This course examines the origins and evolution of the modern territorial state. We start with traditional, bottom-up theories of the state, focusing on the role of conflict and competition in shaping local monopolies of power. We then turn to global, top-down influences, examining how changes in the international system have transformed modern state-making. Some of these international factors include major wars, decolonization, imperial collapses, globalization, and great power transitions.

The general goal of the course is to examine how theories of state formation intersect with theories of international politics.

The course has heavy reading requirements and is designed for upper year political science specialists, MA, or PhD students with previous exposure to history, comparative politics and/or international relations. The focus in class will be on student-led discussion and analysis of the readings.

The readings will be posted online as PDFs. My office hours are by appointment, 124N Munk School, 1 Devonshire. Please send me an email (seva1000@gmail.com) to make an appointment.

**Course Requirements**

1. Reading responses: 25%. Every two weeks, 2-3 pages critiquing the readings for that week. This adds up to five responses over the semester, each worth 5% (no responses in week 1 and 11).
   • In week 1 students will be assigned into one of two groups. Group 1 will have responses due week 2, 4, 6, 8, and 12. Group 2 will have responses due week 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11.
   • Responses should be posted online by Wednesday, 5pm, to give everyone time to read. These will be marked on a scale of 1-5. Late responses will be penalized 1.5 points per day. Responses not received before class starts automatically receive a zero.
   • PhD students: responses are due each week, for a total of ten responses worth 2.5% each.
   • Responses should not just summarize the readings, but reflect your views of the argument. They are a good place for exploring tensions or contradictions, drawing comparisons, pointing out flaws, or using specific examples to illustrate the strength or weakness of a text.
2. Class participation: 25%. This element of the course covers participation in weekly discussion. In addition, each week a designated member of the course will be responsible for preparing questions and leading the discussion that week. (Some sessions may have more than one discussant.)

3. Research paper: 50%. A final research paper dealing with state formation from a global perspective, broadly defined. Approximately 6000-8000 words including references and bibliography. (PhD students: papers may be longer on a prenegotiated basis.) You should discuss possible topics with me ahead of time. I recommend meeting no later than mid-February.

**Lateness and Absence:** Since this is a relatively small course, arriving late disrupts the discussion. Please come on time, and in return I promise to always end the class on time. Your presence is crucial for the course, which is discussion-based and driven by student participation. All absences should be discussed beforehand on an individual basis, and unexcused absences will be reflected in your participation grade.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a serious offense and will be penalized harshly. You are certain to fail the assignment and, depending on the nature of the offense, may also fail the class and be referred to the Dean’s Office for further sanctions. If you are running out of time, keep in mind that you are much better off turning in a late paper than a plagiarized one. See www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize.

**COURSE READINGS**

**Week 1 – January 9**

**Week 2 – January 16**

**Week 3 – January 23**

**Week 4 – January 30**
- Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and its Competitors* (Princeton 1994), Ch. 1, 2, 5, 8, 9
Week 5 – February 6

Week 6 – February 13

[February 20 – no class; spring break]

Week 7 – February 27
• Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (2012) *Why Nations Fail.* Chapters TBD.

Week 8 – March 5

Week 9 – March 12.
• Stephen Krasner (1999) *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*
Week 10 – March 19
• Political Order and Political Decay by Francis Fukuyama. (Chapters TBD)

Week 11 – Date TBD
This session will be scheduled at the beginning of the semester. It will serve as an informal workshop where students can present their paper drafts and receive constructive feedback from their peers.

Week 12 – April 2
• James Scott, Seeing Like a State. Chapters 1-3, 10
• Keller Easterling (2014) Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space. Chapter 1
• Nils Gilman (2014) “The Twin Insurgency” The American Interest

ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

On Concepts and Theories of the State

• Wendy Brown, Walled States, Waning Sovereignty

• David Waldner, State Building and Development (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999)
• Stephen Krasner, “Approaches to the State,” Comparative Politics (January 1984), pp. 223-246
• Weber, Max, “Politics as a Vocation” Part I, Chap IV in From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology
• Hendrik Spruyt. War, trade, and state formation. in the Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics
• Oxford Handbook of the Transformations of the State
• Armies without Nations: Public Violence and State Formation in Central America, 1821-1960
• State Formation, Regime Change, and Economic Development 1st Edition by Jørgen Møller, Routledge 2017
• State Formation in Europe, 843–1789 A Divided World, By Sverre Bagge. Routledge 2019

European (especially early modern) State Formation
• Thomas Ertman, The Birth of the Leviathan
• Norman Davies (2012) Vanished Kingdoms: The Rise and Fall of States and Nations, Viking Books
• Brian Downing (1992) The Military Revolution and Political Change
• Bruce Porter (1994) War and the Rise of the State
• Thompson, William R.; Rasler, Karen (1999). “War, the Military Revolution(s) Controversy, and Army Expansion: A Test of Two Explanations of Historical Influences on European State Making.” Comparative Political Studies. 32 (1): 3–31
• Nicola Gennaioli and Joachim Voth (2013) “State Capacity and Military Conflict.” Review of Economic Studies. They use European evidence to support the idea that warfare produced state capacity.

Nationalism and the Nation-State [incomplete]

• Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities
• Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalism (Blackwell 1983) chs. 1-3 (pp. 1-38)
• Leah Greenfield, Paths to Modernity
• Anthony Smith, National Identity

Early States, Ancient State Formation, Pre-Modern Societies

• Samuel Finer, The History of Government from the Earliest Times: Ancient Monarchies and Empires
• Michael Mann, The Sources of Social Power I: From the Beginning to AD 1760 (Cambridge 1986)
• The Oxford Handbook of the State in the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean (Oxford Handbooks), 2016
• Charles Stanish and Abigail Levine (2011) “War and Early State Formation in the Northern Titicaca Basin, Peru” Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, June 25

Global Legacies of War and State-Making: Bellicist Theory Beyond Europe

• Marcus J. Kurtz’s Latin American State Building in Comparative Perspective: Social Foundations of Institutional Order (Cambridge University Press, 2013)
• Steven Heydemann, ed. (2000) War, Institutions, and Social Change in the Middle East
• John Ferejohn and Frances Rosenbluth, eds. (2010) War and State Building in Medieval Japan
• Dincecco, Mark and Fenske, James E. and Onorato, Massimiliano Gaetano, Is Africa Different? Historical Conflict and State Development (January 27, 2019). Available at http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2538198
• The Horn of Africa: State Formation and Decay by Christopher Clapham (2017)
• Cameron Thies, “National Design and State Formation in Africa,” World Politics (October 2009)

The Political Economy of State Formation

• Margaret Levi, Of Rule and Revenue
• *Why Nations Fail*, Acemoglu and Robinson
• Douglass C. North, Structure and Change in Economic History (Norton 1981) chs. 1-3
• States of Credit: Size, Power, and the Development of European Polities (The Princeton Economic History of the Western World) by David Stasavage [F]
• Money Changes Everything: How Finance Made Civilization Possible Hardcover – April 12, 2016, by William N. Goetzmann (Author)

**Political Economy of War Financing**

• The Economics of WWI, edited by Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison, Cambridge University Press
• The Economics of WWII, edited by Mark Harrison, Cambridge University Press
• Rosella Capella Zielinski, How States Pay for Wars, Cornell University Press
• Sarah Kreps, Taxing Wars, Oxford University Press

**Secession**

• “Kurdistan, the International Recognition Regime, and the Strategy of Secession.” In Alex Danilovich (ed), Federalism, Secession and
• Don Doyle, ed. (2010) *Secession as an International Phenomenon: From America’s Civil War to Contemporary Separatist Movements*, University of Georgia Press

*State Failure and Civil War*


*Private Markets in Violence*

• Robert Blair and Pablo Kalmanovitz (2016) On the Rights of Warlords: Legitimate Authority and Basic Protection in War-Torn Societies

**Precolonial States, Decolonization, and Colonial Legacies**

• Jeanet Bentzen, Jacob Hariri, and James Robinson. 2015. “The Indigenous Roots of Representative Democracy.”
• Melissa Dell, Nathan Lane, and Pablo Querubin. 2015. “State Capacity, Local Governance, and Economic Development in Vietnam.”
• Lauren Benton (2014) A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400-1900

**State Formation Since 1945 (includes some international law)**

• Selections from Adam Getachew (2019) Worldmaking After Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination. [F]

*International Recognition*

• James Crawford (2007) *The Creation of States in International Law*, Oxford University Press
• The Recognition Game: Soviet Russia against the West - E Ringmar - *Cooperation and Conflict* 37 (2), 115
• Recognition in International Relations: rethinking a political concept in a global context. Edited by Christopher Daase, Caroline Fehl, Anna Geis and Georgios Kolliarakis
• Symposium ‘The politics of international recognition’, *International Theory* 5(1)

*The Future of the State*

• David Rezvani (2014) *Surpassing the Sovereign State*. Oxford University Press.