

POL443H1 S

[POL2322H1 S]

Topics in Comparative Politics II: State and Development in Historical Perspective

TIME: Thursday, 4:00–6:00 pm

LOCATION: Trinity College 22

INSTRUCTOR: Brendan McElroy, Assistant Professor, Political Science

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday, 9:00–11:00 am, Sidney Smith 6026A

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

What is the state's role in economic development? What caused the industrial revolution, and why was Britain at its forefront? These questions have preoccupied social scientists and political practitioners alike since the nineteenth century, and the profusion of empirical economic history research over the past two decades suggests that scholarly consensus remains as elusive as ever. Much of this literature takes an institutional approach, attributing Europe's (and especially Britain's) economic precocity to "good" institutions such as secure property rights. Although this argument has a distinguished pedigree, its assumptions are increasingly at odds with the findings of recent historical scholarship on early modern Europe and beyond. We will work together to bridge this gap, contrasting the work of historians, political scientists, and economists on the causes of European economic development, and devoting particular attention to the role of the state in each. Although we will concentrate on the institutional approach and its critics, we will also examine other explanations for European distinctiveness, including geography, class structure, demography, culture, and ideas.

There are no textbooks for this course. Most readings will be posted to Quercus; many can also be accessed through the University of Toronto library system. The amount of reading material is somewhat uneven across weeks, so plan accordingly.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This seminar is reading- and discussion-intensive. All students are expected to complete the required readings before each session, including the first, and to contribute actively to the discussion in class. Come to class with questions to ask or your own interpretation of the readings to share.

Grades for this course will be based on three components: participation (30% of total marks), a short response paper (20%), and a research proposal (50%).

Participation

Participation includes regular contributions to the class discussion as well as a presentation on the readings for a particular week. Students will be assigned to weeks in the first session or shortly thereafter. The presentation should briefly (10–15 minutes) review the main arguments and findings of each of the readings, identify points of agreement and disagreement, and raise questions for class discussion. I encourage you to use slides and/or handouts – let me know in advance so that I can make the necessary arrangements. Depending on enrollment, some students may be paired for a joint presentation.

Response paper

Each student is required to write a short (1,500–1,800-word) response to the readings for a particular week. You are welcome to choose whichever week presents the greatest interest for you (this includes weeks we will only get to after the March 1 deadline for this assignment), but I advise you – strongly – to use this exercise as an opportunity to begin formulating the question or questions you intend to address in your research proposal. The response paper is **due by 11:59 pm, March 1**.

The response paper should compare and contrast the readings for a particular week, bringing them into conversation with each other. What are the points of agreement among them – theoretical, methodological, empirical – and in what respects do they disagree? What, in your view, are the strengths and weaknesses of the methodologies and theoretical approaches used by the different authors? Sometimes we will read the work of historians and of political scientists or economists on one and the same topic: here, you might compare the different disciplines' approaches. What can political scientists who study (say) early representative institutions learn from historians, and *vice versa*? How do political scientists use the work of historians? Rather than trying to cover too much, I advise you to focus on one or two key issues in the readings.

Research proposal

As a final assignment for this course, you will write a 15–20-page research proposal. The proposal should put forward a novel, specific, and empirically tractable research

question related to the “Great Divergence” and/or the state’s role in economic development, briefly survey the relevant scholarship, and propose and defend a research design to answer the question (e.g., if you want to use a comparative case study approach, you need to explain why this is the best research design to answer the question). This means, among other things, identifying relevant data sources and developing a plan to collect them. I will provide more detailed instructions for this assignment over the course of the semester. The research proposal is **due by 11:59 pm, April 4.**

WEEKS AT A GLANCE

Week	Date	Topic	Notes
1	January 12	History, historiography, and political science	
2	January 19	Early modern politics: traditional approaches	
3	January 26	Early modern politics: revisionist approaches	
4	February 2	The “strong but limited” state	
5	February 9	Representative institutions	
6	February 16	Elites and foundations of political stability	
7	February 23	Winter reading week	No seminar
8	March 2	Agrarian class structure	Response paper due 11:59 pm, March 1
9	March 9	Demography and family structure	
10	March 16	Society, civic organization, and public goods	
11	March 23	Ideas and culture	
12	March 30	Developmental states in theory and history	

13	April 6	Escapes from the periphery: failed and successful	Research proposal due 11:59 pm, April 4
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SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

1. History, historiography, and political science (January 12)

- Jørgen Møller, “Feet of Clay? How to Review Political Science Papers That Make Use of the Work of Historians,” in *PS: Political Science & Politics* 53.2 (2020), pp. 253–257.
- Jørgen Møller and Svend-Erik Skaaning, “The Ulysses Principle: A Criterial Framework for Reducing Bias When Enlisting the Work of Historians,” in *Sociological Methods & Research* 50.1 (2021), pp. 103–134.
- “Arenas in Global History: Dating the Great Divergence,” exchange in *Journal of Global History* 16.2 (2021). Read the introductory article by Jack Goldstone (“Dating the Great Divergence”) and Stephen Broadberry’s rejoinder (“Historical National Accounting and Dating the Great Divergence”). Skim the other contributions.

2. Early modern politics: traditional approaches (January 19)

- Otto Hintze, “The Hohenzollern and the Nobility,” and “The Formation of States and Constitutional Development,” in Felix Gilbert and Robert M. Berdahl, eds., *The Historical Essays of Otto Hintze* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 33–63, 157–177.
- Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation,” in David Owen and Tracy B. Strong, eds., Rodney Livingstone, trans., *The Vocation Lectures* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2004), pp. 32–94. Read to the end of the first paragraph on p. 76.
- Thomas Ertman, *Birth of the Leviathan: Building States and Regimes in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), chap. 1, pp. 1–34.

3. Early modern politics: revisionist approaches (January 26)

- Nicholas Henshall, “Early Modern Absolutism, 1550–1700: Political Reality or Propaganda?” in Ronald G. Asch and Heinz Duchhardt, eds., *Der Absolutismus – ein Mythos? Strukturwandel monarchischer Herrschaft in West- und Mitteleuropa (ca. 1550–1700)* (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna: Böhlau-Verlag, 1996), pp. 25–56.

- Robert von Friedeburg and John Morrill, “Introduction,” and John Morrill, “Dynasties, Realms, Peoples and State Formation, 1500–1720,” in von Friedeburg and Morrill, eds., *Monarchy Transformed: Princes and Their Elites in Early Modern Western Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 1–13, 17–43.
- Peter H. Wilson, “Still a Monstrosity? Some Reflections on Early Modern German Statehood,” in *Historical Journal* 49.2 (2006), pp. 565–576.

4. The “strong but limited” state (February 2)

- Douglass C. North and Barry R. Weingast, “Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth Century England,” in *Journal of Economic History* 49.4 (1989), pp. 803–832.
- Bruce G. Carruthers, “Politics, Popery, and Property: A Comment on North and Weingast,” in *Journal of Economic History* 50.3 (1990), pp. 693–698.
- Julian Hoppit, “Compulsion, Compensation and Property Rights in Britain, 1688–1833,” in *Past & Present* 210 (2011), pp. 93–128.
- Pranab Bardhan, “State and Development: The Need for a Reappraisal of the Current Literature,” in *Journal of Economic Literature* 54.3 (2016), pp. 862–892.

5. Representative institutions (February 9)

- Jan Luiten van Zanden, Eltjo Buringh, and Martin Bosker, “The Rise and Decline of European Parliaments, 1188–1789,” in *Economic History Review* 65.3 (2012), pp. 835–861.
- Scott Abramson and Carles Boix, “Endogenous Parliaments: The Domestic and International Roots of Long-Term Economic Growth and Executive Constraints in Europe,” in *International Organization* 73.4 (2019), pp. 793–837.
- Jonathan Doucette, “Parliamentary Constraints and Long-Term Development: Evidence from the Duchy of Württemberg,” in *American Journal of Political Science* (forthcoming): <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12700>.
- William D. Godsey, “Habsburg Government and Intermediary Authority under Joseph II (1780–90): The Estates of Lower Austria in Comparative Perspective,” in *Central European History* 46.4 (2014), pp. 699–740.
- Brendan McElroy, “Representation, Property Rights, and Growth Revisited: Or, Karl Marx Meets Gary Cox” (unpublished working paper).

6. Elites and foundations of political stability (February 16)

- Lisa Blaydes and Eric Chaney, “The Feudal Revolution and Europe’s Rise: Political Divergence of the Christian West and the Muslim World before 1500 CE,” in *American Political Science Review* 107.1 (2013), pp. 16–34.
- Yuhua Wang, “Sons and Lovers: Political Stability in China and Europe before the Great Divergence.” Working paper, available at Social Science Research Network (2018): <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3058065>.
- Steven C. A. Pincus and James A. Robinson, “What Really Happened during the Glorious Revolution?” Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research, working paper no. 17206 (2011): <https://www.nber.org/papers/w17206>.
- Hamish Scott, “Dynastic Monarchy and the Consolidation of Aristocracy during Europe’s Long Seventeenth Century,” in von Friedeburg and Morrill, *Monarchy Transformed* (cf. week 3), chap. 3, pp. 44–86.
- Yuhua Wang, “State and Society 2.0: Toward Fourth-Generation Theories of the State,” in *Comparative Politics* 54.1 (2021), pp. 175–198.

7. Winter reading week (February 23)

8. Agrarian class structure (March 2)

- Robert Brenner, “The Social Basis of Economic Development,” in John Roemer, ed., *Analytical Marxism* (Cambridge, Paris: Cambridge University Press, Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l’homme, 1986), pp. 23–53.
- Tom Scott, “The Agrarian West,” and Edgar Melton, “The Agrarian East,” in Hamish Scott, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern European History, 1350–1750: Peoples and Place* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), chap. 15–16, pp. 398–454.
- Andrei Markevich and Ekaterina Zhuravskaya, “The Economic Effects of the Abolition of Serfdom: Evidence from the Russian Empire,” in *American Economic Review* 108.4 (2018), pp. 1074–1117.
- Carsten Porskrog Rasmussen, “Innovative Feudalism: The Development of Dairy Farming and *Koppelwirtschaft* on Manors in Schleswig-Holstein in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” in *Agricultural History Review* 58.2 (2010), pp. 172–190.

9. Demography and family structure (March 9)

- Mikołaj Szołtysek, “Households and Family Systems,” in Hamish Scott, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern European History, 1350–1750: Peoples and Place* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 313–341.
- Tracy Dennison and Sheilagh Ogilvie, “Does the European Marriage Pattern Explain Economic Growth?” in *Journal of Economic History* 74.3 (2014), pp. 651–693.
- Jan Luiten van Zanden, “Conclusion: The EMP in Eurasian Perspective,” in van Zanden, Tine De Moor, and Sarah Carmichael, *Capital Women: The European Marriage Pattern, Female Empowerment, and Economic Development in Western Europe, 1300–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), chap. 9, pp. 223–244.

10. Society, civic organization, and public goods (March 16)

- Sheilagh Ogilvie, “The State in Germany: A Non-Prussian View,” in John Brewer and Eckhart Hellmuth, eds., *Rethinking Leviathan: The Eighteenth-Century State in Britain and Germany* (Oxford, London: Oxford University Press, German Historical Institute, 1999), pp. 167–202.
- Tine De Moor, *The Dilemma of the Commoners: Understanding the Use of Common-Pool Resources in Long-Term Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), introduction and chap. 1, pp. 1–60.
- Jonathan Healey, “Coping with Risk in the Seventeenth Century – The First Age of the English Poor Law: A Regional Study,” and R. Bin Wong, “Coping with Poverty and Famine: Material Welfare, Public Goods, and Chinese Approaches to Governance,” in Masayuki Tanimoto and R. Bin Wong, eds., *Public Goods Provision in the Early Modern Economy: Comparative Perspectives from Japan, China, and Europe* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019), pp. 100–117, 130–144.

11. Ideas and culture (March 23)

- Marc Raeff, “The Well-Ordered Police State and the Development of Modernity in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Europe: An Attempt at a Comparative Approach,” in *American Historical Review* 80.5 (1975), pp. 1221–1243.
- Paul Slack, *The Invention of Improvement: Information and Material Progress in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), chap. 1, 7–8, pp. 1–14, 215–264.

12. Developmental states in theory and history (March 30)

- Peter Evans, *Embedded Autonomy: States and Industrial Transformation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), chap. 1–4, pp. 3–98. Read to the end of p. 81.
- Stephan Haggard, *Developmental States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), chap. 1–4, pp. 1–70.
- Wolfgang Streeck, “Beneficial Constraints: On the Economic Limits of Rational Voluntarism,” in J. Rogers Hollingsworth and Robert Boyer, eds., *Contemporary Capitalism: The Embeddedness of Institutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 197–219.

13. Escapes from the periphery: failed and successful (April 6)

- Stephan Haggard, *Developmental States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), chap. 5–6, pp. 70–95.
- Jean Batou, “Nineteenth-Century Attempted Escapes from the Periphery: The Cases of Egypt and Paraguay,” in *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 16.3 (1993), pp. 279–318.
- Laura Panza and Jeffrey G. Williamson, “Did Muhammad Ali Foster Industrialization in Early Nineteenth-Century Egypt?” in *Economic History Review* 68.1 (2015), pp. 79–100.
- Richard F. Doner and Ben Ross Schneider, “The Middle-Income Trap: More Politics than Economics,” in *World Politics* 68.4 (2016), pp. 608–644.
- Richard F. Doner and Ben Ross Schneider, “Technical Education in the Middle Income Trap: Building Coalitions for Skill Formation,” in *Journal of Development Studies* 56.4 (2020), pp. 680–697.

COURSE POLICIES

Office hours. No appointment is needed for regular office hours. If you cannot make regular office hours but would like to meet, email me to schedule an appointment. I cannot guarantee that I will be available to meet outside of regular office hours.

Email. Consult the syllabus and Quercus before emailing me with questions. Email correspondence should be used for organizational questions only; substantive questions about the course material are best addressed to me in class or office hours.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will be dealt with accordingly. For further clarification and information, please see the University of Toronto’s policy on Plagiarism at <https://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize/>. This course uses anti-plagiarism software.

Anti-plagiarism software. Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Extensions. Extensions may be granted in extraordinary circumstances. I will only consider requests for extensions made during class or in office hours, not requests submitted by email, except in cases of illness or family emergency. I will only consider requests for extensions made more than one week before the assignment due date.

Late and missed assignments. Late assignments will be subject to a penalty of 5% of total marks for the assignment per day; this includes weekends. Assignments submitted more than five calendar days after the deadline will receive a grade of zero, as will any work handed in after the assignment in question has been returned to the class. I do not make accommodations for late registration in the course.

Accessibility needs. Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, feel free to approach me and/or Accessibility Services (<https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as/contact-us>) as soon as possible.

Equity statement. The University of Toronto is committed to equity and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. As an instructor, I will neither condone nor tolerate behavior that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual in this course and wish to be alerted to any attempt to create an intimidating or hostile environment. It is our collective responsibility to create a space that is inclusive and welcomes discussion. Discrimination, harassment and hate speech will not be tolerated. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns you may contact the U of T Equity and Diversity officer.