



Non-State Actors in Global Politics

*2nd Term research seminar
Spring 2017*

Olivier Roy and Jennifer Welsh

Mondays 3-5pm in seminar room 4 (Badia Fiesolana)

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[Register Online](#)

Introduction

The post-1945 development of the academic discipline of International Relations, particularly in the United States, was dominated by the assumption of the sovereign state as the key actor in global politics. While subsequent decades of scholarship have effectively challenged this guiding proposition, and emphasized the importance of non-state actors both historically and in contemporary times, state-centrism remains central to the so-called Realist paradigm. This seminar examines the variety of non-state entities that have existed alongside sovereigns and sovereign states and the roles they play in supporting, undermining or circumventing inter-state order. It will also consider the critiques frequently leveled at non-state actors, and the bases upon which they claim to exercise authority and influence.

Organisation of the seminar

The seminar is taught in two-hour sessions. At each meeting there are two short oral presentations by students on key issues of interest from the readings (**of no more than 7-10 minutes**), followed by general discussion.

Students who wish to take this seminar for credit must meet relevant SPS Department attendance requirements, complete all required readings, and participate actively in seminar discussions. Students have the option of writing a research paper for the class, and if they wish to take this option they should discuss their proposed topic with Professor Roy or Professor Welsh well before the Department's due date for term papers for the spring semester. Anyone wishing to audit the class must fulfill all requirements expected of other students.

Overview of the Seminar

Session 1 - 09.01.2017.

A historical look at non-state actors: the Jesuits and the East India Company

Session 2 - 16.01.2017

Non-governmental Organisations

Session 3 - 23.01.2017

Terrorist groups and foreign fighters

Session 4 - 30.01.2017

Rebel groups and secessionist movements

Session 5 - 06.02.2017

Multinational corporations

Session 6 - 13.02.2017

Epistemic communities and professional experts

Session 7 - 20.02.2017

Global opinion makers

Session 8 - 27.02.2017

Diasporas

Session 9 - 06.03.2017

Religious actors

Session 10 - 13.03.2017

The re-assertion of statehood?