aristotle (1998). Politics, C.D.C.Reeve (trans), Hackett, bks. IV and V

\*Ober, J. (2005). “Aristotle’s Natural Democracy.” In Aristotle’s Politics: Critical Essays,R. Kraut and S. Skultety (eds.),Rowman and Littlefield.

**March 21 \***Cicero (1999). On the Commonwealth. In Cicero: On the Commonwealth and on the Laws, James Zetzel (ed.). Cambridge UP, books I and III

\*Schofield, M (2009). “Cicero’s Definition of *Res Publica*.” In Cicero and Modern Law, Richard O. Brooks (ed.). Routledge.

**Recommended**

\*Asmis, E. (2009). “A New Kind of Model: Cicero’s Roman Constitution in *De Republica*.” In Cicero and Modern Law, Richard O. Brooks (ed.), Routledge.

**March 28** \*Machiavelli 1996. Discourses on Livy, H. Mansfield & Nathan Tarcov (trans.), UChicago Press, Book I.

\*McCormick, M. (2001). “Machiavellian Democracy. Controlling Elites wihth Ferocious Populism,” American Political Science Review 95(2).

**April 4 \***Rousseau (1997). On the Social Contract, V. Gourevitch (trans.), Cambridge UP, entire.

\*Gaus, G. (1997). “Does Democracy reveal the voice of the people?,” Australasian Journal of Philosophy, 75(2)

**Apri 11** \*Marx & Engels. “Manifesto of the Communist Party” (1848); “Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith” (1847); “The Principles of Communism” (1847), 1-54.

\*Cohen, G.A. (1986). “Historical Agency and Human Agency in Marxism,” Proceedings of the Royal Society of London, 407(1832).

\*Mohandesi, S. (2013). “Class Consciousness or Class Composition,” Science and Society, 77(1).

**April 18 \***Dewey, J. (2016). The Public and Its Problems, Melvin Rogers (ed.). Ohio UP, chs.1-5

**III. FORMATION AND REVISION OF COLLECTIVE BELIEFS**

**April 25 \***Fuller, S. (1987). “On Regulating What is Known: A Way to Social Episteomology,” Synthese, 73.

**\***Fricker, M. (1998. “Rational Authority and Social Power: Toward a Truly Social Ontology,” Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, 98.

**\***Haslanger, S. (2021). **“Political Epistemology and Social Critique,”** Oxford Studies in Political Philosophy 7.

**Recommended**

\*Shelby, T. (2003). “Ideology, Racism, and Critical Social Theory,” The Philosophical Forum, 34(2).

**May 2** \*Mackie, G. (1996). “Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Conventianal Account,” American Sociological Review, 61

 \*Anderson, E. (2015). “Moral Bias and Corrective Practices: A Pragmatist Perspective,” Proceedings and Addresses of the APA, 89.

\*Setiya, K. (2023). “Human nature, history, and the limits of critique,” European Journal of Philosophy.

**May 9 \***Kitcher, P. (2021). Moral Progress, Oxford UP, chs.1-3.

**May 16 \***Appiah, K.A. (2011). The Honor Code: How Moral Revolutions Happen, Norton, chs.1-3, 5.