



State and politics in Africa

Descriptif

This course is an introduction to the study of state-building and state-formation dynamics in Africa since precolonial times, and to the broader question of politics in Africa. What does the very idea of « state » mean on the long run, and how does it work on a day-to-day basis? The course introduces multidisciplinary into the study of politics: it is indeed one of the major contributions of African studies to combine political science with history, anthropology and development studies.

Two main approaches are combined. First, the historical approach, which evokes pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Africa. Archives, maps and documentary film extracts are used to illustrate the ways in which power is exercised and criticized on the *longue durée*. Second, the sociological approach considers the modalities of policymaking in Africa, to which a plurality of actors take part – in partnership but also often in competition with state bodies.

En bref

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