

## Unit 11: Video 2 Transcript

**Q3: What were some key stages in state formation?**

A: I don't think state formation actually developed in stages. I think that's too tidy a way of thinking of the matter. I think it was a much more scattered-gun kind of development that we see the state powerful in an early period, in certain places, very limited number of places. But very, very powerful. Very, very influential. But not so powerful in many others. And later on we see it intruding in many aspects of life and many more people being affected by it, but not everyone then either. It's very uneven.

I can illustrate this in a couple of ways, I guess. One would be to say that the state was very powerful even in the era of the French regime. The French state had a very powerful place in a place like Quebec. Quebec City as we know it today, at Quebec the military was a very prominent institution. Of course, the military was there to protect this fledgling colony from the attacks of, in the earliest times, from Iroquois attacks. But also from the attacks of the British who vied for power in the region. And the presence of the military was readily apparent to everyone who lived in Quebec on a daily basis. They couldn't get away from it. There was no doubt that people were going to behave themselves pretty much in Quebec because of that military presence, so the state was very powerful. But if we go just a little distance away into the countryside nearby, we find peasant farmers going about their business with very little sense of there being a French state at all, I think. Maybe the French state set out the general structures within which they lived. But once those structures were in place, and that happened very early on, life went on, on its own. And there was very little representation of the centre in the local areas. And, of course, if we go to the Bayonne, the up country, the "Indian country" as it was called, the state's presence was even lighter. So tremendous unevenness. And if we go into the British areas, into Nova Scotia, we would find much the same thing. At Halifax, a great naval base of course, the military was a prominent force and the state was everywhere evident. But outside Halifax, as colonists began to settle Nova Scotia, why they went about their lives without a lot of contact with the state. The British state in Nova Scotia was incredibly powerful, of course, when it came to the Acadian

population. Acadians, people of French heritage but who had lived quite independently in what we think of as the Maritime region of Canada, l'Acadie, as they would have thought of it, lived with very little contact with the French state or the French colonial state. They had their own social system that got along largely without a state. And then suddenly in the 1750s the British were concerned for security reasons about the Acadian population, about whether they would likely support the French as warfare was building up in the 1750s. And the military governor at the time, Charles Lawrence in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia, decided that he had to clear the region of Acadians, and this we know of as the Great Deportation of the Acadians. People just picked-up willy-nilly and sent in to many places around the globe. Many starved on the way. Many families split up. A great tragedy. Those Acadians felt the full force of the state in the 1750s at a very early point. So you can see this unevenness in state power and the presence of the state.