

SOCI 318: Social Change, Anti-Systemic and Autonomous Movements¹

Instructor: Dr. Peyman Vahabzadeh

Course Description:

This course offers, in relative depth, descriptions and analyses anti-systemic movements: autonomous movements that have (tried to) break away with the state-system and capitalism. All states—regardless of their ideological underpinnings—are founded on violence and continue to function based on violent proceduralisms that justified through the hegemonic construction of citizens. The violence of capitalism, which continues to destroy all life on earth—human and nonhuman—has reached its pinnacle with no prospect of declining. This course shows how some movements have broken away with the violent civilizational frameworks of our contemporary age. These autonomous movements enact participatory democracy and egalitarian social systems. The course offers the study of autonomous movements that may hold a view of the future of humanity. The course entails descriptive accounts of these movements that are enriched by theoretical perspectives.

Course Outcomes/Objectives:

The students will be familiarized, in relative depth, with anti-systemic and autonomous movements in contemporary world. They will learn that we are not sentenced to live under nation-states and capitalism. Key theoretical components of these movements will be provided. Students are encouraged to reflect on the cases they study.

Course Pre/Co-requisites:

None.

Topics May Include:

Anti-systemic movements, autonomous movements in the world, alternatives to current systemic violence, participatory and collective action.

Required Resources May Include:

The readings include several books and articles.

Grading May Include:

Grading may be based on participation and several short reflection papers. Methods of evaluation will be finalized in the detailed (long) course outline.

Method of Course Delivery:

This is an in-person class. Lectures are a key component of the course. We will also watch documentaries in class and have class discussions. Details on the long course outline. The Brightspace for this course offers only the final course outline and the list of weekly readings, as well as the assigned essays. Lectures will not be recorded or posted on Brightspace.

¹ This online outline is only intended to give an overall sense of the course. Detailed course outlines will be made available for all registered students on the first day of class. Only those outlines are to be considered official.