

Terms and Ideas

- The state
- State scope
- State capacity
- Protection racket
- Extraction
- Organizational residue
- Total vs. limited war
- Coercion vs. bargaining

Questions

Q: How does state scope differ from state capacity?

A: Fukuyama notes that scope refers to how much a state does, whereas capacity refers to how well the state does it. Think back on the debate between economic interventionists and neoliberals; their arguments often concerned scope. The difference in outcomes in contexts of high state involvement, meanwhile, might be attributed to differences in capacity.

Q: What is the state-building sequence according to Tilly?

A: The bellicist model explains state-building as follows:

Rulers used organized violence against rivals outside their territory (war-making) → massive costs of war forced rulers to obtain resources from the population (extraction) → rulers eliminated rivals inside their territory to ensure compliance and enable extraction (state-making) → rulers guaranteed the interests of citizens from threats, which encouraged capital accumulation (protection)

It should be noted that this is a non-linear model where the various processes reinforce each other. For instance, eliminating internal rivals can strengthen extraction, while effective extraction can make states better able to fight in future wars.

Q: How does this sequence differ in other parts of the world?

A: Different authors have proposed modifications of the bellicist framework to explain state-building outcomes in regions outside of Europe.

Centeno:

Europe	Existential threat (total war)	→ Massive extraction, social mobilization and sacrifice	→ Centralization of power	→ Strong states (blood and iron)
Latin America	No existential threat (limited war)	→ Lower resource and social demands	→ Regional and class differences remain	→ Weak states (blood and debt)

Herbst:

Europe	High population density	→ Wars fought over territory (and high external threats)	→ States compelled to extend authority into hinterlands	→ Strong states, complete control
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Africa	Low population density	→ Wars fought over people and treasure (and low external threats)	→ Little incentive to extend authority into hinterlands	→ Weak states, incomplete control
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Dincecco and Wang:

Europe	High political fragmentation	→ Interstate wars, multidirectional threats	→ Elites have high exit ability	→ Rulers forced to bargain; concessions	→ Representative institutions
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China	Low political fragmentation	→ Internal conflict, unidirectional threats	→ Elites have low exit ability	→ Rulers extract resources; no concessions	→ Autocratic re-entrenchment
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Q: What role do elites have in state-building?

A: Elites are an important component of state-building. In the bellicist model, European rulers who wanted to conduct war interacted with capitalists and other elites to secure resources and ensure compliance. Dincecco and Wang argue that because these elites could credibly threaten to move abroad, they had a strong bargaining position to demand political representation; this was not the case in China. Meanwhile, Centeno argues that elites in post-independence Latin American states were often too divided to be able to form a strong state, with wars often based on conflict between elite groups. Depending on the context, elites could thus either enable or constrain state-building.

Takeaways

Last week, we looked at states as drivers of economic development. This week, we took a step back and asked what makes states strong or weak in the first place. From the lectures and the readings, we can see that both state size and strength are contingent on a number of factors; these include population distribution, elite power, and the international system. There might not be a single path to state strength, but it seems that rulers need to have both the correct incentives and the means to build durable institutions.

Looking ahead, this upcoming week will revisit the link between economic development and democratization. In the meantime, here are some more questions for you to reflect on:

- To what extent do states require legitimacy?
- Conflict might not be sufficient for state-building; to what extent is it necessary?