Session 10
State Formation and War
What is the State?

- Classic definitions, and International Law
- 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States:
  (a) a permanent population;
  (b) a defined territory;
  (c) a governing political authority; and,
  (d) the capacity to enter into relations with other states.
- Executive, Legislative, Judiciary, Taxation, Policing

- Thomas Hobbes
- Marx & Engels
- Max Weber
- Robert Dahl
- Nicos Poulantzas
Centralization of power
Monopolization of authority
Social stratification; inequality; hierarchy
Exploitation
Militarization
Taxation
Population control
The State of Persuasion

Pierre Clastres: Society Against the State

- “there are no societies without power” (Clastres, p. 15)

“The political relation of power precedes and founds the economic relation of exploitation. Alienation is political before it is economic; power precedes labour; the economic derives from the political; the emergence of the State determines the advent of classes” (Clastres, p. 198)

- Only one revolution in human history: the State revolution
- The state is political oppression; political oppression begets exploitation
“Prophetic speech, the power of that speech: might this be the place where power *tout court* originated, the beginning of the State in the Word? Prophets who were soul-winners before they were the masters of men? Perhaps” (Clastres, p. 218)
The State of Emergency
The State of Siege

- Karl Marx, under a state of siege the state,

“enmeshes, controls, regulates, superintends and tutors civil society from its most comprehensive manifestations of life down to its most insignificant stirrings, from its most general modes of being to the private existence of individuals; where through the most extraordinary centralization this parasitic body acquires a ubiquity, an omniscience, a capacity for accelerated mobility and an elasticity which finds a counterpart only in the helpless dependence [of the people on the state], in the loose shapelessness of the body politic”

- Assumptions? Questions?
International Politics and Force

- force & the politics of international war
- force in all sectors and levels of international affairs
- politics as an extension of war
- domestic political transformations—James Madison, 1795:

“Of all the enemies of true liberty, war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded, because it comprises and develops the germ of every other. War is the parent of armies; from these proceed debts and taxes; and armies, and debts, and taxes are the known instruments for bringing the many under the domination of the few….No nation can preserve its freedom in the midst of continual warfare.”
War is the New Nation

- global dominance—“American leadership”—interminable warfare
- In the 11 years between the end of the Cold War and 9/11, there were 78 separate US military deployments abroad
- Nearly ceaseless war over the past 218 years of US history
- war defines the centrality of collective, national being?

National Strategy for Homeland Security 2007:

“To best protect the American people, homeland security must be a responsibility shared across our entire Nation. As we further develop a national culture of preparedness, our local, Tribal, State, and Federal governments, faith-based and community organizations, and businesses must be partners in securing the Homeland….This Strategy also calls on each of you….As we secure the Homeland, however, we cannot simply rely on defensive approaches and well-planned response and recovery measures. We recognize that our efforts also must involve offense at home and abroad” (White House, 2007, p. 5)
“In order to realize this vision, the U.S. will use all instruments of national power and influence—diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement—to achieve our goals to prevent and disrupt terrorist attacks; protect the American people, critical infrastructure, and key resources; and respond to and recover from incidents that do occur. We also will continue to create, strengthen, and transform the principles, systems, structures, and institutions we need to secure our Nation over the long term” (White House, 2007, p. 13)
The Absolute Security Agenda

- system of knowledge, political philosophy, political organization, militarization, surveillance, coercion, interference in the domestic affairs of select states

- an attempted total penetration of the state into almost all areas of life, under the pretext of security