

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Ancient State Formation

Graduate Seminar

CLASSHIS 214A-B

Autumn quarter (214A): M 3.15-5.05

Winter quarter (214B): Tu 2.15-4.05

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Rationale

State formation is a major field in world history, and cross-cultural comparative studies flourish among historical sociologists, political scientists, economists, and prehistorians. Their core questions vary. Some ask why humanity moved away from egalitarian communities toward stratified ones; others, why centralized power has taken the particular forms it has in different parts of the world; others still, how individual agency and structural constraints interact in the centralization of power. Every dimension of the human experience is implicated, from evolutionary theory and economics to cross-cultural encounters and gender ideologies. State theorists regularly claim that they are explaining the motor of history.

Ancient historians have always studied state institutions and ideologies, but few of them have entered the larger debates. By contrast, in the 1970s and '80s archaeologists of the Bronze and Early Iron Age Aegean did engage with work in other traditions and other parts of the world, but in the 1990s research slowed down.

Recent geopolitical trends have heightened public and scholarly interest in imperialism and state formation. In this seminar we aim to explore the ways that developments in the comparative social sciences across the last twenty years can help us understand ancient state formation, and how ancient state formation can shed new light on some of the biggest questions in contemporary social theory.

Format

The seminar has 3 components: conceptual tools, data, and research.

- (i) Conceptual tools: in the first 3 sessions we look at just a small selection of the debates that have flourished in the social sciences in the last twenty years.
- (ii) Data: we spend 9 sessions looking at specific case studies. We concentrate on archaic-classical Greece and Republican-early imperial Rome, but also consider the

Bronze Age Aegean, the Hellenistic transfer of Aegean institutions and ideologies, and one non-Mediterranean case, China.

For parts (i) and (ii) of the seminar, the syllabus lists readings. Each week one student will be asked to make a presentation of the main ideas in these readings, then the whole group will discuss them.

(iii) Research: the point of a graduate seminar is to help you learn to be a researcher, developing good questions and finding good answers to them. We therefore devote 2 weeks to individual research and writing, during which period you will meet one-on-one with one or both of us; and a month to revising and refining research results, in which each student will present his or her arguments in the seminar, exposing them to criticism (and praise) and the potential of falsification. Writing papers and debating each other's work is the most important part of the seminar. Your final output should be a research paper (we assume at least 20 pages long, excluding references), which should deploy a sophisticated conceptual framework to make original arguments, supported by data and argument, about some significant aspect of ancient state formation. Your goal should be to produce a publication-quality essay.

We've spread the seminar across two quarters because engaging with sometimes-unfamiliar interdisciplinary conceptual frameworks, reviewing a mass of primary evidence and scholarship, and then developing original insights in written form is too much to squeeze into one quarter. If you take this seminar you have to take it for two quarters.

Your entire grade is based on the quality of your final paper, which is due by 5 p.m. on Thursday March 18th, 2004, so we can enter grades by the deadline of Tuesday March 23rd. We don't normally grant extensions or incompletes. For autumn quarter we'll give everyone a grade of "N," which means it's a continuing course (see *Stanford Bulletin 2003-04*, pp. 43-44). When we enter the final grade in winter quarter, the autumn-quarter N will automatically convert to the final letter grade.

Workshop: In 2003/4, the Stanford Humanities Center sponsors a workshop on "Words and Things", co-ordinated by Giovanna Ceserani, Walter Scheidel and Jennifer Trimble. Several of the workshop sessions will deal with ancient state formation: We are planning talks by Peter Bang (University of Copenhagen) in the autumn quarter and by Jonathan Hall (University of Chicago) and Nicola Terrenato (University of North Carolina) in the winter quarter. While the workshop is not formally linked to the seminar and there is no course credit for contributing to the workshop, you are very strongly encouraged to prepare relevant presentations for the workshop in the winter quarter. The workshop provides a great opportunity to get additional input for your seminar papers, to discuss your ideas with faculty and graduates outside the context of our seminar, and more generally to gain valuable experience in presenting academic talks. We are also eager to attract contributions by graduates who do not take our seminar. For further information, please contact Walter Scheidel or the graduate student coordinators, Marcus Folch and Andrew Monson.

Readings

Available in Stanford Bookstore:

Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (Norton 1997)

Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power I: From the Beginning to AD 1760*
(Cambridge 1986)

All others will be available in Xerox form in the Classics Library.

Nuts and bolts

Please note that we start right in on September 29, the first teaching Monday of the quarter, with a regular session. The final session of the quarter is on December 1, which is the first day of the end-quarter period. In winter we restart on Tuesday January 6, the first day of instruction. We have weekly meetings on the 6th, 13th, and 20th, then have no regular sessions for 2 weeks. During this time you should be planning and writing your papers, meeting at least once with one of us, and discussing your work with other students (and faculty if you can rope them in). We restart on Tuesday February 10th, with students presenting their research for group discussion. On Thursday March 18th you should submit your paper electronically (copies to both of us) by 5 p.m. We'll also have a mailbox in Building 20 for the seminar; please also leave a paper copy in it by 5 p.m. on March 18th, in case of problems with attachments.

AUTUMN

Part I: Conceptual categories (Sept. 29-Oct. 13)

1 Monday September 29

Where do states come from?

Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (Norton 1997)

2 Monday October 6

How do states develop?

Stephen K. Sanderson, *Social Transformations* (Rowman and Littlefield, exp. ed. 1999)
ch. 2-4 (pp. 20-133)

Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1992* (Blackwell 1992)
ch. 1 (pp. 1-37)

Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and its Competitors* (Princeton 1994) ch. 1-2 (pp. 11-33)

3 Monday October 13

What do states do?

Douglass C. North, *Structure and Change in Economic History* (Norton 1981) chs. 1-3
(pp. 3-32)

Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Blackwell 1983) chs. 1-3 (pp. 1-38)

Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power I* (Cambridge 1986) ch. 1 (pp. 1-33)

George Steinmetz, ed., *State/Culture* (Cornell 1999), "Introduction" (pp. 1-49); and
chapter by Tim Mitchell, "Society, economy, and the state effect," pp. 76-97

Native models:

Herodotus I.96-101

Thucydides I.1-19

Aristotle, *Politics* I.1252a1-1253a39

Livy I.4-21, 42-45

Part II: Case studies (Oct. 20-Jan. 20)

4 Monday October 20

The Aegean Bronze Age

Mann, *SSP* I, chs. 2-5 (pp. 34-129)

Sofia Voutsaki and John Killen, eds., *Economy and Society in the Mycenaean Polities* (2001)

John Bennet, "The Aegean Bronze Age," in Ian Morris, Richard Saller, and Walter Scheidel, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge, forthcoming)

5 Monday October 27

City-state formation I: Greece

Mann, *SSP* I, ch. 7 (pp. 190-204)

Anthony Snodgrass, *Archaic Greece* (1980)

Ian Morris, "The early polis as city and state," in John Rich and Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, eds., *City and Country in the Ancient World* (London 1991) 24-57

"The Aegean Early Iron Age," in Ian Morris, Richard Saller, and Walter Scheidel, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge, forthcoming)

James Whitley, *The Archaeology of Ancient Greece* (Cambridge 2001) ch. 8

Irad Malkin, "Inside and outside: colonization and the formation of the mother city," in Bruno d'Agostino and David Ridgway, eds., *Apoikia* (1994; = *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli*, n.s. 1 [1994]) 1-9

Homer, *Odyssey* II

Hesiod, *Works and Days*

6 Monday November 3

City-state formation II: Rome

Christopher J. Smith, *Early Rome and Latium: Economy and Society c. 1000 – 500 BC* (Oxford 1996) 129-232

Mario Torelli, "The Etruscan city-state", in Mogens Herman Hansen, ed., *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures* (Copenhagen 2000) 189-208

Tim J. Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome* (Routledge 1994) 81-118, 151-214

"The city-states in Latium", in Mogens Herman Hansen, ed., *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures* (Copenhagen 2000) 209-228

7 Monday November 10

From city-state to territorial state I: Athens

Mann, *SSP* I, chs. 7, 8 (pp. 204-249)

Gary Runciman, "Doomed to extinction?" in Oswyn Murray and Simon Price, eds., *The Greek City* (Oxford 1990) 347-67

Ian Morris, "The Athenian Empire (478-404 BC)," at <http://www.stanford.edu/group/sshi/empires2.html> (2001)

Thucydides I.1-23, 66-125

The Old Oligarch (Ps.-Xenophon, *Athenaion Politeia*)

Charles W. Fornara, *Archaic Times to the End of the Peloponnesian War* (2nd ed., Cambridge 1983) nos. 68 [10], 71 [14], 81 [11], 85 [259], 92 [21], 94, 97 [1453], 98 [66], 99 [37], 102 [39], 103 [40], 119 [52], 123, 133 [68], 134 [369], 136 [71], 140 [78] (most important inscriptions are underlined)

8 Monday November 17

From city-state to territorial state II: Sparta

Michael Whitby, ed., *Sparta* (Edinburgh 2002) chs. 2, 3, 6, 9-14

Herodotus I.65-68

Plutarch, *Lycurgus*

Xenophon, *Lakedaimonion Politeia*

9 Monday November 26

From city-state to territorial state III: Syracuse

Basic narrative in Moses Finley, *Ancient Sicily* (1968/1979), or in relevant chapters in

CAH V², VI²

500-413 BC:

Herodotus VII.153-167

Diodorus of Sicily XI.1, 20-26, 48-49, 53, 66-68, 72-73, 76, 78, 86-88, 91-92; XII.29-30, 53-54, 82-84

Thucydides III.103, 115; IV.58-65; VI.1-26, 33.3-41, 44-52, 75-88

409-367 BC:

Diodorus of Sicily XIII.43-44, 54-63, 75, 80-96, 108-114; XIV.7-10, 14-15, 18, 40-78, 87-88, 90-91, 95-96, 100-112; XV.6-7, 13-17, 73-74

10 Monday December 1

Transplanting states: the Hellenistic world

Joe Manning (Classics)

Readings TBA

WINTER

11 Tuesday January 6

From city-state to territorial state IV: Rome—from city-state to empire of domination

Mann *SSP* I, 250-272

Michael Doyle, *Empires* (Princeton 1986) 82-92

William Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome 327-70 BC* (Oxford 1979) 9-67

“Current directions in the study of Roman imperialism,” in Harris (ed.), *The Imperialism of Mid-Republican Rome* (Rome 1984) 13-29

“The Social Sciences and Roman Imperialism 2000”, at
<http://www.stanford.edu/group/sshi/empires/harris.pdf> (2000)

Tim J. Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome* (Routledge 1994) 364-68, 380-90

Polybius I.1-12; III.6-33; VI.11-58

Livy I.22-30; V.1-25

12 Tuesday January 13

From city-state to territorial state V: Rome—from empire of domination to territorial state

Henrik Mouritsen, *Italian Unification: A Study in Ancient and Modern Historiography* (1998)

J.-M. David, *The Roman Conquest of Italy* (Blackwell 1997) 120-139

Simon Keay & Nicola Terrenato, eds., *Italy and the West: Comparative Issues in Romanization* (2001) ch. 1, 6, 10

Walter Scheidel, "Ultimate causation in Romanization"

Appian, *Civil Wars* I.1-7, 34-53

13 Tuesday January 20

From city-state to territorial state VI: China

Mark Lewis (History)

Readings TBA

Part III: Research (January 21-March 17)

14, 15 Wednesday January 21-Monday February 9

Research, writing, individual meetings, workshop

16-20 Tuesdays February 10, 17, 24; March 2, 9

Paper presentations

March 18, 5 p.m.

PAPERS DUE