This chapter explores the relationship between the state and institutions and how political scientists theorize about them. It first provides an overview of the concept of institutions and the range of factors that structure political behaviour, noting how political, economic, and social factors determine particular outcomes, which are in turn influenced by ‘structure’ and ‘agency’. It then considers the multifaceted concept of the state and the rise of the European state, focusing in particular on the ways in which the European type of state and state system spread around the world between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries. The chapter goes on to discuss the modern state and some of the differences between strong states, weak states, and democratic states, suggesting that states need legitimacy and robust institutions to be strong.
10. Institutions and States

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