

PS 389.202: Historical Political Economy

The University of Michigan. Summer 2021.

Instructor : Htet Thiha Zaw (htzaw@umich.edu)

Weekly Meetings : Mon-Wed-Thurs 12–2 pm EST

Office Hours : Fri 12–2 pm EST or by appointment

Zoom Links : [here](#) for online meetings (ID: 957 4552 8977, Password: 990807)

[here](#) for office hours (ID: 997 5284 8086, Password: 884854)

Description

How did states emerge throughout history? What legacies did colonial rule leave for political and economic development in former colonies? How did political events shape human behavior in the long run?

Historical political economy (HPE) is a thriving inter-disciplinary field that investigates such questions by bringing together elements from economics, history, and political science. It also answers the questions with original quantitative data built from archival resources, qualitative case knowledge, and causal inference econometrics. Rather than focusing on short-term causes and outcomes, it allows researchers to understand how the variations in important political and economic outcomes have their roots in history or to understand today’s important questions by going back to history.

We will start our first week with an introduction to HPE, discussing the field’s history, present state, and important concepts such as persistence and path dependence. In the following weeks, we will cover both substantive topics and methods topics for research in HPE. The latter will give you some insights into different stages of research in the field; this will be especially useful for those who are planning to write a research proposal in this course (see “Assignments”) and in the future.

After the introduction week, we will delve into the history of state development, investigating its origins and evolution over time as well as their consequences for later development. We will first focus on the rise of states in Europe and try to understand its divergence from the rest of the world in economic and political power throughout the latter half of the second millennium. We will then move outside Europe to better understand how states developed in vastly different contexts such as the Americas, sub-Saharan Africa, and Southeast Asia; this serves as a corrective for an often-missing narrative about state development outside Europe and their legacies during colonial rule or even after independence.

As the previous section serves as an important reminder of how pre-colonial state development may persist or interact with colonization, we will delve into the history of colonialism and its consequences on later developmental outcomes, bringing in examples from Africa, Latin America, and India.

In the following weeks, we will focus on existing HPE findings on five specific outcomes: democratization, inequality, slavery, education, and violence, and political behavior. We will explore

their history and their influence on later development patterns as we see today across and within states around the world. We will also discuss the history of these outcomes in the context of the United States' history with race throughout the course.

Learning Goals

After taking this course, you can expect to:

- Be familiar with research in historical political economy, including seminal studies as well as the frontiers of research.
- Read critically and evaluate research in historical political economy and social science research in general.
- Understand the basics of producing quality political science research with effective arguments and supporting evidence.

On Zoom

All sections and office hours are online via Zoom. All sections will be automatically recorded and later shared on Canvas. Passwords are required for all meetings. Please do not share the meeting links and passwords with those outside the class. Please check your canvas announcements for Zoom links to sections and office hours.

Your audio is automatically muted upon entering. If you want to speak up, please use the “Raise Hand” feature to let me know (Instructions on how to use the feature [here](#)). You can also use the chatbox to share your questions and comments.

Recordings

As with the lecture, the synchronous online meetings will be audio/video recorded and made available to all students in this course (and *only* students in this course) via Canvas, under “Modules,” along with lecture slides. As part of your regular course participation, you may be recorded. If you do not want to be recorded, then please contact me during the first week of the semester to discuss an alternative arrangement.

Please do not record or distribute any class activity, including the synchronous online meetings and the pre-recorded lectures, without explicit written permission from me, except as necessary as part of the approved accommodations for students with disabilities. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student's own private use.

Office Hours and Email Policy

The best way to get in touch with me is via office hours. My office hours are on Fridays 12–2 pm EST via Zoom. If you cannot make it to office hours due to a class conflict or another unavoidable circumstance, please contact me for an appointment. I will do my best to accommodate.

If you cannot come to office hours, email is the best way to contact me with quick questions. I will do my best to respond to your emails within 24 hours, from 9 am - 5 pm EST Monday through Friday. If I have not responded within 24 hours, please send a follow-up. An email sent to me at 5:01 pm EST on Friday can expect a response by 5:00 pm EST Monday. All emails should begin the subject line with [POLSCI389].

Canvas

I will use Canvas announcements to communicate with you regularly. This is in addition to the course canvas site. It is your responsibility to keep up with these updates.

Grading

Grading will be distributed as follows:

- Attendance and Participation (20 percent)
- Perusall readings (25 percent)
- **Final Research Proposal (55 percent)**
 - Research Question (5 percent)
 - Literature Review (10 percent)
 - 5-minute Presentation (10 percent)
 - Proposal Draft (10 percent)
 - Final Proposal (20 percent)

Attendance and Participation (20 percent)

Attendance in the section is mandatory because it gives our class a chance to discuss the readings and share our thoughts from diverse viewpoints. *You have three unexcused absences.* You are responsible for any material you miss due to an unexcused absence; office hours do not replace sections missed due to unexcused absences. A note from a doctor or some other person of authority (documenting a family emergency or medical attention for an illness) is suggested (but not required) for an excused absence. Students with family responsibilities, athletic commitments, or religious conflicts should discuss those with me as soon as possible. Any further absences will halve your section grade.

There will be one quiz during each section, based on the required readings for the day. Grading is on a participation basis (no/full credit), and the questions cover basic facts about the arguments, data, and findings. These quizzes will also serve as a jumping-off point for discussion.

While video presence is encouraged for an engaging discussion, it is not required. We will also adjust this policy after a few sections if needed. If you are unavailable to attend sections for reasons other than above (or if you plan to take the course asynchronously), please contact me in advance so that we can try to make other arrangements.

Perusall readings (25 percent)

Reading is the key ingredient in this course for us to actively participate in the course and meet the learning goals. Each week, you can expect to spend 4-8 hours on the readings (around 4 for most of the week, including recommended readings). A reading load not so different from graduate program seminars should not only improve your skills to critically engage with readings but also your ability to handle situations with a substantial reading load (be it grad school or workplace).

Throughout the course, we will use Perusall, which automatically evaluates your understanding and comprehension of the reading based on the criteria that I have set (1-3 points for each assignment). While many factors go into the evaluation algorithm, you should receive full credit for each reading assignment if you adhere to the following points:

- Read the assignment before the deadline.
- Carefully read (not just scan) the required reading.
- Provide at least three substantive annotations.
- Respond to at least one comment.

All the Perusall assignments in the first week are on a participation basis, meaning you will get full credit for them as long as you open and read through the assignments. You are, however, encouraged to read through them before the section and share your thoughts and comments. The same rules apply to recommended readings. Starting from the week of July 5, you need to do the two required Perusall assignments for each section; only the better score among the two readings will be counted. They are due at midnight before we meet for the class (11:59 p.m. EST); they will, however, be available to be completed for the next day. This will give me sufficient time to read through the comments and engage with them in class. (If you want to learn more about Perusall, you can do so [here](#).)

Additionally, if you are not familiar with statistical analyses (e.g., regressions), you do not need to read and understand the details as long as you grasp the main findings (usually available from the introduction and conclusion).

Final Research Proposal (55 percent)

Each student will write a research proposal related to historical political economy (10-15 pages long, double-spaced, 12-pt font, and 1-inch margins). I strongly encourage you to work on the topic that you find to be of the most interest. This Research Proposal may form the basis of a research paper, an honors thesis, or even a bigger project if you decide to pursue a career in research.

Ideally, you will identify a puzzle that derives from one or more of the course readings. If you want, then you may co-author your paper with up to two other classmates. Each co-author will receive the same grade for each assignment under this project.

The paper will be completed in five parts. The first three parts will be a draft of the paper's front end, including the motivation and/or puzzle, a review of the relevant literature, your argument,

and a description of your proposed data and empirical strategy. The last two parts will strengthen the ideas and eventually produce the final draft.

The components for this project are as follows. All components are due by 11:59 p.m. EST. Unless otherwise specified, all assignments should be formatted as a double-spaced, 12-pt font document with 1-inch margins.

Research Question (5 percent, due Jul 18, 2021): Based on our discussion about writing a research question on July 8, write two research questions that are of interest to you (maximum 150 words each for each stating the research question and elaborating the relevant ideas). In the following week, we will chat over an office hour appointment, and I will share my thoughts about which one sounds more promising and feasible for the final Proposal. Here we will also discuss the readings that will be useful for your next assignment (four minimum).

Literature Review (10 percent, due Jul 25, 2021): Here, you will write a 2–3-page literature review, where you detail the existing research and findings that are relevant to your question and explain the new knowledge or insights you can gain from the project. You will use this assignment as a basis for the presentation assignment.

5-minute Presentation (10 percent, due during class either Jul 29 or Aug 2, 2021): This is the presentation version of the previous assignment, with more explanation on your plan. On either of the days, you will give a 5-minute presentation, followed by 5 minutes of a Q&A session. You should have a maximum of three slides: the first detailing the research question and the project, the second providing a brief overview of the literature, and the third describing the next steps that you plan to take (data, methodology, etc.) You do not need to take all of these steps in the final project. I will explain more about this in due course.

Proposal Draft (10 percent, due Aug 8, 2021): The proposal draft is the version you have of the final Proposal so far. This will give me an opportunity to have a look at it and provide final feedback. In this week, we will chat over an office hour appointment, where we will go over the draft and discuss the improvements we can make at this point.

Final Proposal (20 percent, due Aug 17, 2021): Final Proposal is due on August 17. Please make sure that you follow the format specifications before uploading it to Canvas.

(Note: I may update the syllabus with additional readings for substantive content and Proposal prep, but none of them will be required. I will cover their key ideas during the sections.)

Course Timeline

June 30 Introduction to Historical Political Economy

Required Readings

PS 389.2 Course Syllabus.

Gailmard, Sean. "What are we doing in Historical Political Economy?" In *Broadstreet*, 2021. (Link [here](#))

Cirone, Alexandra. "Types of HPE Paper." In *Broadstreet*, 2021. (Link [here](#))

Dippel, Christian, and Bryan Leonard. "Not-so-Natural Experiments in History." *Journal of Historical Political Economy* 1(1) (2021): 1-30.

July 1 Triumphs and Challenges of HPE

Required Readings

Abad, Leticia Arroyo, and Noel Maurer. "History Never Really Says Goodbye: A Critical Review of the Persistence Literature." *Journal of Historical Political Economy* 1(1) (2021): 31-68.

Recommended Readings

Kelly, Morgan. "The standard errors of persistence." (2019). (Vox, CEPR Policy Portal Version here).

Dennison, Tracy. "Context is Everything: The Problem of History in Quantitative Social Science." *Journal of Historical Political Economy* 1(1) (2021): 105-126.

July 5 No Class. Independence Day Holiday.

July 7 The Emergence of States in Europe

Required Readings

Dincecco, Mark. "The Rise of Effective States in Europe." *The Journal of Economic History* (2015): 901-918.

Blaydes, Lisa, and Christopher Paik. "The Impact of Holy Land Crusades on State Formation: War Mobilization, Trade Integration, and Political Development in Medieval Europe." *International Organization* (2016): 551-586.

Recommended Readings

Drelichman, Mauricio, and Hans-Joachim Voth. "Lending to the Borrower from Hell: Debt and Default in the Age of Philip II." *The Economic Journal* 121, no. 557 (2011): 1205-1227.

Tilly, Charles. "Introduction." In *Coercion, Capital, and European states, AD 990–1990*. Routledge, 1990.

July 8

The Great Divergence

Required Readings

Hoffman, Philip T. "How the Tournament in Early Modern Europe Made Conquest Possible." In *Why Did Europe Conquer the World?* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015.

Koyama, Mark, Chiaki Moriguchi, and Tuan-Hwee Sng. "Geopolitics and Asia's little divergence: State building in China and Japan after 1850." *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 155 (2018): 178-204.

Recommended Readings

Dincecco, Mark, and Yuhua Wang. "Violent conflict and political development over the long run: China versus Europe." *Annual Review of Political Science* 21 (2018): 341-358.

Lieberman, Victor, and Brendan Buckley. "The impact of climate on Southeast Asia, circa 950-1820: new findings." *Modern Asian Studies* (2012): 1049-1096.

July 12

State Development Outside Europe

Required Readings

Bates, Robert. "The Imperial Peace." In *African Development in Historical Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Lowes, Sara, Nathan Nunn, James A. Robinson, and Jonathan L. Weigel. "The evolution of culture and institutions: Evidence from the Kuba Kingdom." *Econometrica* 85, no. 4 (2017): 1065-1091.

Recommended Readings

Paik, Christopher, and Jessica Vechbanyongratana. "Path to Centralization and Development: Evidence from Siam." *World Politics* 71, no. 2 (2019): 289-331.

Michalopoulos, Stelios, and Elias Papaioannou. "Pre-colonial ethnic institutions and contemporary African development." *Econometrica* 81, no. 1 (2013): 113-152.

July 14

Colonialism and Pre-colonial History

Required Readings

Dell, Melissa, Nathan Lane, and Pablo Querubin. "The historical state, local collective action, and economic development in Vietnam." *Econometrica* 86, no. 6 (2018): 2083-2121.

Zaw, Htet Thiha. "Pre-colonial Origins of Colonial State Formation: Evidence from British Burma." *Available at SSRN*, 2021.

Recommended Readings

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. "Reversal of fortune: Geography and institutions in the making of the modern world income distribution." *The Quarterly journal of economics* 117, no. 4 (2002): 1231-1294.

Nathan, Noah L. "Electoral Consequences of Colonial Invention: Brokers, Chiefs, and Distribution in Northern Ghana." *World Politics* 71, no. 3 (2019): 417-456.

July 15

Proposal Prep: Research Question and Literature Review

Required Readings

Gustafsson, Karl, and Linus Hagström. "What is the point? Teaching graduate students how to construct political science research puzzles." *European Political Science* 17, no. 4 (2018): 634-648.

Gaikwad, Nikhar, Veronica Herrera, and Robert W. Mickey. "Text-Based Sources." *American Political Science Association Organized Section for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research, Qualitative Transparency Deliberations, Working Group Final Reports, Report II* 1 (2019).

July 18

Final Research Proposal: Research Question Due.

July 19

State-building under Colonialism

Required Readings

Guardado, Jenny. Office-selling, corruption, and long-term development in Peru. *American Political Science Review* 4, no. 112 (2018): 971-995.

Franco Vivanco, Edgar. "Justice as Checks and Balances: Indigenous Claims in the Courts of Colonial Mexico," 2021. Working paper.

Recommended Readings

De Juan, Alexander, Fabian Krautwald, and Jan Henryk Pierskalla. "Constructing the state: Macro strategies, micro incentives, and the creation of police forces in colonial Namibia." *Politics & Society* 45, no. 2 (2017): 269-299.

Frankema, Ewout, and Marlous Van Waijenburg. "Metropolitan blueprints of colonial taxation? Lessons from fiscal capacity building in British and French Africa, c. 1880-1940." *The Journal of African History* (2014): 371-400.

July 21

Legacies of Colonialism

Required Readings

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, & James Robinson. The colonial origins of comparative development: An empirical investigation. *American Economic Review* 5, no. 91 (2001): 1369-1401.

Banerjee, Abhijit, and Lakshmi Iyer. "History, institutions, and economic performance: The legacy of colonial land tenure systems in India." *American Economic Review* 95, no. 4 (2005): 1190-1213.

Recommended Readings

Lowe, Sara, and Eduardo Montero. "The legacy of colonial medicine in Central Africa." *American Economic Review* 111, no. 4 (2021): 1284-1314.

Dell, Melissa, and Benjamin A. Olken. "The development effects of the extractive colonial economy: The Dutch cultivation system in Java." *The Review of Economic Studies* 87, no. 1 (2020): 164-203.

July 22

Proposal Prep: Data Collection

Required Readings

Cirone, Alexandra, and Arthur Spirling. "Turning History into Data: Data Collection, Measurement, and Inference in HPE." *Journal of Historical Political Economy* 1(1) (2021): 127-154.

Baker, James. "Preserving Your Research Data." *Programming Historian*, 2021. (Link [here](#))

July 25 Final Research Proposal: Literature Review Due.

July 26 **Democracy and Its Struggles**

Required Readings

North, Douglass C., and Barry R. Weingast. "Constitutions and commitment: the evolution of institutions governing public choice in seventeenth-century England." *Journal of Economic History* (1989): 803-832.

Puga, Diego, and Daniel Trefler. "International trade and institutional change: Medieval Venice's response to globalization." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129, no. 2 (2014): 753-821.

Recommended Readings

Cassan, Guilhem, Lakshmi Iyer, and Rinchan Ali Mirza. *Enfranchisement, Political Participation and Political Competition: Evidence from Colonial India*. No. 13476. IZA Discussion Papers, 2020.

Cirone, Alexandra, and Brenda Van Coppenolle. "Bridging the gap: Lottery-based procedures in early parliamentarization." *World Politics* 71, no. 2 (2019): 197-235.

July 28 **Inequality and Redistribution**

Required Readings

Scheve, Kenneth, & Dan Stasavage. Democracy, war, and wealth: lessons from two centuries of inheritance taxation. *American Political Science Review* (2012): 81-102.

Meriläinen, Jaakko, Matti Mitrunen, and Tuomo Virkola. "The Violent Origins of Finnish Equality." *Available at SSRN*, 2020.

Recommended Readings

Piketty, Thomas. "Introduction." In *Capital in the Twenty-first Century*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013.

Cansunar, Asli. "Distributional Consequences of Philanthropic Contributions to Public Goods: Self-Serving Elite in Ottoman Istanbul." (2021).

July 29 5-minute Presentation Day 1.

August 2 5-minute Presentation Day 2.

August 4 **Origins of Slavery**

Required Readings

Robinson, James, & Kenneth Sokoloff. "Historical Roots of Inequality in Latin America." In *Inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean: Breaking with History?* Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2004.

Acharya, Avidit, Matthew Blackwell, and Maya Sen. "Introduction." In *Deep Roots: How Slavery Still Shapes Southern Politics*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018.

Recommended Readings

Dexter, Emma. "The Relationship Between Geology and Voting Patterns." ArcGIS Story Maps, 2021. (Link [here](#))

Van Waijenburg, Marlous. "Financing the African colonial state: The revenue imperative and forced labor." *Journal of Economic History* 78, no. 1 (2018): 40-80.

August 5 **Persistent Effects of Slavery**

Required Readings

Markevich, Andrei, and Ekaterina Zhuravskaya. "The economic effects of the abolition of serfdom: Evidence from the Russian Empire." *American Economic Review* 108, no. 4-5 (2018): 1074-1117.

Suryanarayan, Pavithra, and Steven White. "Slavery, reconstruction, and bureaucratic capacity in the American South." *American Political Science Review* 115, no. 2 (2021): 568-584.

Recommended Readings

Dell, Melissa. "The persistent effects of Peru's mining *Mita*." *Econometrica* 78, no. 6 (2010): 1863-1903.

Nunn, Nathan, and Diego Puga. "Ruggedness: The blessing of bad geography in Africa." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 94, no. 1 (2012): 20-36.

August 8 Final Research Proposal: Proposal Draft Due.

August 9 **The Rise of Mass Education**

Required Readings

Lindert, Peter. "The Rise of Mass Public Schooling before 1914." In *Growing Public*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Paglayan, Agustina S. "The non-democratic roots of mass education: evidence from 200 years." *American Political Science Review* 115, no. 1 (2021): 179-198.

Recommended Readings

Ricart-Huguet, Joan. "Colonial Education, Political Elites, and Regional Political Inequality in Africa." *Comparative Political Studies* (2020): 0010414021997176.

Zhang, Nan, and Melissa M. Lee. "Literacy and State-Society Interactions in Nineteenth-Century France." *American Journal of Political Science* 64, no. 4 (2020): 1001-1016.

August 11 **Education in the United States**

Required Readings

Mazumder, Soumyajit. "No Nation Left Behind? Assessing the Impact of Compulsory Schooling Laws on Immigrant Assimilation." (2019).

Fouka, Vasiliki. "Backlash: The unintended effects of language prohibition in US Schools after World War I." *The Review of Economic Studies* 87, no. 1 (2020): 204-239.

Recommended Readings

Aaronson, Daniel, and Bhashkar Mazumder. "The impact of Rosenwald schools on black achievement." *Journal of Political Economy* 119, no. 5 (2011): 821-888.

Go, Sun, and Peter Lindert. "The uneven rise of American public schools to 1850." *The Journal of Economic History* (2010): 1-26.

August 12

Violence and Repression

Required Readings

McNamee, Lachlan. "Mass resettlement and political violence: Evidence from Rwanda." *World Politics* 70, no. 4 (2018): 595-644.

Cook, Lisa D. "Violence and economic activity: evidence from African American patents, 1870–1940." *Journal of Economic Growth* 19, no. 2 (2014): 221-257.

Recommended Readings

Charnysh, Volha, and Evgeny Finkel. "The death camp Eldorado: political and economic effects of mass violence." *American Political Science Review* 111, no. 4 (2017): 801-818.

Zhukov, Yuri M., and Roya Talibova. "Stalin's terror and the long-term political effects of mass repression." *Journal of Peace Research* 55, no. 2 (2018): 267-283.

August 16

Political Behavior

Required Readings

Teele, Dawn Langan. "How the west was won: Competition, mobilization, and women's enfranchisement in the United States." *The Journal of Politics* 80, no. 2 (2018): 442-461.

Wasow, Omar. "Agenda seeding: How 1960s black protests moved elites, public opinion, and voting." *American Political Science Review* 114, no. 3 (2020): 638-659.

Recommended Readings

Brodeur, Abel, and Joanne Haddad. "Institutions, attitudes and LGBT: Evidence from the Gold Rush." *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 187 (2021): 92-110.

Wantchékon, Léonard, and Omar García-Ponce. "Critical junctures: independence movements and democracy in Africa." *Department of Economics, University of Warwick* (2013).

August 17

Final Research Proposal: Final Proposal Due.