



MAX WEBER MULTIDISCIPLINARY WORKSHOP

State-building in Non-democratic Societies

European University Institute | May 6, 2019

Badia Fiesolana, Theatre

■ Organisation

Keynote speaker: Matthias vom Hau (Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals)

Organizers: Per Andersson (SPS)
Rémi Dewière (HEC)
Benoît Maréchaux (HEC)
Corina Mavrodin (HEC)
Andrea Papadia (RSC)
Christopher Roberts (LAW)

■ Abstract

Successful state-building and the development of state capacity are key challenges for today's developing countries. However, we still only partially understand how modern states arise and obtain their administrative capabilities, including the ability to tax and provide high-quality social services. In particular, the political, social, institutional, and economic factors that influence these processes are still widely debated.

While there is a wealth of research on democracy and state-building, we know much less about state building in non-democratic settings. This workshop will bring together scholars from different disciplines – using a range of scientific methods and empirical case studies with a wide geographical and temporal scope – to discuss recent work related to past and present state building in non-democratic states. The purpose of the workshop is to start a cross-disciplinary conversation (including history, political science, law and economics) about the academic challenges in the literature on state-building, and some of the problems facing today's developing countries. The workshop will be of interest to anyone concerned with state-building and institutions in a broad sense.

■ Programme

09:15 – 09:30 Welcome and coffee

09:30 – 10:30 **KEYNOTE LECTURE**

By Matthias vom Hau (Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals)

'Beyond Democracy: Unpacking the Politics of State Performance'

Abstract

Studying state-building inevitably raises questions about state capacity—why have states in some parts of the world become more effective at providing valued social goods than in others. In order to account for variations in the development of state capacity existing research tends to privilege structural and historical factors such as geography, population characteristics, and the legacies of (colonial) institutions and international wars. If concerned with political factors at all, scholars usually focus on the implications of political regimes for state-building. As such, we are reasonably well-equipped to explain enduring long-term differences between what democratic versus authoritarian states are able to accomplish. But we lack the necessary theoretical tools to explain mid- and short-term changes in state-building, and to do so effectively across a variety of historical time periods, including those when liberal democracy was still rather an exception than the norm. In response, this keynote develops a novel approach that moves beyond the “regime question” and brings a more dynamic perspective. I start by making a distinction between state capacity (understood as the quality of bureaucracy) and state performance (understood as what states actually do with their organizational capabilities). I further suggest that politics matters in how state capacity is deployed and for what ends (Centeno et al. 2017). To unpack this claim I combine insights from political settlements analysis, coalition-based approaches, and power resources theory and explore the likely impact of different power configurations on state performance. Specifically, I analyze (1) the political cohesion of the governing coalition, that is, the groups in control of political authority and state resources, and (2) its social foundation, or the amount of support and resistance the governing coalition faces from the wider population. This focus on power configurations complements existing research on the factors influencing the development of state capacity and offers a more plausible theoretical basis for understanding the politics of state performance than the prevailing focus on democracy; this is critical given the extent to which state performance directly shapes development outcomes. Initial evidence to illustrate the insights and limitations of the framework will be drawn from comparative case studies of resource governance and maternal health provision in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America.

10:30 – 10:45 *Coffee break*

10:45 – 12:45 **SESSION 1. Fiscal capacity, political constraints and warfare**

Chair: Andrea Papadia (EUI MWF/RSC)

Per Andersson (EUI MWF/SPS) ‘Fiscal Capacity in Non-Democratic States’. **Discussant:** David Le Bris.

David Le Bris (Toulouse Business School) ‘Constraints on the Executive: a Reappraisal of the Ancien Régime’. **Discussant:** Benoît Maréchaux.

Benoît Maréchaux (EUI MWF/HEC) ‘Business organization in the Mediterranean Sea: the Genoese galley entrepreneurs at the service of the Spanish empire (16th-17th centuries)’. **Discussant:** Oriol Sabaté.

Oriol Sabaté (Lund University) ‘Fiscal capacity in times of war: Bolivia, Chile, and Peru during the War of the Pacific (1879-1883)’. **Discussant:** Per Andersson.

12.45 – 14.15 *Lunch (upon invitation)*



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14:15 – 16:15

SESSION 2. State expenditures, ethnicity and economic development

Chair: Per Andersson (EUI MWF/SPS)

Alfonso Herranz Loncán (University of Barcelona) ‘Military spending as a coup-proofing strategy: opening the ‘black box’ for Spain (1850-1915)’.

Discussant: Andrea Papadia

Andrea Papadia (EUI MWF/RSC) ‘Slaves, Migrants and Development in Brazil, 1872-1923’. **Discussant:** Morten Jerven

Leonard Kukić (Universidad Carlos III de Madrid) ‘The Last Yugoslavs: Ethnic Diversity, National Identity, and Civil War’. **Discussant:** Alfonso Herranz Loncán.

Morten Jerven (Trinity College Dublin/Lund University) ‘Measuring the State in Africa’. **Discussant:** Rémi Dewièrè.

16.15 – 16.30

Coffee Break

16:30 – 18:00

SESSION 3. State-building, rule of law and international relations

Chair: Benoît Maréchaux (EUI MWF/HEC)

Rémi Dewièrè (EUI MWF/HEC) ‘Life and death of a precolonial African frontier: Kanem and Borno in 1574-1578 (Nigeria-Chad)’. **Discussant:** Christopher Roberts.

Christopher Roberts (EUI MWF/LAW) ‘From the State of Emergency to the Rule of Law: The Evolution of Repressive Legality in the British Empire’. **Discussant:** Christy M. Brandly.

Christy M. Brandly (University of Chicago) ‘Myth-making and State-building in Post-Reconstruction America and Post-Soviet Russia’. **Discussant:** Leonard Kukić.