

MGCS 5003
The Political Economy of State-formation

Professor Wenkai He

Course Description

This course integrates social scientific studies of the state and historical scholarship on the process of state formation and encourages the students to deepen the understanding of the political nature of the state and come up with new projects in the study of state-building in China. The theoretical study of the state consists of works in fields such as political theory, comparative politics and sociology. Historical cases are mainly drawn from the experiences of state formation of England, China, and Japan, three countries that have long and continuous histories in state formation from the early modern to modern time.

Requirements:

1. Weekly response papers (one page) [20 percent]
 2. Class preparedness and participation in the form of in-class presentation [20 percent]
 3. Final term paper [60 percent]
- 10-12 double-spaced paper, topic should be related to the process of state formation.

Class Schedule

NO. THEME

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| L1 | What is the state: the political perspective? |
| L2 | What does the state do: the political economy perspective. |
| L3 | Infrastructural capacities of the state |
| L4 | Wars and State formation |
| L5 | Political negotiation and taxation in state formation |
| L6 | Political representativeness and state formation |
| L7 | Institutions of political credibility in state formation |
| L8 | Bureaucracy and state formation |
| L9 | Bureaucracy and state formation in Prussia |
| L10 | Centralization in public finance and state formation |
| L11 | Infrastructure capacities and state formation in the modern world |

Major Readings

Quentin Skinner, "The State," in *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, ed. Terence Ball, James Farr, and Russell L. Hanson (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

Philip T. Hoffman, "Why was it Europeans who conquered the world?" *Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 72, No. 3 (September 2012): 601-633.

Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, 2 vols. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986–1993), pp. 358-509.

Brian Downing, *The Military Revolution and Political Change* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), chapters 1-3.

Jean-Laurent Rosenthal, "The Political Economy of Absolutism Reconsidered," in Robert H. Bates et. al. eds., *Analytic Narratives* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998).