The growth of institutional capacity in the developing world has become a central
theme in twenty-first-century social science. Many studies have shown that public institutions are an important (some would argue the most important) determinant of long-run rates of economic growth. This book argues that to understand the difficulties and pitfalls of state building in the contemporary world, it is necessary to analyze previous efforts to create institutional capacity in conflictive contexts. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the process of state and nation building in Latin America and Spain from independence to the 1930s. The book examines how Latin American countries and Spain tried to build modern and efficient state institutions for more than a century — without much success. The chapters discuss key processes and challenges of state building. To what extent do historical legacies determine the capacity and reach of states? What are the obstacles to and paths toward the effective consolidation of public authority? How can states best design and create the institutions meant to provide the basic services now associated with citizenship? How can we put together notions of community that include diverse groups and cultures within a single identity, while also respecting the integrity of particular traditions? The Spanish and Latin American experience of the nineteenth century was arguably the first regional stage on which the organizational and political dilemmas that still haunt states were faced. This book provides an unprecedented perspective on the development and contemporary outcome of those state and nation building projects.

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目录:
1. Republics of the possible: state building in Latin America and Spain Miguel Centeno and Agustin Ferraro
2. The construction of national states, 1820—90: five cases, multiple variables Frank Safford
3. State building in Western Europe and the Americas before and in the long nineteenth century: some preliminary considerations Wolfgang Knoebl
4. The state and development under the Brazilian monarchy: 1822—89 Jeffrey Needell
5. The Brazilian federal state in the old republic (1889—1930): did regime change make a difference? Joseph E. Love
6. The Mexican state, Porfirian and revolutionary (1876—1930) Alan Knight
7. Nicaragua: the difficult creation of a sovereign state Salvador Marti
8. Friends' tax. Patronage, fiscal policy and state building in Argentina and Spain Claudia Herrera and Agustin Ferraro
9. Ideological pragmatism and non-partisan expertise in nineteenth-century Chile: Andrés Bello's contribution to state and nation building Iván Jaksic
10. Militarization without bureaucratization in Central America James Mahoney
11. Between 'Empleomanía' and the common good: successful expert bureaucracies in Argentina (1870—1930) Ricardo Salvatore
12. Elite preferences, administrative institutions, and educational development during Peru's Aristocratic Republic (1895—1919) Hillel Soifer
13. Liberalism in the Iberian world 1808—25 Roberto Breña
14. Visions of the national: natural endowments, futures, and the evils of men Fernando López-Alves
15. Spanish national identity in the age of nationalisms José Alvarez Junco
16. Census taking and nation making in nineteenth-century Latin America Mara Loveman
17. Citizens before the law: the role of courts in post-independence state building in Spanish America Sara Chambers
18. Visualizing the nation: the mid-nineteenth-century Colombian chorographic commission Nancy Applebaum
19. Paper leviathans. Historical legacies and state strength in contemporary Latin America and Spain Miguel Centeno and Agustin Ferraro.

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评论

精读前三章、结论章、Mahoney中美洲军事、Brena西班牙自由主义、Junco西班牙民族主义、Lopez-Alves民族与爱国主义的激情等章。仍旧是“从现成理论抽取历史动力并观察不同情境内如何展开”的思路，将理想西欧国家模型延后到19世纪末20世纪初自由主义民主实现、常备军强大、有完整官僚与抽税系统的强国家，反照西班牙和拉美国家与民族在18世纪和19世纪初建构历程相对艰难：本土自由主义不反君主制只要求殖民地和省区自治，拉美种族分割造成民族主义建构困难，军队专业化缓慢，过度依赖出口的经济体，最重要历史遗产便是政治上集团分裂内斗不息。为给西班牙与拉美量体裁衣，概念扩展和历史维度延展极大，力图将基础权力和符号权力塞入国家民族建构过程中，既丰富历史认知却也有丢失核心焦点模糊之弊。

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