

Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1990

CHARLES TILLY

Basil Blackwell

Contents

Preface	ix
1 Cities and States in World History	1
States in History	1
Available Answers	5
Logics of Capital and Coercion	16
War Drives State Formation and Transformation	20
Long Trends and Interactions	28
Prospects	33
2 European Cities and States	38
Absent Europe	38
States and Coercion	45
Cities and Capital	47
City–State Interaction	51
State Physiologies	54
Liaisons Dangereuses	58
Alternative Forms of State	62
3 How War Made States, and Vice Versa	67
A Bifurcation of Violence	67
How States Controlled Coercion	68
Wars	70
Transitions	76
Seizing, Making, or Buying Coercion	84
Paying the Debts	87

The Long, Strong Arm of Empire	91
4 States and their Citizens	96
From Wasps to Locomotives	96
Bargaining, Rights, and Collective Action	99
The Institution of Direct Rule	103
The French Revolution: From Indirect to Direct Rule	107
State Expansion, Direct Rule, and Nationalism	114
Unintended Burdens	117
Militarization = Civilianization	122
5 Lineages of the National State	127
China and Europe	127
States and Cities Recxamined	130
Coercive Trajectories	137
Capitalist Trajectories	143
Trajectories of Capitalized Coercion	151
6 The European State System	161
The Connectedness of European States	161
The Ends of Wars	165
Members of the System	170
The Creation of a State-Linked World	181
How Wars Began	183
<u>Six Salient Questions</u>	187
7 Soldiers and States in 1990	192
Political Misdevelopment	192
The Impact and Heritage of World War II	197
The Ascent of Military Men	203
Today's Military in Historical Perspective	205
Military Buildup	209
Soldiers in Power	211
How Did the Military Gain Power?	217
Envoi	224
References	226
Index	261

I

Cities and States in World History

STATES IN HISTORY

Some 3,800 years ago, the ruler of a small Mesopotamian city-state conquered all the region's other city-states, and made them subject to Marduk, his own city's god. Hammurabi, ruler of Babylon, became the supreme king of Mesopotamia. By conquering, he gained the right and obligation to establish laws for all the people. In the introduction to his famous laws, Hammurabi claimed instruction from the great gods Anu and Enlil:

then did Anu and Enlil call me to afford well-being to the people,
me, Hammurabi, the obedient, godfearing prince, to cause righteousness
to appear in the land
to destroy the evil and the wicked, that the strong harm not the weak
and that I rise like the sun over the black-headed people,
lighting up the land.

(Frankfort 1946: 193)

Wrapped in a divine calling, Hammurabi could confidently call those who opposed his rule "evil" and "wicked." Vilifying victims, annihilating allies, and razing rival cities, he claimed that divine justice stood behind him. Hammurabi was building the power of his city, and founding a state; his gods and their particular vision of justice would prevail.

States have been the world's largest and most powerful organizations for more than five thousand years. Let us define states as coercion-wielding organizations that are distinct from households and kinship groups and exercise clear priority in some respects over all other organizations within substantial territories. The term therefore includes city-states, empires, theocracies, and

many other forms of government, but excludes tribes, lineages, firms, and churches as such. Such a definition is, alas, controversial; while many students of politics use the term in this organizational way, some extend it to whatever structure of power exists in a large, contiguous population, and others restrict it to relatively powerful, centralized, and differentiated sovereign organizations – roughly to what I will call a national state. I will, furthermore, eventually compromise the definition by including such entities as today's Monaco and San Marino, despite their lack of "substantial" territories, on the ground that other unambiguous states treat them as fellow-states.

For the moment, let us stick with the organizational definition. By such a standard, archaeological remains first signal the existence of states as of 6000 BC, and written or pictorial records testify to their presence two millennia later. Through most of the last eight millennia, states have only occupied a minority of the earth's inhabited space. But with the passage of millennia their dominance has grown.

Cities originated in the same era. Some time between 8000 and 7000 BC, the settlement later called Jericho contained a temple and stone houses; within the next thousand years, it acquired a thick wall and differentiated buildings. By that time, one could reasonably call Jericho a city, and other Middle Eastern settlements were beginning to acquire the signs of urbanization as well. In Anatolia, Çatal Hüyük's remains include rich houses, shrines, and works of art dating to well before 6000 BC. Full-fledged cities and recognizable states, then, appeared at roughly the same point in world history, a moment of great expansion in human capacity for creativity and for destruction. For a few millennia, indeed, the states in question were essentially city-states, often consisting of a priest-ruled capital surrounded by a tribute-paying hinterland. By 2500 BC, however, some Mesopotamian cities, including Ur and Lagash, were building empires ruled by warriors and held together by force and tribute; Hammurabi's unification of southern Mesopotamia came seven centuries after the first empires formed there. From that point on, the coexistence of substantial states and numerous cities has marked the great civilizations, from Mesopotamia, Egypt, and China to Europe.

Over the eight or ten millennia since the couple first appeared, cities and states have oscillated between love and hate. Armed conquerors have often razed cities and slaughtered their inhabitants, only to raise new capitals in their place. City people have bolstered their independence and railed against royal interference in urban affairs, only to seek their king's protection against bandits, pirates, and rival groups of merchants. Over the long run and at a distance, cities and states have proved indispensable to each other.

Through most of history, *national states* – states governing multiple contiguous regions and their cities by means of centralized, differentiated, and autonomous structures – have appeared only rarely. Most states have been *non-national*: empires, city-states, or something else. The term national state,

regrettably, does not necessarily mean *nation-state*, a state whose people share a strong linguistic, religious, and symbolic identity. Although states such as Sweden and Ireland now approximate that ideal, very few European national states have ever qualified as nation-states. Great Britain, Germany, and France – quintessential national states – certainly have never met the test. With militant nationalities in Estonia, Armenia, and elsewhere, the Soviet Union now lives the distinction painfully every single day. China, with nearly three thousand years' experience of successive national states (but, given its multiple languages and nationalities, not one year as a nation-state), constitutes an extraordinary exception. Only during the last few centuries have national states mapped most of the world into their own mutually exclusive territories, including colonies. Only since World War II has almost the entire world come to be occupied by nominally independent states whose rulers recognize, more or less, each other's existence and right to exist.

As this final partitioning of the world into substantial states has proceeded, two important counter-currents have begun to flow. First, speakers for many populations that do not form distinct states have made claims to independent statehood. Not only the inhabitants of former colonies, but also minorities within old, established Western states, have demanded their own states with surprising frequency. While I write, groups of Armenians, Basques, Eritreans, Kanaks, Kurds, Palestinians, Sikhs, Tamils, Tibetans, Western Saharans, and many more stateless peoples are demanding the right to separate states; thousands have died for claiming that right. Within a Soviet Union that long seemed an unbreakable monolith, Lithuanians, Estonians, Azerbaijanis, Ukrainians, Armenians, Jews, and numerous other "nationalities" are pressing for varying degrees of distinctness – and even, sometimes, independence.

In the recent past, Bretons, Flemings, French Canadians, Montenegrins, Scots, and Welsh have also made bids for separate power, either inside or outside the states that now control them. Minorities claiming their own states have, furthermore, regularly received sympathetic hearings from third parties, if not from the states currently governing the territories they have claimed. If all the peoples on behalf of whom someone has recently made a claim to separate statehood were actually to acquire their own territories, the world would splinter from its present 160-odd recognized states to thousands of statelike entities, most of them tiny and economically unviable.

The second counter-current also runs strong: powerful rivals to states – blocs of states such as NATO, the European Economic Community or the Warsaw Pact, world-wide networks of traders in expensive, illicit commodities such as drugs and arms, and financial organizations such as giant international oil companies – have emerged to challenge their sovereignty. In 1992, members of the European Economic Community will dissolve economic barriers to a degree that will significantly limit their ability to pursue independent policies in respect of money, prices, and employment. These signs show that

states as we know them will not last forever, and may soon lose their incredible hegemony.

In one of his sardonic “laws” of organizational behavior, C. Northcote Parkinson revealed that “a perfection of planned layout is achieved only by institutions on the point of collapse” (Parkinson 1957: 60). Cases in point include St Peter’s basilica, and the Vatican Palace (completed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, after the popes had lost most of their temporal power), the peacemaking Palace of the League of Nations (completed in 1937, just in time for the preliminaries to World War II), and the planning of colonial New Delhi, where “each phase of the [British] retreat was exactly paralleled with the completion of another triumph in civic design” (Parkinson 1957: 68). Perhaps a similar principle applies here. States may be following the old routine by which an institution falls into ruin just as it becomes complete. In the meantime, nevertheless, states remain so dominant that anyone who dreams of a stateless world seems a heedless visionary.

States form *systems* to the extent that they interact, and to the degree that their interaction significantly affects each party’s fate. Since states always grow out of competition for control of territory and population, they invariably appear in clusters, and usually form *systems*. The system of states that now prevails almost everywhere on earth took shape in Europe after AD 990, then began extending its control far outside the continent five centuries later. It eventually absorbed, eclipsed, or extinguished all its rivals, including the systems of states that then centered on China, India, Persia, and Turkey. At the Millennium, however, Europe as such had no coherent existence; it consisted of the territory north of the Mediterranean once occupied by the Roman Empire, plus a large northeastern frontier never conquered by Rome, but largely penetrated by missionaries of the Christian churches which a disintegrating empire left as its souvenirs. At the same time Muslim empires controlled a significant part of southern Europe.

The continent we recognize today did have some potential bases of unity. An uneven network of trading cities connected much of the territory, and provided links to the more prosperous systems of production and commerce that extended from the Mediterranean to East Asia. The bulk of the region’s population were peasants rather than hunters, pastoralists, or mercantile city-dwellers. Even in areas of urban concentration such as northern Italy, landlords ruled most of the population, and agriculture predominated among economic activities. Religion, language, and the residues of Roman occupation probably made the European population more culturally homogeneous than any other comparable world area outside of China. Within the area previously conquered by Rome, furthermore, traces of Roman law and political organization remained amid the splinters of sovereignty.

These features would eventually have a significant impact on Europe’s history. Let us take AD 990 as an arbitrary point of reference. On the world

stage the Europe of a thousand years ago was not a well-defined, unitary, independent actor. For that reason, any attempt to explain the continent's subsequent transformation in terms of its distinctive ethos or social structure runs a great risk of reasoning backwards. What is more, individual countries such as Germany, Russia and Spain simply did not exist as coherent entities; they took shape over succeeding centuries as a result of processes this book traces. Arguments that begin with the distinctive, enduring characteristics of "Germany" or "Russia" misrepresent the troubled, contingent history of European states.

[✓] So natural do the rise of national states, the growth of national armies, and the long European hegemony appear, indeed, that scholars rarely ask why plausible alternatives to them – such as the systems of loosely-articulated regional empires that thrived in Asia, Africa, and the Americas well past AD 990 – did not prevail in Europe. Surely part of the answer lies in the dialectic of cities and states that developed within a few hundred years after 990. For the coincidence of a dense, uneven urban network with a division into numerous well-defined and more or less independent states eventually set apart Europe from the rest of the world. Behind the changing geography of cities and states operated the dynamics of capital (whose preferred sphere was cities) and of coercion (which crystallized especially in states). Inquiries into the interplay between cities and states rapidly become investigations of capital and coercion.

A surprising range of combinations between coercion and capital appeared at one point or another in European history. Empires, city-states, federations of cities, networks of landlords, churches, religious orders, leagues of pirates, warrior bands, and many other forms of governance prevailed in some parts of Europe at various times over the last thousand years. Most of them qualified as states of one kind or another: they were organizations that controlled the principal concentrated means of coercion within delimited territories, and exercised priority in some respects over all other organizations acting within the territories. But only late and slowly did the national state become the predominant form. Hence the critical double question: What accounts for the great variation over time and space in the kinds of states that have prevailed in Europe since AD 990, and why did European states eventually converge on different variants of the national state? Why were the directions of change so similar and the paths so different? This book aims to clarify that problem, if not to resolve it entirely.

AVAILABLE ANSWERS

Established replies to the big question leave any serious student of European history unsatisfied. The alternatives now available differ especially with respect to their positions on two issues. First, to what extent, and how closely, did state formation depend on the particular form of economic change? The range runs

6 Cities and States in World History

from straightforward economic determinism to assertions of the complete autonomy of politics. Second, how strong an influence did factors exterior to any particular state have on its path of transformation? Answers vary from strongly internalist accounts to those which attach overwhelming weight to the international system. Through no coincidence, theories of war and of international relations vary in exactly the same manner: from economically determinist to politically determinist, and from internal to internationalist.

Although very few thinkers station themselves at the extremes – derive the state and its changes, for example, entirely from the economy – differences among available approaches remain impressively large. Figure 1.1 schematizes available answers to the two questions.

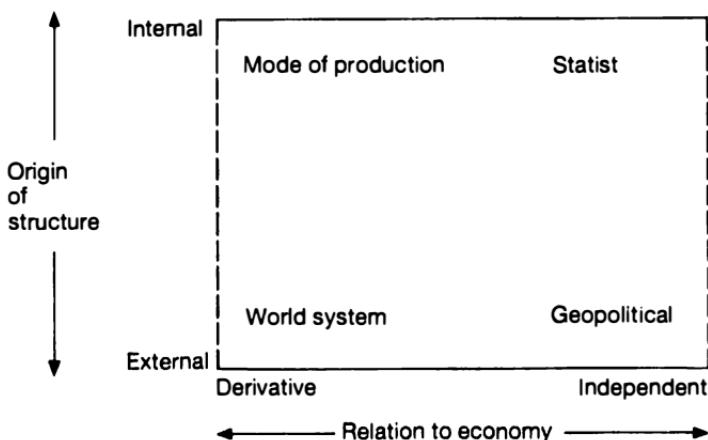


Figure 1.1 Alternative conceptions of state formation.

Statist analyses

Thus a statist model of war, international relations, and state formation treats political change as proceeding in partial independence of economic change, and presents it chiefly as a consequence of events within particular states. Many analysts of international relations have often adopted a statist perspective, assuming that individual states act on their defined interests, that the international system is anarchic, and that interactions among states ultimately reduce to the parity and thrust of self-interested actors. These days the most popular theories of the classic type bear the labels "structural realist" or "rational choice"; they allow for the effects of a hegemonic, bipolar, or multipolar international system, but ground their analyses of states' behavior in the interests and orientations of individual states (e.g. Bueno de Mesquita 1988, Gilpin 1988, Waltz 1988; for explication and criticism, see Holsti 1985, Jervis 1988a).

Among historians, sociologists, and students of comparative politics, statist accounts of states' transformations are by far the most popular. They inherit the now-discredited tradition of political development, searching for clues as to the conditions producing strong, effective, stable states, and assuming that only one such set of conditions exists. They typically take the individual state as their point of reference. When they do not reduce to particular histories of single states, they often posit a single, central path of European state formation and a set of deviations from the path explained by inefficiency, weakness, bad luck, geopolitical position, or the timing of economic growth and its concomitants; thus we have a few successful instances such as France or Britain and a great many failures, partial or total, such as Rumania or Portugal. Bertrand Badie and Pierre Birnbaum, for example, treat France as the most fully realized European state: "Prussia, Spain, and Italy followed various related paths, but the process of differentiation and institutionalization never went so far [as in France]." Great Britain they treat as "the model of under-statization" (Badie and Birnbaum 1979: 191, 217).

Samuel Huntington is a little more generous; considering Europe and the United States together, he distinguishes three patterns of modernization in governmental institutions: a Continental rationalization of authority and differentiation of structures within a unified sovereign body under the crown, a British centralization of power in a representative assembly, and an American fragmentation of sovereignty (Huntington 1968: 94–8). Soon, however, Huntington drops the distinction between Britain and the Continent in favor of a broad European–American comparison. In either analysis, Huntington singles out the effect of war on changes in state structure, but considers war to have roughly similar effects throughout Europe. His analysis emphasizes internal causes, and attributes little weight to economic determinants.

A second variant of the statist analysis stands closer to the diagram's center. This locates states in an international environment, but still treats them as acting more or less individually; its answer to questions about the diverse paths of state formation begins with sociocultural variation among the various parts of Europe – Protestant or Catholic, Slavic or German, feudal or free, peasant or pastoral – and derives differences from rulers' efforts to accomplish the same objectives in widely varying milieux. Thus in southeastern Europe theorists have repeatedly claimed to have discovered an indigenous Slavic, Magyar, or Roman village tradition distinguishing the fate of the region's states from those of Russia to the east or of capitalist states to the west (Berend 1988, Hitchins 1988, Roksandic 1988).

In a lucid and widely-read book, Paul Kennedy proposes a sophisticated variant of the statist argument, with significant economic overtones. His *Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* resembles Mancur Olson's *Rise and Decline of Nations* (which he does not cite) in more than title; both argue that the very process of economic and political expansion creates commitments that

eventually slow it down. Olson, however, concentrates on the contemporary period, aims at building a general model, and singles out the coalitions – cartels, labor unions, and others – that form *within* a state to capture benefits of growth. Kennedy, in contrast, looks chiefly at a state's international position, and marks out a broad historical path.

Uneven economic growth, according to Kennedy, causes the world's leading states to acquire and lose advantages relative to other states, advantages they ordinarily seek to secure with the support of military power. States that win out in such contests, however, find that they have to commit increasing shares of their resources to armies and navies. "If, however, too large a proportion of the state's resources is diverted from wealth creation and allocated instead to military purposes, then that is likely to lead to a weakening of national power over the long term" (Kennedy 1987: xvi). Meanwhile, other states are amassing wealth, reinvesting in the creation of new wealth, and benefiting from their lesser obligation to pay for military force. Although Kennedy's initial statement renders the decline and fall merely possible, all the cases he analyzes – early imperial China, the Mughal Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the Habsburgs, Great Britain, and the United States – make it seem inevitable. In the pursuit of this argument, Kennedy provides a useful chronology of the European state system since 1519: a Habsburg bid for mastery (1519–1659), a great power struggle without primacy (1660–1815), a period of uncertain British hegemony (1815–85), another period of uneasy balance (1885–1918), the rise of the United States to temporary supremacy (1918–43), a bipolar Soviet-US system (1943–80), and another period of shifting struggle (1980–?). While Kennedy's analysis provides only vague indications of the origins of different kinds of state organization, its emphasis on the interaction of war, economic power, and international position points to factors that no treatment of the subject can afford to neglect.

William McNeill's *Pursuit of Power* brings out even more dramatically the centrality of changing forms and scales of warfare in the transformation of the European state system. McNeill's *tour de force* presents an overview of warfare – and especially its technological leading edge – in the world as a whole since AD 1000. With great clarity he traces the impact of gunpowder, siege artillery, antisiege fortifications, and other great technical innovations not only on warfare itself, but also on state finances, the introduction of time-discipline into civilian life, and much more. McNeill underestimates, I believe, the importance of such organizational innovations as the commodification of military service as well as the influence of changes in naval warfare, but he produces insight after insight into the significance of a given kind of warfare for social life and state structure. He does not, however, attempt a systematic analysis of relations between military organization and different types of state formation.

With McNeill, we reach the boundary of statist and geopolitical analyses of state formation; the sheer centrality of war in his account makes position within

the international system a critical determinant of any particular state's organizational history. Most statist treatments of the subject fit the conventional use of the term much more comfortably, explaining the transformation of the French, Ottoman, or Swedish state as an outcome of events and processes within its own perimeter.

Such statist accounts of state formation – both monographic and synthetic – provide much of the raw material from which I have manufactured the argument of this book. Nevertheless, in themselves they provide no effective answer to the book's master theme: Why European states followed such diverse paths but eventually converged on the national state. They dissolve into particularisms and teleologies, explaining why the "modern" form of a given state emerged on the basis of the special character of a national population and economy. They neglect, furthermore, the hundreds of states that once flourished but then disappeared – Moravia, Bohemia, Burgundy, Aragon, Milan, Savoy, and many more. For systematic explanations, we must look beyond the statist literature.

Geopolitical analyses

If most students of state formation have adopted a statist perspective, considering the transformation of any particular state to result chiefly from noneconomic events within its own territory, each of the other three perspectives has had influential advocates. Geopolitical analyses of state formation attach great importance to the international system as the shaper of states within it. Geopolitical arguments ordinarily claim that interstate relations have a logic and influence of their own, and that state formation therefore responds strongly to the current system of relations among states. In a characteristic effort, James Rosenau distinguishes four "patterns of national adaptation" to international politics: acquiescent, intransigent, promotive, and preservative. The intransigent state, for example, "can seek to render its environment consistent with its present structures" while the promotive state "can attempt to shape the demands of its present structures and its present environment to each other" (Rosenau 1970: 4). Each of these patterns, according to Rosenau, has distinctive consequences for the character of the executive, the character of the party system, the role of the legislature, the role of the military, and much more (Rosenau 1970: 6–8). Similarly, what William Thompson calls a "global society" perspective on war and international relations attributes considerable autonomy to politics, and regards individual states as responding strongly to the structure of relations among all states; it therefore falls clearly into the geopolitical quadrant. Unsurprisingly, then, we find that geopolitical models of state formation, war, and international relations articulate closely with each other (Thompson 1988: 22–7; see also Waltz 1979). This body of work, as I read it, provides a valuable corrective to the internalism of statist analyses, but gives unclear guidance to the search for

mechanisms that link particular forms of state to specific positions within the international system.

Mode of production analyses

Mode of production analyses typically spell out the logic of feudalism, capitalism, or some other organization of production, then derive the state and its changes almost entirely from that logic, as it operates within the state's territory (Brenner 1976, Corrigan 1980). "We conceive of the state," declare Gordon Clark and Michael Dear in a characteristic statement, "as deriving equally from the economic and political imperatives of capitalist commodity production. The state is ultimately implicated in the generation and distribution of surplus value as it seeks to sustain its own power and wealth" (Clark and Dear 1984: 4). It follows that explanations of state structure derive largely from the interests of capitalists who operate within the same state's jurisdictions. Marxist and *marxist* analysts of war and international relations likewise generally deploy some version of theories of imperialism, an extension of national economic interest to the international sphere, which places them toward the diagram's mode-of-production corner.

In one of the most comprehensive and persuasive Marxist treatments, Perry Anderson proposes this formula:

The typical Western constellation in the early modern epoch was an aristocratic Absolutism raised above the social foundations of a non-servile peasantry and ascendant towns; the typical Eastern constellation was an aristocratic Absolutism erected over the foundations of a servile peasantry and subjugated towns. Swedish Absolutism, by contrast, was built on a base that was unique, because . . . it combined free peasants and nugatory towns; in other words, a set of two "contradictory" variables running across the master-division of the continent.

(Anderson 1974: 179–80)

Anderson similarly grounds the *absence* of well-developed Absolutism in Italy in the relation of town aristocracies to surrounding tributary territories in which they acted both as rulers and as predatory landlords. He complicates the picture by insisting that "It was the international pressure of Western Absolutism, the political apparatus of a more powerful feudal aristocracy, ruling more advanced societies, which obliged the Eastern nobility to adopt an equivalently centralized state machine, to survive" (Anderson 1974: 198). Thus on either side of the Elbe the full-fledged Absolutist state reflected the use of state power to fortify the positions of great feudal landlords, but military threats impinged on those positions differently in the East and the West. Anderson concentrates on the stronger, most centralized states, and aims his attention at the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, but his general approach deserves careful attention at a European and millennial level. In the meantime, it falls far short of a comprehensive account of European state formation. While the mode-of-production literature as a whole contributes many insights into struggles for

control of states, indeed, it offers only the faintest of clues to reasons for variations in form and activity among states having similar modes of production.

World system analyses

World system analyses of state formation ground the explanation of diverse paths of state formation in a characterization of the world economy. Neo-Marxist theorists such as Immanuel Wallerstein and André Gunder Frank extend the classic Marxist division between capital and labor to a world scale, thus pushing their analyses toward the world system quadrant – still deriving relations among states from economic structure, but regarding the structures of individual states as consequences of their positions within the world economy (see Taylor 1981). Wallerstein's grand survey of European history since 1500 (Wallerstein 1974–88) generally follows a spiral with respect to state formation: the mode of production in a given region creates a certain class structure, which emanates in a certain kind of state; the character of that state and the relations of the region's producers and merchants to the rest of the world economy determine the region's position – core, peripheral, or semiperipheral – in the world economy, which in turn significantly affects the state's organization. In this promising analysis, the state figures chiefly as an instrument of the national ruling class, an instrument that serves the interest of that class in the world economy. However, world system analyses have so far failed to produce a well-articulated theory linking the actual organizational structures of states to their positions within the world system. Thus Wallerstein's account of Dutch hegemony (volume II, chapter 2) in the seventeenth century provides no explanation of Dutch state structure – in particular, of the nation's prospering with a wispy national state at a time when its neighbors were creating massive civilian staffs and standing armies.

None of the four lines of explanation, much less their combination, yields a satisfactory set of answers to our pressing questions about European state formation. Most available explanations fail because they ignore the fact that many different kinds of states were viable at different stages of European history, because they locate explanations of state-to-state variation in individual characteristics of states rather than in relations among them, and because they assume implicitly a deliberate effort to construct the sorts of substantial, centralized states that came to dominate European life during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Geopolitical and world-system analyses provide stronger guidance, but so far they lack convincing accounts of the actual mechanisms relating position within the world to the organization and practice of particular states. In particular, they fail to capture the impact of war and preparation for war on the whole process of state formation; on that score, statist analyses do much better.

In *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, published in 1975, my

colleagues and I hoped to remedy these defects of the existing literature. In a series of historical studies emphasizing the extractive and repressive side of state formation, we looked self-consciously at war, policing, taxation, control of food supply, and related processes, and kept our distance from the models of political development that then prevailed. Our critique worked better, in retrospect, as a demonstration of the flaws in unilinear models of problem-solving political development than as an alternative account of European state formation. In fact, we implicitly substituted a new unilinear story – one running from war to extraction and repression to state formation – for the old one. We continued, more or less unthinkingly, to assume that European states followed one main path, the one marked by Britain, France, and Brandenburg-Prussia, and that the experiences of other states constituted attenuated or failed versions of the same processes. That was wrong. This book attempts to repair the errors of the previous one.

We have, fortunately, important models for the enterprise. Three great scholars – Barrington Moore, Jr, Stein Rokkan, and Lewis Mumford – escaped some of the standard literature's theoretical handicaps, even if they ultimately failed to fashion comprehensive accounts of variation in European state formation. In *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, Barrington Moore sought to explain (as his title implies) why in the twentieth century some states sustained more or less viable representative systems while others featured one form or another of authoritarian rule. Although his accounts of individual countries were all wide-ranging and nuanced, when it came to differences among national destinies Moore used as his points of reference the forms of government that existed in the 1940s and stressed as "origins" the class coalitions that prevailed when the country's agriculture began extensive commercialization. To the extent that great, exploitative landlords survived the transition to intensive cash-crop farming, according to Moore, authoritarian government persisted into the contemporary era. To the extent that the bourgeoisie predominated, some form of democracy existed.

Moore's insightful analysis left important problems unsolved. It focused on explaining conditions of government at a single historical moment, and thus failed to explain the different forms of government experienced by the same peoples before and after the critical moment. It deliberately ignored smaller states, dependent states, and states that did not survive. It said little about the actual mechanisms that translated a certain form of class power into a specific mode of government. But it posed this book's problems with great force. It pointed toward solutions taking serious account of changes and variations in the class coalitions dominating the states of different European regions.

Early in his career, Stein Rokkan became obsessed with the variability of European political systems, and with the tendency of adjacent states to develop similar political arrangements. Eventually he came to represent variation among European states in schematic maps which included a north-south dimension

reflecting the variable influence of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, an east-west separation of seaward peripheries, seaward empire-nations, a city-state band, landward empire-nations, and landward buffers, plus finer variations within those two dimensions.

Rokkan died before he produced a satisfactory version of his conceptual map. As he left it, his scheme called attention to marked geographic variation in the forms of European states, singled out the distinctiveness of state-formation in Europe's central urbanized band, and hinted at the importance of long-term changes in relations among rulers, neighboring powers, dominant classes and religious institutions. But it left a muddled idea of the actual social processes connecting these changes with alternative state trajectories. It is hard to see how Rokkan could have gotten much farther without laying aside his maps and concentrating on the analysis of the mechanisms of state formation.

Lewis Mumford made a less obvious contribution. Implicitly, he fashioned a threshold-and-balance theory of urbanism. For Mumford, two great forces drive the growth of cities: the concentration of political power, and the expansion of productive means. Below a threshold combining minimum levels of power and production, only villages and bands exist. Above that threshold, the character of cities depends on the levels of power and production, relative and absolute: modest and balanced levels of power and production gave the classic *polis* and the medieval city their coherence; an excessive growth of political power informed the baroque city; the hypertrophy of production created the nineteenth century's industrial Coketowns, and huge concentrations in both directions have produced the overwhelming cities of today. Figure 1.2 diagrammatically represents the argument.

Mumford pointed to similar effects on a national scale. "There is little doubt," he wrote in 1970, "that at least in most industrially developed countries

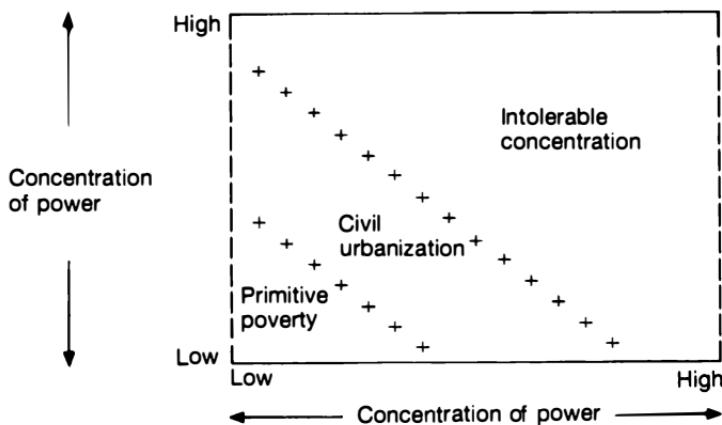


Figure 1.2 Lewis Mumford's implicit model of urbanization.

the Megatechnic Complex is now at the height of its power and authority, or is fast approaching it. In objectively measurable physical terms – units of energy, output of goods, input of ‘bads,’ capabilities for mass coercion and mass destruction – the system has nearly fulfilled its theoretic dimensions and possibilities; and if not judged by a more human measure, it is an overwhelming success” (Mumford 1970: 346). Mumford’s prescriptions followed directly from that analysis; reduce the scale of both production and political power, he argued, and a more humane city would result.

Since Mumford never quite explicated the analytic argument, he did not spell out its implications for the formation of states. Most of the time, he treated forms of rule as outgrowths of the prevailing technology, especially the technology of war. But the logic of his analysis clearly points to alternative trajectories of state formation depending on the prevailing combination of production and power.

This book, then, takes up the problem where Barrington Moore, Stein Rokkan, and Lewis Mumford left it: at the point of recognizing decisive variations in the paths of change followed by states in different parts of Europe during successive epochs, with the realization that the class coalitions prevailing in a region at a given point in time strongly limited the possibilities of action open to any ruler or would-be ruler, and with the specific hypothesis that regions of early urban dominance, with their active capitalists, produced very different kinds of states from regions in which great landlords and their estates dominated the landscape. It goes beyond Moore, Rokkan, and Mumford most emphatically in two ways: first by placing the organization of coercion and preparation for war squarely in the middle of the analysis, arguing in its rasher moments that state structure appeared chiefly as a by-product of rulers’ efforts to acquire the means of war; and second by insisting that relations among states, especially through war and preparation for war, strongly affected the entire process of state formation. Thus in this book I derive alternative histories of state formation from continuously-varying combinations of concentrated capital, concentrated coercion, preparation for war, and position within the international system.

This book’s central argument does not so much synthesize as echo the analyses of Moore, Rokkan, and Mumford. Even in its simplest form, the argument is necessarily complex; it says that in European experience:

Men who controlled concentrated means of coercion (armies, navies, police forces, weapons, and their equivalent) ordinarily tried to use them to extend the range of population and resources over which they wielded power. When they encountered no one with comparable control of coercion, they conquered; when they met rivals, they made war.

Some conquerors managed to exert stable control over the populations in substantial territories, and to gain routine access to part of the goods and services produced in the territory; they became rulers.

Every form of rule faced significant limits to its range of effectiveness within a particular kind of environment. Efforts to exceed that range produced defeats or fragmentation of control, with the result that most rulers settled for a combination of conquest, protection against powerful rivals, and coexistence with cooperative neighbors.

The most powerful rulers in any particular region set the terms of war for all; smaller rulers faced a choice between accommodating themselves to the demands of powerful neighbors and putting exceptional efforts into preparations for war.

War and preparation for war involved rulers in extracting the means of war from others who held the essential resources – men, arms, supplies, or money to buy them – and who were reluctant to surrender them without strong pressure or compensation.

Within limits set by the demands and rewards of other states, extraction and struggle over the means of war created the central organizational structures of states.

The organization of major social classes within a state's territory, and their relations to the state, significantly affected the strategies rulers employed to extract resources, the resistance they met, the struggle that resulted, the sorts of durable organization that extraction and struggle laid down, and therefore the efficiency of resource extraction.

The organization of major social classes, and their relations to the state varied significantly from Europe's coercion-intensive regions (areas of few cities and agricultural predominance, where direct coercion played a major part in production) to its capital-intensive regions (areas of many cities and commercial predominance, where markets, exchange, and market-oriented production prevailed). The demands major classes made on the state, and their influence over the state, varied correspondingly.

The relative success of different extractive strategies, and the strategies rulers actually applied, therefore varied significantly from coercion-intensive to capital-intensive regions.

As a consequence, the organizational forms of states followed distinctly different trajectories in these different parts of Europe.

Which sort of state prevailed in a given era and part of Europe varied greatly. Only late in the millennium did national states exercise clear superiority over city-states, empires, and other common European forms of state.

Nevertheless, the increasing scale of war and the knitting together of the European state system through commercial, military, and diplomatic interaction eventually gave the war-making advantage to those states that could field standing armies; states having access to a combination of large rural populations, capitalists, and relatively commercialized economies won out. They set the terms of war, and their form of state became the predominant one in Europe. Eventually European states converged on that form: the national state.

Some of these generalizations (for example, the tendency for war to build state structure) hold through much of world history. Others (for example, the sharp contrast between coercion-intensive and capital-intensive regions) distinguish

Europe from many other world regions. We are pursuing a history that oscillates between the somewhat particular and the extremely general. In both regards, I will try to present enough concrete historical evidence to make the principles comprehensible and credible, but not so much as to bury them in detail.

If we explain the various paths taken by European states, we will better understand today's non-European states. Not that the states of Africa or Latin America are now recapitulating the European experience. On the contrary: the fact that European states formed in a certain way, then imposed their power on the rest of the world, guarantees that non-European experience will be different. But if we pinpoint the durable characteristics of the system Europeans first built, and identify the principles of variation within European experience, we will be better placed to specify what is distinctive about contemporary states, under what historically-imposed constraints they are operating, and what relationships among characteristics of states are likely to hold in our own time. With exactly that aim in mind, the book's final chapter turns from analyses of European experience to an examination of military power in today's Third World.

What happened in history? For the first few centuries of their existence, European states multiplied in the space left them by the large Muslim powers that ringed the Mediterranean and by the nomadic conquerors who thundered west from the Eurasian steppe. When they won territory, Muslims, Mongols, and other outsiders typically set up military rulers and systems of tribute that produced important revenues; they did not, however, intervene decisively in local social arrangements. Within their own space, Europeans farmed, manufactured, traded and, especially, fought each other. Almost inadvertently, they thereby created national states. This book tells how and why.

LOGICS OF CAPITAL AND COERCION

The story concerns capital and coercion. It recounts the ways that wielders of coercion, who played the major part in the creation of national states, drew for their own purposes on manipulators of capital, whose activities generated cities. Of course the two interacted; figure 1.3 represents the general condition.

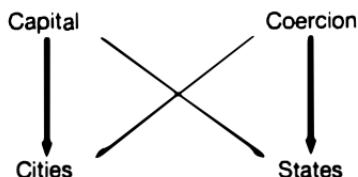


Figure 1.3 How capital and coercion generate cities and states.

Although states strongly reflect the organization of coercion, they actually show the effects of capital as well; as the rest of this book will demonstrate, various combinations of capital and coercion produced very different kinds of states. Again, cities respond especially to changes in capital, but the organization of coercion affects their character as well; Lewis Mumford's baroque city lived on capital like its cousins, but showed a clearer imprint of princely power – in palaces, parade grounds, and barracks – than they did. Over time, furthermore, the place of capital in the form of states grew ever larger, while the influence of coercion (in the guise of policing and state intervention) expanded as well.

Capital – Cities – Exploitation

Before entering into these complexities, however, it will help to explore the capital–cities and coercion–states relationships separately. Let us think of *capital* generously, including any tangible mobile resources, and enforceable claims on such resources. Capitalists, then, are people who specialize in the accumulation, purchase, and sale of capital. They occupy the realm of exploitation, where the relations of production and exchange themselves yield surpluses, and capitalists capture them. Capitalists have often existed in the absence of capitalism, the system in which wage-workers produce goods by means of materials owned by capitalists. Through most of history, indeed, capitalists have worked chiefly as merchants, entrepreneurs, and financiers, rather than as the direct organizers of production. The system of capitalism itself arrived late in the history of capital. It grew up in Europe after 1500, as capitalists seized control of production. It reached its apex – or, depending on your perspective, its nadir – after 1750, when capital-concentrated manufacturing became the basis of prosperity in many countries. For millennia before then, capitalists had flourished without much intervening in production.

The processes that accumulate and concentrate capital also produce cities. Cities figure prominently in this book's analyses, both as favored sites of capitalists and as organizational forces in their own right. To the extent that the survival of households depends on the presence of capital through employment, investment, redistribution or any other strong link, the distribution of population follows that of capital. (Capital, however, sometimes follows cheap labor; the relationship is reciprocal.) Trade, warehousing, banking, and production that depends closely on any of them all benefit from proximity to each other. Within limits set by the productivity of agriculture, that proximity promotes the formation of dense, differentiated populations having extensive outside connections – cities. When capital both accumulates and concentrates within a territory, urban growth tends to occur throughout the same territory – more intensely at the greatest point of concentration, and secondarily elsewhere (see figure 1.4). The form of urban growth, however, depends on the balance between concentration and accumulation. Where capital accumulation occurs

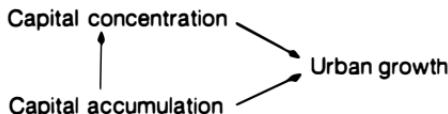


Figure 1.4 How capital generates urban growth.

quite generally, but concentration remains relatively low, many smaller centers develop. Where a single concentration of capital emerges, urban population concentrates around that center.

Properly speaking, then, cities represent regional economies; around every city or urban cluster lies a zone of agriculture and trade (and sometimes of manufacturing as well) that interacts closely with it. Where accumulation and concentration occur in tandem, a hierarchy from small centers to large tends to take shape (see figure 1.5). These tendencies have always operated within important limits. City people normally depend on others to raise most or all of their food and fuel; the transportation and preservation of these requisites for large cities consumes a great deal of energy. Until very recently, most of the world's agricultural areas, including those of Europe, were too unproductive to permit much more than a tenth of the nearby population to live off the land. Cities that could not reach agricultural areas conveniently by means of low-cost water transportation, furthermore, faced prohibitively high food costs. Berlin and Madrid provide good examples: except as their rulers force-fed them, they did not grow.

Health mattered as well. Through almost all of the last thousand years, despite their disproportionate recruitment of vigorous migrants of working age, cities have had significantly higher death rates than their hinterlands. Only after 1850, with improvements in urban sanitation and nutrition, did the balance shift in favor of city-dwellers. As a result, cities have only grown rapidly when

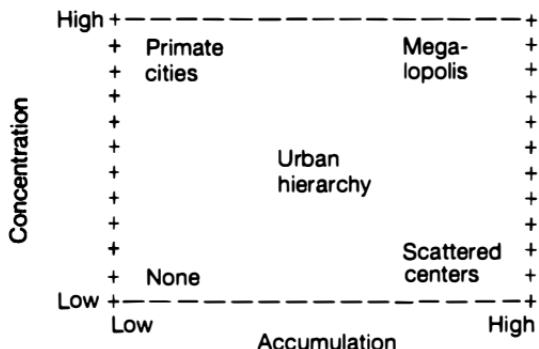


Figure 1.5 Alternative forms of urban growth as functions of capital accumulation and concentration.

agriculture and transportation were becoming relatively efficient or when powerful pressures were driving people off the land.

The sheer growth of cities, however, produced a spiral of change in all these regards. In the vicinity of active cities, people farmed more intensively and devoted a higher proportion of their farming to cash crops; in Europe of the sixteenth century, for example, highly productive agriculture concentrated in the two most urbanized regions, northern Italy and Flanders. Similarly, urban growth stimulated the creation and improvement of transportation by water and land; the Netherlands' superb system of canals and navigable streams brought down the cost, and brought up the speed, of communication among its swarm of cities, thus serving as both cause and effect of urbanization (de Vries 1978). The pressures that drove people off the land, furthermore, often resulted in part from urbanization, as when urban landlords drove smallholders from the hinterland or urban demand fostered the capitalization of the hinterland's agriculture. Accumulation and concentration of capital fostered urban growth, while transforming the regions surrounding new clusters of cities.

Coercion – States – Domination

What of coercion? Coercion includes all concerted application, threatened or actual, of action that commonly causes loss or damage to the persons or possessions of individuals or groups who are aware of both the action and the potential damage. (The cumbersome definition excludes inadvertent, indirect, and secret damage.) Where capital defines a realm of exploitation, coercion defines a realm of domination. The means of coercion center on armed force, but extend to facilities for incarceration, expropriation, humiliation, and publication of threats. Europe created two major overlapping groups of specialists in coercion: soldiers and great landlords; where they merged and received ratification from states in the form of titles and privileges they crystallized into nobilities, who in turn supplied the principal European rulers for many centuries. Coercive means, like capital, can both accumulate and concentrate: some groups (such as monastic orders) have few coercive means, but those few are concentrated in a small number of hands; others (such as armed frontiersmen) have many coercive means that are widely dispersed. Coercive means and capital merge where the same objects (e.g. workhouses) serve exploitation and domination. For the most part, however, they remain sufficiently distinct to allow us to analyze them separately.

When the accumulation and concentration of coercive means grow together, they produce states; they produce distinct organizations that control the chief concentrated means of coercion within well-defined territories, and exercise priority in some respects over all other organizations operating within those territories (see figure 1.6). Efforts to subordinate neighbors and fight off more distant rivals create state structures in the form not only of armies but also of

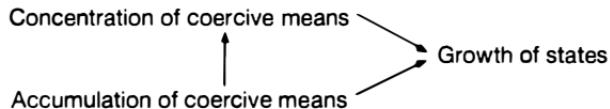


Figure 1.6 How coercion generates the growth of states.

civilian staffs that gather the means to sustain armies and that organize the ruler's day-to-day control over the rest of the civilian population.

WAR DRIVES STATE FORMATION AND TRANSFORMATION

The deployment of coercive means in war and domestic control presents warriors with two dilemmas. First, to the extent that they are successful in subduing their rivals outside or inside the territory they claim, the wielders of coercion find themselves obliged to administer the lands, goods, and people they acquire; they become involved in extraction of resources, distribution of goods, services, and income, and adjudication of disputes. But administration diverts them from war, and creates interests that sometimes tell against war. We can see the dilemma in the five-century conquest of Muslim Spain by Christian warriors. Starting with the taking of Coimbra in 1064, standard siege practice ran like this:

Residents of a town under siege who surrendered promptly could remain with full freedoms after the conquest. If the Muslims surrendered after having been under siege for some time, they could leave with only those goods they could carry. If they waited for the town to fall by force, they faced death or enslavement.

(Powers 1988: 18)

Any of the three responses set a problem for conquerors. The first imposed the obligation – at least temporarily – to establish a system of parallel rule. The second called for a redistribution of property as well as the settlement and administration of a depopulated town. The third left slaves in the hands of the victors, and posed even more sharply the challenge of reestablishing production and population. In one way or another, conquest entailed administration. On a larger scale, these problems dogged the whole reconquest of Iberia. In different forms, they marked the history of conquest throughout Europe.

The second dilemma parallels the first. Preparation for war, especially on a large scale, involves rulers ineluctably in extraction. It builds up an infrastructure of taxation, supply, and administration that requires maintenance of itself and often grows faster than the armies and navies that it serves; those who run the infrastructure acquire power and interests of their own; their interests and power limit significantly the character and intensity of warfare any particular

state can carry on. Europe's Mongol and Tatar states resolved the dilemmas by raiding and looting without building much durable administration, but their strategy put inherent limits on their power, and eventually made them vulnerable to well-financed mass armies. In contrast highly commercial states such as Genoa resolved the dilemmas by borrowing or contracting out the structure necessary to extract the means of war. Between the two extremes, European states found a number of other ways of reconciling the demands of warmaking, extraction, and other major activities.

European states differed significantly, indeed, with respect to their salient activities and organizations. Three different types of state have all proliferated in various parts of Europe during major segments of the period since 990: tribute-taking empires; systems of fragmented sovereignty such as city-states and urban federations, and national states. The first built a large military and extractive apparatus, but left most local administration to regional powerholders who retained great autonomy. In systems of fragmented sovereignty, temporary coalitions and consultative institutions played significant parts in war and extraction, but little durable state apparatus emerged on a national scale. National states unite substantial military, extractive, administrative, and sometimes even distributive and productive organizations in a relatively coordinated central structure. The long survival and coexistence of all three types tells against any notion of European state formation as a single, unilinear process, or of the national state – which did, indeed, eventually prevail – as an inherently superior form of government.

Over the centuries, tribute-taking empires have dominated the world history of states. Empires appeared mainly under conditions of relatively low accumulation of coercive means with high concentration of the available means. When anyone other than the emperor accumulated important coercive means, or the emperor lost the ability to deploy massive coercion, empires often disintegrated. For all its appearance of massive durability, the Chinese Empire suffered incessantly from rebellions, invasions, and movements for autonomy, and long spent a major part of its budget on tribute to Mongols and other nomadic predators. Nor did Europe's empires enjoy greater stability. Napoleon's 1808 invasion of the Iberian peninsula, for instance, shattered much of the Spanish overseas empire. Within months, movements for independence formed in most of Spanish Latin America, and within ten years practically all of the region had broken into independent states.

Federations, city-states, and other arrangements of fragmented sovereignty differed from empires in almost every respect. They depended on relatively high accumulations, and relatively low concentrations, of coercion; the widespread urban militias of fourteenth-century western Europe typify that combination. In such states, a relatively small coalition of nominal subjects could equal the ruler's forces, while individuals, groups, and whole populations had abundant opportunities for defection to competing jurisdictions.

Fourteenth-century Prussia and Pomerania offer a telling contrast: in Prussia, then dominated by the Teutonic Knights, no great princes rivalled the Knights' Grand Master, and towns wielded little power. But the landlords installed by the Knights had wide discretion within their own extensive domains, just so long as revenues flowed to the Knights. In nearby Pomerania, a duchy established simultaneously by smaller-scale German conquests and alliances, many armed rivals to the duke arose, and smaller lords took to outright banditry, as towns dominated the duchy's Estates and provided major military forces in time of war.

During the 1326–8 war between the dukes of Pomerania and Mecklenburg, Pomerania's towns generally sided with their duke while nobles aligned themselves with Mecklenburg. When the Pomeranian house won, the Estates, in which the cities had much say, "were granted far-reaching privileges: the guardianship over minor dukes, the decision whether new ducal castles should be built or pulled down, the right to choose a new master if ever the duke broke his promises or wronged his subjects" (Carsten 1954: 90). The cities' ability to give or withhold support afforded them great bargaining power.

In between tribute-taking empires and city-states stand national states – built around war, statemaking, and extraction like other states, but compelled by bargaining over the subject population's cession of coercive means to invest heavily in protection, adjudication, and sometimes even production and distribution. The later history of Prussia illustrates the process by which national states formed. During the fourteenth century, as we have seen, the Teutonic Knights established a centralized empire there. During the fifteenth century, the Knights, shaken by plague, out-migration of peasants, and military defeat, began to disintegrate, and the regional magnates they had previously controlled became Prussian political powers in their own right. They used their power to impose greater and greater restrictions on the peasants who remained on their estates; with coerced labor the increasingly powerful landlords shifted toward demesne farming and the export of grain to western Europe.

At the same time, the rulers of Brandenburg and Pomerania, previously weakened by alliances of their dukes with prosperous burghers, began to win their incessant struggles with the towns, as the towns' position in international trade declined and the ability of the Hanseatic League to intercede on their behalf weakened. The rulers then had to bargain with noble-dominated Estates, which acquired the fundamental power to grant – or deny – royal revenues for war and dynastic aggrandizement. Over the next few centuries the Hohenzollern margraves of Brandenburg fought their way to pre-eminence in what became Brandenburg-Prussia, absorbing much of old Pomerania in the process; they contracted marriage and diplomatic alliances that eventually expanded their domains into adjacent areas and into the capital-rich areas of the lower Rhine; and they negotiated agreements with their nobility that ceded

privileges and powers to the lords within their own regions, but gave the monarch access to regular revenues.

Out of battles, negotiations, treaties, and inheritances emerged a national state in which the great landlords of Prussia, Brandenburg, and Pomerania had great power within domains the crown had never wrested from them. During the eighteenth century, such monarchs as Frederick the Great locked the last pieces of the structure into place by incorporating peasants and lords alike into the army, the one under the command of the other. Prussia's army mimicked the countryside, with nobles serving as officers, free peasants as sergeants, and serfs as ordinary soldiers. Peasants and serfs paid the price: many peasants fell into serfdom, and "In war and peace Old Prussia's military obligations weakened the social position, the legal rights, and the property holding of serfs vis à vis the noble estate" (Busch 1962: 68). In this respect, Prussia followed a different path from Great Britain (where peasants became rural wage-workers) and France (where peasants survived with a fair amount of property into the nineteenth century). But Prussia, Great Britain, and France all trembled with struggles between monarch and major classes over the means of war, and felt the consequent creation of durable state structure.

As military allies and rivals, Prussia, Great Britain, and France also shaped each other's destinies. In the nature of the case, national states always appear in competition with each other, and gain their identities by contrast with rival states; they belong to systems of states. The broad differences among major types of state structure are schematized in figure 1.7. Well developed examples of all four kinds of state existed in different parts of Europe well after AD 990. Full-fledged empires flourished into the seventeenth century, and the last major zones of fragmented sovereignty only consolidated into national states late in the nineteenth.

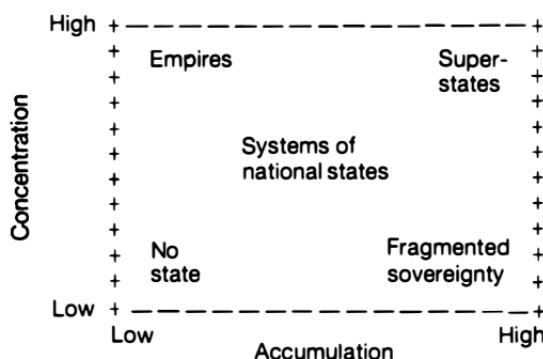


Figure 1.7 Alternative conditions of state growth as functions of accumulation and concentration of coercion.

Rulers of the three types faced some common problems, but faced them differently. Of necessity, they distributed means of coercion unevenly through the territories they sought to control. Most often they concentrated force at the center and at the frontiers, attempting to maintain their authority in between by means of secondary coercive clusters, loyal local wielders of coercion, roving patrols, and widespread collection of intelligence. The Ottoman Empire, for example, created two overlapping systems, one consisting of the *kazas* and other units of civil administration, governed by *kadis*, the other composed of *sancaks* and other districts of the feudal cavalry, governed by a military commander; in time of conquest, the military system tended to absorb the civilian, at the cost of losses in revenue (Pitcher 1972: 124).

The larger the state and the greater the discrepancy between the distribution of coercion and that of capital, however, the stronger the incentives to resist central control, and for alliances to form among different enemies of the state, whether inside or outside its territory. In the *sancak* of Belgrade, part of nineteenth-century Ottoman Serbia, the empire-serving notables (*avan*)

logically concluded that they could enrich themselves more easily by creating their own redistributive system than by serving simply as the stewards of redistribution. They seized a share in the production of the peasantry, levied illegal tolls on the passage of livestock, and retained a portion of the fees collected at the customs stations of the Sava and Danube entrepôts, especially Belgrade, through which passed the cotton exports of Serres and Salonika destined for Vienna and Germany. In particular, they asserted their right to the *deveto*, ostensibly an illegal tribute of one-ninth of a peasant's harvest after the collection by the timariot (in return for cavalry service to the state) of the *deseto* or tenth. By this action and other acts of violence against person or property, the dues in kind exacted from many Serbian peasants were suddenly doubled, sometimes tripled.

(Stoianovitch 1989: 262–3)

This sort of devolution of power occurred widely in the disintegrating Ottoman Empire of the nineteenth century. But in one version or another, agents of indirect rule everywhere in Europe faced temptations to emulate their Serbian cousins. Given the costs of communication and the advantages regional agents of the crown could gain by evading demands from the center or by using delegated national means for local or individual ends, all rulers faced repeated challenges to their hegemony.

Rulers of empires generally sought to co-opt local and regional powerholders without utterly transforming their bases of power and to create a distinctive corps of royal servants – often present or former comrades in arms – whose fate depended on that of the crown. Mamluk sultans, to take an extreme case, maintained a whole caste of enslaved foreigners who became warriors and administrators; except for fiefs directly supporting officials, however, the Mamluks left local magnates in place within their domains. With such a system, slaves actually ruled Egypt and adjacent areas of the Middle East from 1260 to 1517 (Garcin 1988). Rulers of national states usually tried harder to

create a complete administrative hierarchy and to eliminate autonomous bases of power. The Electors and kings of Brandenburg-Prussia, for example, ceded great power to the landholding Junkers, but tied them closely to the crown by means of offices, tax exemptions, and military service.

Those who ruled, or claimed to rule, in city-states, federations, and other states of fragmented sovereignty often managed to exercise tight control over a single city and its immediate hinterland. Beyond that scale, however, they had no choice but to bargain with the authorities of competing centers. The local control usually depended not only on the city's coercive forces, but also on extensive rural landholding by the urban ruling class. Once Florence began its aggressive expansion beyond the municipal level during the fourteenth century, its tyrants replaced the rulers of conquered cities with their own men as much as possible, but selected the replacements from among the local patricians.

All these arrangements left considerable power and discretion in the hands of local potentates, just so long as they contained the monarch's enemies and kept the revenues flowing to the national capital. On a national scale, in fact, no European state (except, perhaps, Sweden) made a serious attempt to institute direct rule from top to bottom until the era of the French Revolution. Before then all but the smallest states relied on some version of indirect rule, and thus ran serious risks of disloyalty, dissimulation, corruption, and rebellion. But indirect rule made it possible to govern without erecting, financing, and feeding a bulky administrative apparatus.

~~The transition to direct rule gave rulers access to citizens and the resources they controlled through household taxation, mass conscription, censuses, police systems, and many other invasions of small-scale social life. But it did so at the cost of widespread resistance, extensive bargaining, and the creation of rights and perquisites for citizens. Both the penetration and the bargaining laid down new state structures, inflating the government's budgets, personnel, and organizational diagrams. The omnivorous state of our own time took shape.~~

It is all too easy to treat the formation of states as a type of engineering, with kings and their ministers as the designing engineers. Four facts compromise the image of confident planning.

1 Rarely did Europe's princes have in mind a precise model of the sort of state they were producing, and even more rarely did they act efficiently to produce such a model state. As the Norman Roger de Hauteville wrested Sicily from Arab control between 1060 and 1075, for example, he improvised a government by incorporating segments of the existing Muslim administration, drew Muslim soldiers into his own army, and maintained Muslim, Jewish, and Greek Christian churches, but took over large tracts of land as his own domain and parceled out other lands to his followers. Calabria, which belonged to Sicily, remained very Greek in culture and political style, with Byzantine offices and rituals brought wholesale into Norman government. But Arab institutions also had their place: Roger's chief minister bore the wonderful title Emir of

Emirs and Archontes of Archontes. The resulting state was certainly distinctive and new, but it did not emanate from a coherent plan. Roger de Hauteville and his followers created a mosaic of adaptations and improvisations (Mack Smith 1968a: 15–25).

2 No one designed the principal components of national states – treasuries, courts, central administrations, and so on. They usually formed as more or less inadvertent by-products of efforts to carry out more immediate tasks, especially the creation and support of armed force. When the French crown, greatly expanding its involvement in European wars during the 1630s, stretched its credit to the point of bankruptcy, the local authorities and officeholders on whom the king's ministers ordinarily relied for the collection of revenues ceased cooperating. At that point chief minister Richelieu, in desperation, began sending out his own agents to coerce or bypass local authorities (Collins 1988). Those emissaries were the royal intendants, who became the mainstays of state authority in French regions under Colbert and Louis XIV. Only in faulty retrospect do we imagine the intendants as deliberately designed instruments of Absolutism.

3 Other states – and eventually the entire system of states – strongly affected the path of change followed by any particular state. From 1066 to 1815, great wars with French monarchs formed the English state, French intervention complicated England's attempts to subdue Scotland and Ireland, and French competition stimulated England's adoption of Dutch fiscal innovations. From the sixteenth century onward, settlements of major wars regularly realigned the boundaries and the rulers of European states, right up to World War II; the division of Germany, the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union, and the dismantling of most European overseas empires all stemmed more or less directly from the settlements of World War II. In none of these cases can we reasonably think of a self-guided state acting on its own.

4 Struggle and bargaining with different classes in the subject population significantly shaped the states that emerged in Europe. Popular rebellions, for example, usually lost, but each major one left marks on the state in the form of repressive policies, realignments of classes for or against the state, and explicit settlements specifying the rights of the affected parties. During the fierce revolt of the Florentine workers (the Ciompi) in 1378, two of the three new woolworkers' guilds formed during the rebellion defected to the government and thereby destroyed a front that had seized effective power in the city; in the settlement, the still-insurrectionary (and more proletarian) guild lost its right to exist, but the two collaborators joined the guilds that paraded and deliberated as part of the official municipal government (Schevill 1963: 279, Cohn 1980: 129–54).

On a smaller scale, both the resistance and the cooperation of knights, financiers, municipal officers, landlords, peasants, artisans, and other actors

created and recreated state structure over the long run. Thus the class structure of the population that fell under the jurisdiction of a particular state significantly affected the organization of that state, and variations in class structure from one part of Europe to another produced systematic geographic differences in the character of states. Not only the ruling classes, but all classes whose resources and activities affected preparation for war, left their imprint on European states.

Twin facts, for example, strongly affected the path of Swedish state formation: first, the overwhelming presence of a peasantry that held plenty of land well into the eighteenth century; second, the relative inability of landlords either to form great estates or to coerce peasant labor on their lands. That exceptional rural class structure prevented the royal strategy of granting nobles fiscal and judicial privileges and assistance in bending peasants to their will in return for collaboration in extracting revenues and military service from the peasantry – even though such a strategy prevailed in nearby areas such as Prussia and Russia. It also helps explain the survival of a separate peasant Estate which actually had some power over governmental action, and the fact that in its period of imperial expansion Sweden turned rapidly from the hiring of mercenaries on the European market to the creation of militias whose members received land, or the income from land, in return for their service. In Sweden as elsewhere, the ambient class structure constrained rulers' attempts to create armed force, and therefore left its impact on the very organization of the state.

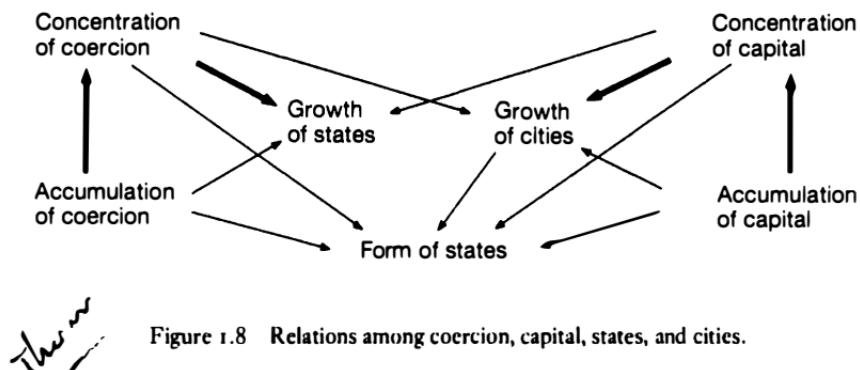


Figure 1.8 Relations among coercion, capital, states, and cities.

A more general and schematic statement of the essential relationships is given in figure 1.8. The diagram takes this shape for the reasons we surveyed earlier: war and preparation for war involved rulers in extracting the means of war from others who held the essential resources – men, arms, supplies, or money to buy them – and were reluctant to surrender them without strong pressure or compensation. The organization of major social classes within a state's territory, and their relations to the state, significantly affected the strategies rulers employed to extract resources, the resistance they met, the struggle that resulted, the sorts of durable organization extraction and struggle laid down, and therefore the efficiency of resource extraction. Within limits set

by the demands and rewards of other states, extraction and struggle over the means of war created the central organizational structures of states. The organization of major social classes, and their relations to the state varied significantly from Europe's coercion-intensive regions (areas of few cities and agricultural predominance, where direct coercion played a major part in production) to its capital-intensive regions (areas of many cities and commercial predominance, where markets, exchange, and market-oriented production prevailed). Demands major classes made on the state, and the influence of those classes over the state, varied correspondingly. The relative success of different extractive strategies, and the strategies rulers actually applied, therefore varied significantly from coercion-intensive to capital-intensive regions. As a consequence, the organizational forms of states followed distinctly different trajectories in these different parts of Europe. Such circumstances belie any idea that European monarchs simply adopted a visible model of state formation and did their best to follow it.

LONG TRENDS AND INTERACTIONS

Another illusion must also disappear. So far I have presented the relationships as though capital and coercion always moved toward greater accumulation and concentration. For the thousand years that concern us here, those have been the main trends. Yet even within the European experience many states have undergone deflation in both regards; Poland endured many reversals in capital and coercion, successive Burgundian and Habsburg empires collapsed, and the sixteenth-century religious wars seriously depleted Europe's stocks of capital and coercive means. The history of European state formation runs generally upward toward greater accumulation and concentration, but it runs across jagged peaks and profound valleys.

Accumulation probably made the larger long-term difference to the history of the European economy. But concentration, deconcentration, and reconcentration of coercion mark off major chapters in the story of state formation; the concentration came to depend in important degree on the availability of concentrated capital. Exactly why and how that was so will preoccupy this book's later sections and take us into complicated questions of fiscal policy. Yet the central link is simple: over the long run, far more than other activities, war and preparation for war produced the major components of European states. States that lost wars commonly contracted, and often ceased to exist. Regardless of their size, states having the largest coercive means tended to win wars; efficiency (the ratio of output to input) came second to effectiveness (total output).

Through the interplay of competition, technological change, and the sheer scale of the largest belligerent states, war and the creation of coercive means

became immensely more expensive over time. As that happened, fewer and fewer rulers could create military means from their own routine resources; more and more they turned to short-term borrowing and long-term taxation. Both activities went more easily where concentrations of capital already existed. But everywhere they produced changes in governmental organization.

How did changes in warfare and state organization relate to each other? As a first approximation, we can divide the years since AD 990 into four segments, with varying temporal limits from one part of Europe to another:

1 *patrimonialism*: a time (up to the fifteenth century in much of Europe) when tribes, feudal levies, urban militias, and similar customary forces played the major part in warfare, and monarchs generally extracted what capital they needed as tribute or rent from lands and populations that lay under their immediate control;

2 *brokerage*: an era (roughly 1400 to 1700 in important parts of Europe) when mercenary forces recruited by contractors predominated in military activity, and rulers relied heavily on formally independent capitalists for loans, for management of revenue-producing enterprises, and for installation and collection of taxes;

3 *nationalization*: a period (especially 1700 to 1850 or so in much of Europe) when states created mass armies and navies drawn increasingly from their own national populations, while sovereigns absorbed armed forces directly into the state's administrative structure, and similarly took over the direct operation of the fiscal apparatus, drastically curtailing the involvement of independent contractors;

4 *specialization*: an age (from approximately the mid-nineteenth century to the recent past) in which military force grew as a powerful specialized branch of national government, the organizational separation of fiscal from military activity increased, the division of labor between armies and police sharpened, representative institutions came to have a significant influence over military expenditures, and states took on a greatly expanded range of distributive, regulatory, compensatory, and adjudicative activities.

Clearly the relations between capital and coercion changed significantly from one period to the next.

The transformation of states by war, in its turn, altered the stakes of war. Through the period of patrimonialism, conquerors sought tribute much more than they sought the stable control of the population and resources within the territories they overran; whole empires grew up on the principle of extracting rents and gifts from the rulers of multiple regions without penetrating significantly into their systems of rule. In the move to brokerage and then to nationalization, a closely administered territory became an asset worth fighting

for, since only such a territory provided the revenues to sustain armed force. But in the age of specialization, states accumulated claimants to their services so rapidly that war became, even more than before, a means of satisfying the economic interests of the ruling coalition by gaining access to the resources of other states. Since World War II, with the extension of the European state system to the entire world and the accompanying rigidification of national boundaries, that has increasingly meant exercising influence over other states without actually incorporating their territory into that of the more powerful state.

Those were the broad trends. Yet more than one combination of capital and coercion appeared at each stage in the growth of European states. We might distinguish a coercion-intensive, a capital-intensive, and a capitalized coercion path to state formation. They do not represent alternative "strategies" so much as contrasting conditions of life. Rulers pursuing similar ends – especially successful preparation for war – in very different environments responded to those environments by fashioning distinctive relations to the major social classes within them. The reshaping of relations between ruler and ruled produced new, contrasting forms of government, each more or less adapted to its social setting.

In the *coercion-intensive* mode, rulers squeezed the means of war from their own populations and others they conquered, building massive structures of extraction in the process. Brandenburg and Russia – especially in their phases as tribute-taking empires – illustrate the coercion-intensive mode. At the very extreme of the mode, however, armed landlords wielded so much power that no one of them could establish durable control over the rest; for several centuries, the Polish and Hungarian nobilities actually elected their own kings, and struck them down when they strove too hard for supreme power.

In the *capital-intensive* mode, rulers relied on compacts with capitalists – whose interests they served with care – to rent or purchase military force, and thereby warred without building vast permanent state structures. City-states, city-empires, urban federations, and other forms of fragmented sovereignty commonly fall into this path of change. Genoa, Dubrovnik, the Dutch Republic, and, for a time, Catalonia, exemplify the capital-intensive mode. As the history of the Dutch Republic illustrates, at the extreme this mode produced federations of largely autonomous city-states, and constant negotiation among them over state policy.

In the intermediate *capitalized coercion* mode, rulers did some of each, but spent more of their effort than did their capital-intensive neighbors on incorporating capitalists and sources of capital directly into the structures of their states. Holders of capital and coercion interacted on terms of relative equality. France and England eventually followed the capitalized coercion mode, which produced full-fledged national states earlier than the coercion-intensive and capital-intensive modes did.

Driven by the pressures of international competition (especially by war and preparation for war) all three paths eventually converged on concentrations of capital and of coercion out of all proportion to those that prevailed in AD 990. From the seventeenth century onward the capitalized coercion form proved more effective in war, and therefore provided a compelling model for states that had originated in other combinations of coercion and capital. From the nineteenth century to the recent past, furthermore, all European states involved themselves much more heavily than before in building social infrastructure, in providing services, in regulating economic activity, in controlling population movements, and in assuring citizens' welfare; all these activities began as by-products of rulers' efforts to acquire revenues and compliance from their subject populations, but took on lives and rationales of their own. Contemporary socialist states differ from capitalist states, on the average, in exerting more direct, self-conscious control over production and distribution. As compared with the range of states that have existed in Europe over the last thousand years, nevertheless, they belong recognizably to the same type as their capitalist neighbors. They, too, are national states.

Before their recent convergence, the coercion-intensive, capital-intensive and capitalized coercion paths led to very different kinds of states. Even after convergence, states retained some features – for example, the character of their representative institutions – that clearly reflected their earlier historical experiences. All three types of state were quite viable under certain conditions that actually prevailed in Europe at various times before the present. Indeed, at the abdication of Charles V in 1555, the major part of Europe lay under imperial hegemony, rather than under the control of national states in any strong sense of the term.

At that point, Suleyman the Magnificent's Ottoman Empire (in addition to dominating Anatolia and much of the Middle East) occupied most of the Balkans and held in vassalage states from the Volga to the Adriatic. Charles V, as Holy Roman Emperor, Emperor of Spain, and Elder of the Habsburgs, then claimed rule over Spain, the Netherlands, Milan, Naples, Sicily, Sardinia, Austria, Bohemia, Burgundy, Franche-Comté and (more contestably) the swarm of states in the territory we now call Germany. Further east, Poland, Lithuania, Muscovy, and the Don Cossacks also organized in imperial style. In 1555, northern Italy, Switzerland, and significant parts of the Holy Roman Empire remained areas of intensely fragmented sovereignty, while only France and England resembled our conventional models of national states. By that time, city-states and other small-scale organizations were losing ground relative to other forms of state. Yet the Dutch Republic was soon to prove that federations of cities and adjacent territories could still hold their own as world powers. Empires, furthermore, were advancing. Nothing then assured the ultimate victory of the national state.

The lesson is clear. To use twentieth-century strength as the main criterion

of effective state formation (as many analysts do) means succumbing to the temptations of teleology, misconceiving the relations among cities, states, capital, and coercion in the European past. We can avoid these pitfalls by following the choices of statemakers, and the consequences of those choices, forward from an early date – here set arbitrarily at AD 990 – to the present.

That forward-looking strategy will allow us to reach some tentative answers to this book's crucial question: What accounts for the great variation over time and space in the kinds of states that have prevailed in Europe since AD 990, and why did European states eventually converge on different variants of the national state? Although the question is formidably broad, it translates into narrower, more manageable problems such as:

~~1~~ *What accounts for the roughly concentric pattern of state formation in Europe as a whole, with large but thinly-controlled states as the Ottoman Empire and Muscovy forming early around the periphery, smaller but more tightly governed states such as France and Brandenburg grouped in a rough intermediate zone, and a central band of city-states, principalities, federations, and other varieties of intensely fragmented sovereignty that only after 1790 consolidated into larger states?*

2 Why, despite obvious interests to the contrary, did rulers frequently accept the establishment of institutions representing the major classes within the populations that fell subject to the state's jurisdiction?

3 Why did European states vary so much with respect to the incorporation of urban oligarchies and institutions into national state structure, with the Dutch Republic's state practically indistinguishable from its cluster of municipal governments, the Polish state almost oblivious to urban institutions, and a dozen other variants in between those extremes?

4 Why did political and commercial power slide from the city-states and city-empires of the Mediterranean to the substantial states and relatively subordinated cities of the Atlantic?

5 Why did city-states, city-empires, federations, and religious organizations lose their importance as prevailing kinds of state in Europe?

6 Why did war shift from conquest for tribute and struggle among armed tribute-takers to sustained battles among massed armies and navies?

The questions remain large, but not so large as the demand for a general explanation of the alternative trajectories taken by European states. The challenge, then, is to address this huge problem and its more manageable subsidiaries by close examination of the various paths that states actually took in different parts of Europe after AD 990. That will involve identifying the main processes transforming states, and sorting them out into their coercion-intensive, capital-intensive, and capitalized-coercion variants.

A book on these questions must steer a narrow road between randomness and teleology. On one side, the blank wall of randomness, in which every history seems *sui generis*, one king or battle after another. On the other, the crevasse of teleology, in which the outcome of state formation seems to explain its entire course. I will try to avoid the blank wall and the crevasse by pointing out that the paths of state formation were multiple but not infinite, that at any particular historical juncture several distinctly different futures were possible, that states, rulers, and citizens influenced each other profoundly, that systematic problems and processes connected the histories of all European states, hence the relations among them. If successful, the chapters to come will tell a tale of diversity in unity, of unity in diversity, of choice and consequences.

PROSPECTS

Let me confess at once: my reading of the European past is unconventional, unproved, and riven with gaps. On the whole, students of European states have prudently avoided syntheses on the scale of a thousand years. Those who have made the leap have generally either sought to explain what was distinctive about the West as a whole, or proposed a single standard path of state formation, or both. They have usually proceeded retrospectively, seeking the origins of the states we now know as Germany or Spain and ignoring states that disappeared along the way rather than trying to chart the whole range of state formation.

By claiming the existence of multiple paths as a function of the relative ease with which capital and coercion concentrated, in arguing a strong interdependence between the form of a state and its previous access to capital, and by seeking to replace a retrospective with a prospective analysis of transformations in state structure I am abandoning the solid ways of established scholarship for an adventure in rethinking the past. By discussing a thousand years in little more than two hundred pages, furthermore, I can hope to do no more than identify some important relationships, and illustrate how they worked.

A fully expanded version of the book's argument would give far greater weight to the dynamics of the European economy than the following pages do. First of all, I will say far too little about swings in prices, productivity, trade and population growth, neglecting among other things the probable importance of price rises in the thirteenth, sixteenth, and eighteenth centuries and of depressions in between for the viability of different kinds of states and the relative power of merchants, peasants, landlords, officials, and other social classes (Abel 1966, Frank 1978, Kriedte 1983, Wallerstein 1974–88).

Second, I will treat the changing organization of production and the resulting class structure only cursorily. That is not because I think it negligible. On the contrary: relations between landlords and cultivators made an enormous difference to the consequences of statemaking, protection, and extraction, as

contrasts among Hungary, Florence, and England instantly demonstrate. The seventeenth-century Prussian state, for example, bore the marks of Prussia's earlier history: during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a crusading order, the Teutonic Knights, extended military control over that thinly-settled region, subdued the Slavs who had previously occupied it, induced German knights to come in and organize large estates, and encouraged cultivation by those knights' recruitment of peasants to clear and farm land that would be theirs in return for dues and service. Such arrangements at the level of household, village, or region clearly affected the viability of different kinds of taxation, conscription, and surveillance. But my assignment is already complicated enough. In order to concentrate on mechanisms of state formation I will repeatedly stereotype or take for granted the relations among landlords, peasants, agricultural proletarians, and other major rural actors.

In attempting to close in on the crucial relationships, furthermore, I will make no effort to review alternative theories of state formation, past or present. Nor will I try to state the pedigrees of the book's organizing ideas. Let us take for granted the existence of analyses by Karl Marx, Max Weber, Joseph Schumpeter, Stein Rokkan, Barrington Moore, Gabriel Ardant, and others that obviously bear on the book's subject matter; *cognoscenti* will surely notice their influence on almost every page, and reviewers will no doubt waste many of their words trying to pigeonhole the book into one school or another. To deal with those analyses, the theories behind them, and the historical phenomenon of state formation at the same time would blunt the analysis and double its length without advancing it greatly. Instead, the book will focus on the actual processes of state formation.

In the interests of compact presentation, I will likewise resort to metonymy and reification on page after page. Metonymy, in that I will repeatedly speak of "rulers," "kings," and "sovereigns" as if they represented a state's entire decision-making apparatus, thus reducing to a single point a complex, contingent set of social relations. Metonymy, in that cities actually stand for regional networks of production and trade in which the large settlements are focal points. Reification, in that I will time and again impute a unitary interest, rationale, capacity, and action to a state, a ruling class, or the people subject to their joint control. Without a simplifying model employing metonymy and reification, we have no hope of identifying the main connections in the complex process of European state formation.

Most of the time the implicit model will contain these elements: a *ruler* summing up the joint decision-making of a state's most powerful officers; a *ruling class* allied with the ruler and controlling major means of production within the territory under the state's jurisdiction; other *clients* enjoying special benefits from their association with the state; *opponents, enemies, and rivals* of the state, its ruler, its ruling class, and its clients, both within and outside the state's own area; the remainder of the *population* falling under the state's jurisdiction; a

coercive apparatus including armies, navies, and other organized, concentrated means of force that operate under the state's control; and the *civilian apparatus* of the state, consisting especially of distinctive fiscal, administrative, and judicial organizations that operate under its control.

Most of the arguments to come entail the description and explanation of the different ways that rulers, ruling classes, clients, opponents, general populations, coercive organizations, and civil administrations articulated in European history from AD 990 onward. Occasionally they unpack one or another of these reified categories – most notably by specifying when, why, and with what effects capitalists (themselves, to be sure, a reified class of people) fell into one or another of the categories. But usually the arguments proceed as if each category were real, unitary and unproblematic. We pay that price for operating on the scale of a continent and a thousand years.

A final apology. On such a scale, I must deal with historical facts like a rock skipping water; spinning quickly from high point to high point without settling for more than an instant at a time. I do not know all the history one would need to write this book fully, and to supply all the documentation for the history I think I do know would burden the text immeasurably. On the recent growth of state activity, for example, any responsible author would want to cite Reinhard Bendix, Walter Korpi, Theda Skocpol, Goran Therborn, and many more. I do nothing of the sort, generally reserving citations for direct quotations and esoteric or controversial information. Clearly, experts will have to scrutinize my rendering of European histories, and ponder whether its errors vitiate its arguments.

Given their broad, synthetic, and speculative character, this book's arguments do not lend themselves immediately to verification or refutation. Yet we can judge them wrong to the degree that:

- 1 rulers having very different relations to capital and coercion nevertheless pursued similar strategies, with similar effects, when they tried to build armed force and state power;
- 2 major moments in the growth and transformation of particular states, and of the European state system as a whole, did *not* correspond to war and preparation for war;
- 3 efforts to amass the means of armed force did *not* produce durable features of state structure;
- 4 rulers deliberately set out to construct states according to preconceived designs, and succeeded in following those designs;
- 5 some or all of the empirical regularities I have claimed – especially (a) state formation's geography, (b) differential incorporation of urban oligarchies and

institutions into national state structure, (c) development of representative institutions despite rulers' contrary interests, (d) movement of political and commercial power from Mediterranean to Atlantic, (e) decline of city-states, city-empires, federations, and religious organizations, and (f) shift of war to sustained battles among massed armies and navies – do not, in fact, hold up to historical scrutiny;

- 6 alternative explanations provide more economical and/or convincing accounts of those empirical regularities that *do* hold up to scrutiny.

If any of these holds true, my argument faces a serious challenge. If all of them hold true, it is clearly wrong.

Important theoretical issues are at stake. One might expect a follower of Joseph Strayer, for example, to hold that the domestic peacemaking activities of monarchs began much earlier and played a much larger part in people's acceptance of the state than my account implies, and therefore to uphold most of the checklist's charges against the book's analysis. One might expect a follower of Douglass North to claim that the state's construction and protection of property rights underlay many of the changes I have attributed to preparation for war. One might expect a follower of Immanuel Wallerstein to insist that the activities of states forwarded the interests of capitalists to an even larger degree than I have allowed, and a follower of Perry Anderson to counter (at least for the middle period of my analysis) that the argument greatly underestimates the weight of European nobilities in the creation of bulky "absolutist" states. Thus the ways in which my arguments are right or wrong bear on widely-discussed disagreements concerning European state formation.

The checklist provides a means of sorting possible criticisms of the book into legitimate, semi-legitimate, and illegitimate. It would be fully legitimate, and quite illuminating, to establish that one of the conditions just listed, or a similar condition implied by the book's arguments did, indeed, hold for some substantial block of European experience. It would be semi-legitimate to show that the argument did not account for certain major, durable features of particular states. (The criterion would be only semi-legitimate because it would show that the argument was incomplete – which I concede readily in advance – but not that it was wrong.)

It would be illegitimate to complain that the argument neglects variables the critic happens to regard as important: physical environment, ideology, military technology, or something else. The missing-variable criticism only becomes legitimate when the critic shows that neglect of the variable causes a false reading of relationships among variables that *do* appear in the argument. The point is not to give a "complete" account (whatever that might be), but to get the main connections right.

In pursuit of that goal, the next chapter concentrates on the changing

geography of cities and states in Europe over the inquiry's thousand years. Chapter 3 takes up the mechanisms by which the rulers of states acquired the means to carry on their major activities – especially the creation of armed force – and the implications of those mechanisms for state structure. Chapter 4 concentrates on relations between states and citizens, tracing the formation through bargaining of massive, multi-function states. Chapter 5 deals with alternative paths of state formation, tracing out the effects of varying relationships to capital and coercion. Chapter 6 examines European states as a set of interacting parties, a system whose operation constrains the actions of its members. Chapter 7 brings the story up to the present, reflecting on contemporary relationships between capital and coercion in an effort to understand why military men have gained power in so many states since World War II, and in the hope of discerning in what ways European experience helps us understand the troubled states of our own time.

3

How War Made States, and Vice Versa

A BIFURCATION OF VIOLENCE

Despite the current forty-year lull in open war among the world's great powers, the twentieth century has already established itself as the most bellicose in human history. Since 1900, by one careful count, the world has seen 237 new wars – civil and international – whose battles have killed at least 1,000 persons per year; through the year 2000, the grim numbers extrapolate to about 275 wars and 115 million deaths in battle. Civilian deaths could easily equal that total. The bloody nineteenth century brought only 205 such wars and 8 million dead, the warlike eighteenth century a mere 68 wars with 4 million killed (Sivard 1986: 26; see also Uralanis 1960). Those numbers translate into death rates per thousand population of about 5 for the eighteenth century, 6 for the nineteenth century, and 46 – eight or nine times as high – for the twentieth. From 1480 to 1800, a significant new international conflict started somewhere every two or three years, from 1800 to 1944 every one or two years, since World War II every fourteen months or so (Beer 1974: 12–15; Small and Singer 1982: 59–60; Cusack and Eberwein 1982). The nuclear age has not slowed the centuries-old trend toward more frequent, deadlier wars.

That Westerners commonly think otherwise probably results from the fact that war has become rarer among the great powers: France, England, Austria, Spain, and the Ottoman Empire in 1500; France, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, West Germany, the United States, and China today; other sets in between. Wars directly involving great powers have, on the average, declined in frequency, duration, and number of participating states since the sixteenth century. They have also, in bitter compensation, become much more severe – especially if we count the number of deaths per month or per year (Levy

1983: 116–49). Among lesser powers, more and more wars, but fairly small ones; among the great powers, fewer and fewer wars, but increasingly deadly ones.

We can read the contrast between great power experience with war and that of other states optimistically or pessimistically. Optimistically, we might suppose that the great powers eventually found less costly ways of settling their differences than incessant wars, and that the same thing will eventually happen to other states. Pessimistically, we might conclude that the great powers have exported war to the rest of the world, and have saved their own energy for destroying each other in concentrated bursts. In either mood, we see an increasingly belligerent world in which the most powerful states enjoy a partial exemption from war on their own terrains and therefore, perhaps, become less sensitive to the horrors of war.

The problem is not, however, that people in general have become more aggressive. As the world has grown more warlike, interpersonal violence outside of the state's sphere has generally declined (Chesnais 1981, Gurr 1981, Hair 1971, Stone 1983). At least that seems to be true of Western countries, the only ones so far for which we have long series of evidence. Although the reports of murders, rapes, and collective violence in our daily newspapers may suggest otherwise, the chances of dying a violent death at some other civilian's hand have diminished enormously.

Homicide rates in thirteenth-century England, for example, were about ten times those of today, and perhaps twice those of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Rates of murder declined with particular rapidity from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. (Because the United States has by far the highest national homicide rate in the Western world, it may be harder for Americans than for others to appreciate how rare interpersonal violence has become elsewhere; in most Western countries suicide is ten or twenty times as common as murder, while the American population's homicide rate approaches its rate of suicide.) If it were not for war, state repression, the automobile, and suicide, the odds of violent death of any kind would be incomparably slimmer in most of the Western world today than they were two or three hundred years ago.

Such thinkers as Michel Foucault and Marvin Becker may be right to attribute part of the change to massive shifts in mentality. But surely a significant contribution came from the increasing tendency of states to monitor, control, and monopolize the effective means of violence. In most of the world, the activity of states has created a startling contrast between the violence of the state's sphere and the relative non-violence of civilian life away from the state.

HOW STATES CONTROLLED COERCION

European states led the construction of that contrast. They did so by building up fearsome coercive means of their own as they deprived civilian populations

of access to those means. For the most part, they relied heavily on capital and capitalists as they reorganized coercion. Yet different states did so in strikingly different ways.

Do not underestimate the difficulty or importance of the change. Over most of European history, ordinary men (again, the masculine form of the word matters) have commonly had lethal weapons at their disposal; within any particular state, furthermore, local and regional powerholders have ordinarily had control of concentrated means of force that could, if combined, match or even overwhelm those of the state. For a long time, nobles in many parts of Europe had a legal right to wage private war; the twelfth-century *Usatges*, or Customs, of Catalonia specifically recorded that right (Torres i Sans 1988: 13). Bandits (who often consisted of disbanded segments of private or public armies) flourished in much of Europe through the seventeenth century. In Sicily, those controlled and protected entrepreneurs of violence called *mafiosi* have terrorized rural populations into our own time (Blok 1974, Romano 1963). People outside the state have often profited handsomely from their private deployment of violent means.

Since the seventeenth century, nevertheless, rulers have managed to shift the balance decisively against both individual citizens and rival powerholders within their own states. They have made it criminal, unpopular, and impractical for most of their citizens to bear arms, have outlawed private armies, and have made it seem normal for armed agents of the state to confront unarmed civilians. By clinging to civilian possession of firearms, the United States now sets itself apart from all other Western countries, and pays the price in rates of death by gunshot hundreds of times higher than its European counterparts; in the proliferation of private weaponry, the United States resembles Lebanon and Afghanistan more than Great Britain or the Netherlands.

Disarmament of the civilian population took place in many small steps: general seizures of weapons at the ends of rebellions, prohibitions of duels, controls over the production of weapons, introduction of licensing for private arms, restrictions on public displays of armed force. In England, the Tudors suppressed private armies, reduced the princely power of great lords along the Scottish border, contained aristocratic violence, and eliminated the fortress-castles that once announced the power and autonomy of the great English magnates (Stone 1965: 199–272). Louis XIII, the seventeenth-century monarch who with the aid of Richelieu and Mazarin rebuilt the armed force of the French state, probably tore down more fortresses than he constructed. But he built at the frontiers, and destroyed in the interior. In subduing magnates and cities that resisted his rule, he commonly demolished their fortifications, reduced their rights to bear arms, and thereby decreased the odds of any serious future rebellion.

At the same time, the state's expansion of its own armed force began to overshadow the weaponry available to any of its domestic rivals. The distinction

between "internal" and "external" politics, once quite unclear, became sharp and fateful. The link between warmaking and state structure strengthened. Max Weber's historically contestable definition of the state – "a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory" (Gerth and Mills 1946: 78) – finally began to make sense for European states.

Exactly how civilian disarmament proceeded depended on its social setting: in urban regions, the installation of routine policing and the negotiation of agreements between municipal and national authorities played a major part, while in regions dominated by great landlords the disbanding of private armies, the elimination of walled, moated castles, and the interdiction of vendettas alternated between co-optation and civil war. Coupled with the continued buildup of the state's armed force, the disarmament of civilians enormously increased the ratio of coercive means in state hands to those at the disposal of domestic rivals or opponents of those currently holding state power. As a result, it has become almost impossible for a dissident faction to seize power over a Western state without the active collaboration of some segments of the state's own armed forces (Chorley 1943, Russell 1974).

A ruler's creation of armed force generated durable state structure. It did so both because an army became a significant organization within the state and because its construction and maintenance brought complementary organizations – treasuries, supply services, mechanisms for conscription, tax bureaux, and much more – into life. The Prussian monarchy's chief tax-collection agency came into being as the General War Commissariat. During the later seventeenth century, England's successive republican and monarchical governments, intent on countering French and Dutch naval power, built royal shipyards into the country's largest concentrated industry. Such empire-building organizations as the Dutch East India Company became enormously influential elements of their national governments (Duffy 1980). From AD 990 onward, major mobilizations for war provided the chief occasions on which states expanded, consolidated, and created new forms of political organization.

WARS

Why did wars occur at all? The central, tragic fact is simple: coercion *works*; those who apply substantial force to their fellows get compliance, and from that compliance draw the multiple advantages of money, goods, deference, access to pleasures denied to less powerful people. Europeans followed a standard war-provoking logic: everyone who controlled substantial coercive means tried to maintain a secure area within which he could enjoy the returns from coercion, plus a fortified buffer zone, possibly run at a loss, to protect the secure area. Police or their equivalent deployed force in the secure area, while armies

patrolled the buffer zone and ventured outside it; the most aggressive princes, such as Louis XIV, shrank the buffer zone to a thin but heavily-armed frontier, while their weaker or more pacific neighbors relied on larger buffers and waterways. When that operation succeeded for a while, the buffer zone turned into a secure area, which encouraged the wielder of coercion to acquire a new buffer zone surrounding the old. So long as adjacent powers were pursuing the same logic, war resulted.

Some conditions for war varied, however. Every state's particular brand of warmaking depended on three closely-related factors: the character of its major rivals, the external interests of its dominant classes, and the logic of the protective activity in which rulers engaged on behalf of their own and dominant classes' interests. Where rivals were commercial seafarers, piracy and privateering simply continued, regardless of the formal state of war and peace, while where landlord-dominated agrarian powers lived shoulder to shoulder, disputes over control of land and labor – especially at moments of disputed succession – precipitated resort to arms much more frequently. When small maritime powers owned large overseas empires, protection of interests drew them into the patrolling of sea lanes, and therefore into inevitable battles with others who coveted the same trade. Because the constellation of rivalries, the nature of dominant classes, and the demands of protection changed fundamentally over the thousand years we are surveying, the characteristic causes of war changed as well.

Coercion is always relative; anyone who controls concentrated means of coercion runs the risk of losing advantages when a neighbor builds up his means. In Europe before 1400, the control of most states by kin groups compounded the competition. Where rulers formed a kin group, the tendency of prospering kin groups to expand and to seek places for growing numbers of heirs incited conquest, and therefore sharpened rivalries. Intermarriage among ruling families, furthermore, multiplied the claims of powerful dynasties to vacated thrones. In the fragmented sovereignty of Europe, rivals – whether kinsmen or not – were always close at hand, but so was a coalition nearly always available to keep any particular center from expanding indefinitely.

For a long time, furthermore, larger states such as Burgundy and England always harbored *internal* rivals to the current sovereign, armed groups who had also some claim to rule, and who sometimes served as implicit or explicit allies of external enemies. In China, once the vast imperial apparatus formed, a waxing empire had plenty of enemies, but no real rivals inside or outside its territories. Mongols constantly threatened along China's northern border, and intermittently staged devastating raids into the empire, but only once actually took it over. In general, the Mongols were better at exacting tribute than they would have been at running the state apparatus themselves. Chinese dynasties collapsed when the empire's administrative reach exceeded its grasp, when warlords organized in the empire's interstices, and when mobile invaders

(especially Manchus) swept into imperial territory and seized the levers of power. China became the great land of rebellions and civil war, but not of war among multiple states. For that, Europe held the record.

Over the long run, European wars became more lethal and less frequent. Drawing on the pioneer work of Pitirim Sorokin, Jack Levy has compiled a catalog of larger wars involving great powers – European or otherwise – from 1495 through 1975 (see table 3.1). His catalog, which requires at a minimum 1,000 battle deaths per year, is much smaller than Evan Luard's attempt at a comprehensive listing of all substantial wars over a comparable period, but Levy sets clearer criteria for inclusion and provides more detail on the wars he does include (see Levy 1983, Luard 1987). Over the centuries, the number of great power wars, their average duration, and the proportion of all years in which such wars were in progress all dropped dramatically (Levy 1983: 88–91, 139). William Eckhardt's list of all wars – great power and other, international and civil, combined – includes 50 for the eighteenth century, 208 for the nineteenth, and 213 for the twentieth through 1987 (Eckhardt 1988: 7; Sivard 1988: 28–31).

Table 3.1 Wars involving great powers

Century	Number of wars	Average duration of wars (years)	Proportion of years war underway (%)
16th	34	1.6	95
17th	29	1.7	94
18th	17	1.0	78
19th	20	0.4	40
20th ^a	15	0.4	53

^a through 1975
Source: Levy 1983, Luard 1987

In addition, the intensity of war altered significantly. Figure 3.1 captures some of the alteration by means of a device borrowed from the analysis of strikes: a solid whose volume represents the total number of battle deaths incurred by great powers per year, and whose three dimensions show the components of total battle deaths. The three components are: number of battle deaths per state participating in great power wars during the average year; number of states participating in those wars during the average year; and average number of wars per state-year of participation. Thus

$$\begin{aligned} \text{battle deaths per year} = \\ \text{battle deaths per state} \times \text{state-years per war} \times \text{wars per year} \end{aligned}$$

which is what the solid shows.

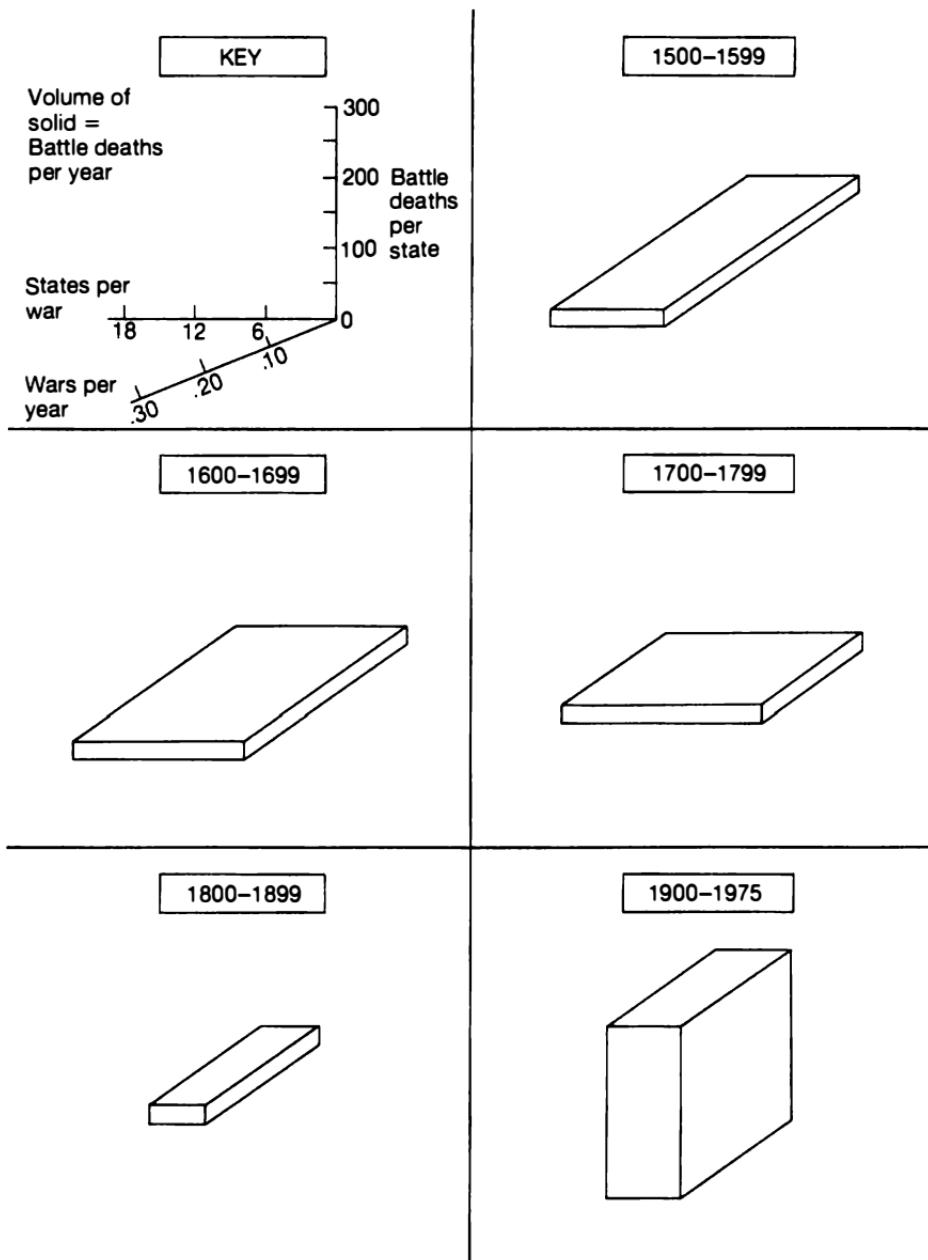


Figure 3.1 Magnitudes of great power war by century, 1500–1975.

Moving from century to century, we see the number of great power battle deaths per state rising from just under 3,000 per year during the sixteenth century to more than 223,000 during the twentieth. The average number of states involved in great power wars rose from 9.4 in the sixteenth century to

17.6 in the eighteenth century, only to fall back to 6.5 in the twentieth. (The rise and fall reveals the development of the general war among most or all of the great powers, counterbalanced in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by the tendency of Western states to start or intervene in local conflicts outside of the West.) Finally, the number of wars going on in a given year per warmaking state dropped from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, then held steady: 0.34, 0.29, 0.17, 0.20, and 0.20. During the sixteenth century, that is, states that ever participated in great power wars were at war during about one year in three (0.34); during the twentieth, one year in five (0.20).

As a result of these changes, the sheer volume of great power deaths per year soared from 9,400 during the sixteenth century to 290,000 during the twentieth. If we could include deaths of civilians and among troops of minor powers, the inflation would surely be even more rapid. With aircraft, tanks, missiles, and nuclear bombs, the death toll of twentieth-century wars far outshadows those of previous centuries.

The numbers are only approximate, but they establish the heavy involvement of European states (which, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries constituted almost all the world's great powers) in warfare, century after century. They also suggest that preparation for war, paying for it, and mending its damage preoccupied rulers throughout the five centuries under scrutiny. In the five centuries before 1500, furthermore, European states concentrated even more exclusively on the making of war. Over the millennium as a whole, war has been the dominant activity of European states.

State budgets, taxes, and debts reflect that reality. Before 1400, in the era of patrimonialism, no state had a national budget in the understood sense of the word. Taxes existed in Europe's more commercialized states, but rulers everywhere acquired most of their revenues from tribute, rents, dues, and fees. Individual sovereigns borrowed money, but usually in their own names and against real collateral. During the sixteenth century, as war multiplied state expenditures through most of the continent, European states began to regularize and expand budgets, taxes, and debts alike. States' future revenues began to serve as security for long-term debt.

France's public debt took on serious proportions when Francis I started borrowing from Parisian businessmen in the 1520s, offering the city's future revenues as security (Hamilton 1950: 246). He spent the money on his great campaigns against Habsburg Emperor Charles V. Although the French national debt fluctuated as a function of war efforts and fiscal policies, in general it galloped upward – to the point at which borrowing for eighteenth-century wars swamped the state, ruined its credit, and led directly to the fateful calling of the Estates General in 1789. Budgets and taxes swelled accordingly: French taxes rose from the equivalent of about 50 hours of an ordinary laborer's wages per capita per year in 1600 to almost 700 hours per capita in 1963 (Tilly 1986: 62).

Great Britain survived without large state debts until the reign of William and Mary. The War of the League of Augsburg (1688–97) elevated the long-term British debt to £22 million. By 1783, after the Seven Years' War and the War of American Independence, it had increased tenfold, to £238 million. In 1939, as Britain rearmed, the public debt reached £8,300 million (Hamilton 1950: 254–7). From the late seventeenth century onward budgets, debts, and taxes arose to the rhythm of war. All of Europe's warmaking states had the same experience.

If war drove states, it did not exhaust their activity. On the contrary: as a by-product of preparations for war, rulers willy-nilly started activities and organizations that eventually took on lives of their own: courts, treasuries, systems of taxation, regional administrations, public assemblies, and much more. Writing of the sixteenth century, J. H. Elliott notes:

~~If warfare was a dominant theme in the history of Spain under Charles V and Philip II, bureaucratization was another . . . The replacement of the warrior-king Charles V by a sedentary Philip II, who spent his working day at his desk surrounded by piles of documents, fittingly symbolized the transformation of the Spanish Empire as it passed out of the age of the *conquistador* into the age of the Civil Servant.~~

(Elliott 1963: 160)

The tasks of fitting out armies and navies were not the only ones which resulted in an expanding governmental structure. No monarch could make war without securing the acquiescence of nearly all of his subject population, and the active cooperation of at least a crucial few. Over and over, rulers sent troops to enforce the collection of tribute, taxes, and levies of men or materials. But they also allowed localities to buy off the costly imposition of troops by timely payments of their obligations. In this regard, rulers resembled racketeers: at a price, they offered protection against evils that they themselves would otherwise inflict, or at least allow to be inflicted.

At the level of the state, the organizational division between armed forces oriented to attacks on external enemies (armies) and those oriented to control of the national population (police) developed only slowly, and never became complete. Problems of policing differ systematically between rural areas (where, among other things, large proportions of land tend to be in private space, forbidden to public authorities) and urban areas (where much land is public space, accessible to anyone); a military style of policing on call suits most rural areas, while systematic patrolling and surveillance becomes possible in urban areas (Stinchcombe 1963). As a consequence of these and other differences, cities generally developed distinct police forces well before the countryside, and the separation of police forces from other military organizations occurred earlier in relatively urban states.

Well into the seventeenth century, most large European states, by virtue of their reliance on armed and partly autonomous regional magnates for domestic

rule, faced recurrent threats of civil war as magnates took up arms against rulers. During the critical centuries from 1400 to 1700, rulers spent much of their effort disarming, isolating, or co-opting rival claimants to state power. Although municipalities and rural jurisdictions had created their own small police forces long before, only during the nineteenth century did European states establish uniformed, salaried, bureaucratic police forces specialized in control of the civilian population. They thus freed their armies to concentrate on external conquest and international war.

TRANSITIONS

War wove the European network of national states, and preparation for war created the internal structures of the states within it. The years around 1500 were crucial. Europeans had started using gunpowder seriously in warfare toward the middle of the fourteenth century. Over the following 150 years, the invention and diffusion of firearms had tipped the military advantage toward monarchs who could afford to cast cannon and build the new kinds of fortresses that cannon could not easily shatter. Warfare shifted from battles fought on open plains toward sieges of important cities. Around 1500 costs rose again as mobile siege artillery, and infantry to accompany it, came into widespread use; the development of portable musketry in the early sixteenth century further enhanced the importance of trained, disciplined infantry. At the same time, sailing vessels carrying big guns started to predominate in naval warfare. The larger states north of the Alps, especially France and the Habsburg empire, had the scale to absorb the increased costs, and took advantage of it.

For two more centuries, it is true, some states that concentrated on navies continued to thrive; by some standards the Dutch Republic, with very small land forces, became Europe's leading state during the seventeenth century. Portugal and Venice likewise held their own into the seventeenth century. Insular England prospered as a maritime power before building up its armies during the eighteenth century (Modelska and Thompson 1988: 151–244). Such states drew riches from their colonies, profited from intensive international trade, and took advantage of home bases that seapower could easily defend. Eventually, however, those states that recruited and maintained huge armies from their own national resources – France, Great Britain, and Prussia are the preponderant models – prevailed over all the rest.

On a European scale, then, the late fifteenth century marked an important transition: as the large military states began to feel the stimulus of capitalist expansion, the advantages of the small mercantile states began to disappear. Geopolitics played its part: the end of the Hundred Years' War freed a relatively unified France to look around for spaces to conquer. The multiple states of

Iberia, which were completing the expulsion of Muslim powers from the peninsula, felt the French pressure; in 1463, Louis XI actually annexed the Catalan counties of Roussillon and Cerdagne. The marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella (1474), by joining the crowns of Aragon and Castile, replied to the French threat, and threatened France in its turn. The rivalry of France and Spain then began to reverberate through European politics.

Italy felt the impact of that change first. The papal states, the republics, and the small monarchies of Italy had, of course, long involved themselves in politics outside of the peninsula. Delicately balanced alliances, appeals to outside mediators, and timely marriages played significant parts in their politics. During the eleventh to fourteenth centuries, popes had devoted much of their energy to checking, controlling, or even engineering the elections of German-based Holy Roman emperors. The emperors, in their turn, had typically claimed suzerainty over much of Italy. In short, Italian politics had long connected with politics elsewhere.

Nor were war and international rivalry novelties in the peninsula. During the thirteenth century, Aragon, the Holy Roman Empire, France, and the papacy had all contended for priority in Italy. Many of the century's major battles occurred there. By the 1490s, furthermore, the major powers of Italy – Venice, Milan, Florence, Naples, and the papal states – had been warring with each other intermittently for decades. Their wars, however, had proceeded in a genteel, limited way. Then the usurper-duke Ludovico Sforza of Milan invited Charles VIII of France to press his family's claims to the kingdom of Naples.

With Charles VIII's siege of Naples, not one scourge but two entered Italy. Before 1494, syphilis probably did not exist in Europe; returnees from Columbus's first voyage to America, who had contracted the disease in America, very likely introduced the disease to Spain. Spanish mercenaries at the siege of Naples (1494–5) suffered an epidemic that was almost certainly syphilis, whence it spread throughout the continent. As the plague spread, the French commonly called it "Neapolitan disease," while Neapolitans preferred to call it "the French disease" (Baker and Armelagos 1988). Whatever the precise origin of that first epidemic, Italians soon knew that the French and their mercenaries had returned to the peninsula, with a vengeance. If the French arrived, the Spanish would follow.

The 1490s therefore differed from the past. They differed in bringing not just ambassadors, princes, and imperial forces, but large armies from the waxing national states across the Alps, into city-state Italy. The northerners arrived, furthermore, with mobile siege guns and tactics to accompany them, which multiplied the scale and destructiveness of warfare. The French invasion of 1494 made the peninsula Europe's battleground, ended the round of small-scale wars among autonomous city-states, and shocked Italian thinkers.

Their shock resulted from the fact that barbarian forces had once again overrun the homeland of civilization. As J. R. Hale puts it:

The change that came over the nature of warfare after 1494 was overstressed by Machiavelli in the interest of proving a thesis about the relative merits of militiamen to *condottieri*, as it was by Guicciardini in the interest of turning the knife in the wound to Italy's self-esteem, but a change there certainly was, and it was greeted with widespread horror. This horror, however, was not directed against large-scale war as such, as opposed to earlier small-scale wars, nor even against a long period of such wars; nor was it directed to any important extent against the changed nature of war – more bloody, more total, more expensive. It was caused by the evidence provided by these wars of a failure of morale, a failure of the Italian character to meet their challenge.

(Hale 1983: 360)

A significant portion of Machiavelli's writing about military affairs stemmed from his effort to think through what was happening to the Italian state system, and what to do about it.

What *was* happening to the Italian state system? The national states in formation north of the Alps, by competing for hegemony in Italy, were forcibly integrating it into a larger system spanning much of Europe. Soon after, the Ottoman Empire was expanding deep into European territory, and putting pressure on Italy from the southeast; the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent (1520–66) brought the Turks to the summit of their European power. The Ottoman advance, in its turn, started a four-century struggle with Russia, aligning the strategically-located Crimean Tatars with the Ottomans and against the Russians for the first time.

In Italy, the alteration of warfare had devastating consequences. By the 1520s, Habsburgs and Valois were fighting their dynastic wars on Italian territory. In 1527, the Habsburg emperor's mercenaries sacked Rome. As of 1540, Milan and Lombardy had fallen under Spanish rule, France occupied much of Savoy and Piedmont, Florence had become a Medici-ruled duchy nominally subject to the empire, and Naples was an appanage of the Spanish crown. Of the greater Italian powers, only the most maritime, Venice and Genoa, had maintained their oligarchic institutions. Even they lost their pre-eminence in the Mediterranean.

As the northern states generalized their wars and drew Italy into their struggles, war on land became more important, and the ability to field large armies more critical to a state's success. France had 18,000 troops under arms in 1494, 32,000 in 1525, and 40,000 in 1552. Spain's forces expanded much faster: from 20,000 soldiers in 1492 to 100,000 in 1532. By 1552, Emperor Charles V had some 148,000 men under arms, a total unprecedented since Roman times (Parker 1988: 45). At Spain's peak, around 1630, 300,000 men served under its banners. The ratio of troops to total population rose significantly. The figures in table 3.2 require many qualifications. The dates are approximate, "England and Wales" means England and Wales through 1600, Great Britain in 1700, and the United Kingdom thereafter, the boundaries of all these states changed continually throughout the period, and the frequent

Table 3.2 Men under arms, Europe 1500–1980

Country	Thousands of troops under arms					Troops as percent of national population				
	1500	1600	1700	1850	1980	1500	1600	1700	1850	1980
Spain	20	200	50	154	342	0.3	2.5	0.7	1.0	0.9
France	18	80	400	439	495	0.1	0.4	2.1	1.2	0.9
England/Wales	25	30	292	201	329	1.0	0.7	5.4	1.1	0.6
Netherlands		20	100	30	115		1.3	5.3	1.0	0.8
Sweden		15	100	63	66		1.5	7.1	1.8	0.8
Russia		35	170	850	3663		0.3	1.2	1.5	1.4

Source: Compiled from Ballibé 1983, Brewer 1989, Corvisier 1976, Flora 1983, Jones 1988, Lynn 1989, Mitchell 1975, Parker 1976, Parker 1988, Reinhard, Armengaud and Dupâquier 1968, Sivard 1983, de Vries 1984, Wrigley and Schofield 1981.

employment of foreign mercenaries meant that between 1500 and 1700 the figures shown here were in most cases much higher than the proportion of the national population under arms. Furthermore, the official and real strengths of armies often differed significantly, especially before 1800. Finally, for reasons this chapter explores, numbers of troops fluctuated dramatically from year to year, depending on public finances and the state of war; in France toward 1700, for example, the peacetime army ran to around 140,000 men, but Louis XIV brought it up to 400,000 in the midst of his great campaigns (Lynn 1989). Nevertheless, the figures make their main point eloquently. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially, armies expanded. They became big business.

State budgets, taxes, and debt rose accordingly. Castile's tax revenues rose from less than 900,000 *reales* in 1747 to 26 million in 1504 (Elliott 1963: 80). At the same time, Ferdinand and Isabella borrowed to pay for their wars in Granada and Italy. As Spanish control over Italy deepened, Italian taxation became a prime source of crown income; the Netherlands likewise yielded an important share of Castile's revenue. The Cortes of Catalonia, Aragon, and Valencia, in contrast, successfully resisted royal demands to increase their contributions to the state's warmaking. By the middle of the sixteenth century, Spain's Italian and Dutch provinces ceased to yield substantial increases; Charles V and Philip II turned increasingly to Castile (where their predecessors had more effectively subjugated nobility, clergy, and cities to royal will) and to America for financial aid (Elliott 1963: 192–3). They also borrowed through anticipations of revenue from both Castile and America, with the result that by 1543, 65 percent of the crown's regular revenues went to payment of annuities (Elliott 1963: 198; for more detail, see Fernandez Albaladejo 1989). Unsurprisingly, the crown went bankrupt, repudiating its debts in 1557.

At the same time, the Swiss – still, at that time, a conquering people – developed new, highly-disciplined infantry tactics that rapidly proved their superiority. The Swiss had established their military mettle in defeating

Burgundy's Charles the Bold repeatedly during the 1470s. Soon almost every power needed its own Swiss soldiers, and the Swiss began substituting the training and export of mercenaries for the conduct of their own wars (Fueter 1919: 10). In the process, the Swiss cantons themselves entered the business of supplying soldiers for pay (Corvisier 1976: 147). Like other exporters of mercenaries, Switzerland already had a substantial number of poor, mobile, semi-proletarianized and late-married highlanders who became attractive candidates for military service away from home (Braun 1960). Mercenaries, Swiss and otherwise, displaced armies of clients and citizen militias.

On a small scale, mercenaries had played their part in European wars for centuries. From the time of the crusades, freebooting soldiers from north of the Alps had sold their services to princes, actual and aspiring, all through the Mediterranean. When no one employed them, they extorted and pillaged on their own account (Contamine 1984: 158). During the fourteenth century, Italian city-states started employing small bodies of hired troops. As it accelerated its forcible annexation of adjacent territory in the 1320s, for example, Florence began relying regularly on mercenary cavalry. In the 1380s, democratic Florence engaged – or bought off – the great English mercenary Sir John Hawkwood, who had been pillaging Tuscany since the end of a war between Milan and the papacy left his company jobless. Hawkwood had previously served England, Savoy, Milan, Pisa and the papacy. Unfortunately for Florentine democrats, Hawkwood backed the oligarchy in their successful rising of 1382; Hawkwood "was accorded the rare favor of Florentine citizenship together with a pension for life and exemption from taxation; and when he died in 1394 the grateful government not only honored him with a splendid funeral at public expense, but also commemorated his services by having him painted on the wall of the inner façade of the cathedral mounted on horseback in full panoply of war" (Schevill 1963: 337). Today's tourists still see the curiously secular mural.

In Venice, that great maritime power, the resident nobility long provided its own military commanders on sea and land; they recruited their soldiers and sailors, furthermore, largely from the Venetian population. But by the end of the fourteenth century Venice, like its Italian neighbors, was hiring mercenary captains, *condottieri*, who recruited their own troops and fought the city-state's wars for a handsome price. Since a *condotta* was a contract to make war for a particular sovereign, *condottiere* meant, essentially, contractor. The German word *Unternehmer* conveys the same commercial tone. The *condottieri* were the oilmen of their time, shifting allegiances from deal to deal and sometimes accumulating great wealth; when the mercenary entrepreneur Bartolomeo Colleoni died in 1475, his fortune was "comparable to the riches of the leading banker of the age, Cosimo de' Medici" (Lane 1973a: 233). By 1625 Wallenstein, Duke of Friedland, ran his own domain of 2,000 square miles and used it as a supply base for troops he deployed – at a profit – on behalf of the

Holy Roman Emperor. Instead of allowing his troops to loot indiscriminately, he organized a protection racket, forcing occupied cities to pay lest the soldiers be let loose (Maland 1980: 103). Under Wallenstein, war became a well-oiled business.

War did not merely entail recruiting and paying troops. Warmaking states had to supply them as well. During the later seventeenth century, a typical army of 60,000 men, with its 40,000 horses, consumed almost a million pounds of food per day – some carried with the army, some stored in magazines, the great bulk procured wherever the army was located, but all of it requiring massive expenditure and organization (Van Creveld 1977: 24). At the prices and wages of the time, a million pounds of grain cost the equivalent of the daily wages of about 90,000 ordinary laborers (calculated from Fourastié 1966: 423). In addition to food, armies had to acquire weapons, horses, clothing, and shelter; the larger the armies, the less feasible to have each individual supply his own. From Wallenstein to Louvois, the great seventeenth-century organizers of war involved themselves in supply as much as in battle. That made their big business even bigger.

From the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries – the critical period for European state formation – armies deployed through much of Europe consisted largely of mercenaries recruited by great lords and military entrepreneurs. Similarly, national navies (especially the corsairs who preyed on enemy shipping with authorization from a protector state) commonly grouped hired sailors from all over the continent (Fontenay 1988b). True, states varied in how much, and how long, they relied on mercenaries. Rulers of larger, more powerful states strove to limit their dependence: France, Spain, England, Sweden, and the United Provinces kept their own generals in place while hiring regiments and companies, but smaller states commonly rented whole armies from generals on down. The German Habsburgs relied on local levies until the Thirty Years' War, engaged the great but demanding *condottiere* Wallenstein during the war and then moved to create a standing army during the latter half of the seventeenth century.

Since battles pay off on the size of armies relative to each other rather than on the per capita effort behind them, one can see why relatively prosperous smaller states often rented their armies on the international market. Navies, too, mixed private and public forces. "Until the 1660s," remarks M. S. Anderson,

a considerable proportion of the French galley-fleet was provided by private entrepreneurs (often Knights of Malta) who owned the galleys they commanded and served the king under contract for a fixed period in return for a specified sum. In Spain in 1616, when the navy was at a very low ebb, of the seventeen vessels in the fleet five were privately owned, hired merely for the summer (the campaigning season at sea as on land), while in the following year another six or seven had to be hired to provide an escort to bring the silver flotas from America into port. In England, of the twenty-five ships which had made up Drake's expedition to the West Indies in 1585 only two were

supplied by the queen; and though he sailed as Elizabeth's admiral and had official instructions, only about a third of the cost of fitting out the expedition was met by the government.

(Anderson 1988: 27; see also Lontenay 1988a, 1988b)

Privateers, who thrived in seventeenth-century sea warfare, came by definition from licensed non-governmental forces.

Rented armies and leased navies lived chiefly on payments made or authorized by agents of the crowns they served. Etymologically, after all, "soldier" carries the meaning "he who fights for pay." The *Söldner* and the *Unternehmer* complemented each other. The peculiarity of the system became clear early on, when in 1515 "two Swiss armies, one in the service of the French king and one in the service of an Italian baron, met on opposing sides in a battle at Marignano in northern Italy and almost completely annihilated each other" (Fischer 1985: 186). The event helped persuade the Swiss to avoid wars of their own, but it did not keep them from shipping mercenaries to other people's battles.

For several centuries, European states found the system of hire-purchase through returns from taxation/a convenient way to build armed force. The extreme case of state specialization in the production of mercenaries was no doubt Hesse-Cassel, a small eighteenth-century state that maintained a full 7 percent of its entire population under arms – 12,000 in domestic garrisons that participated in the local economy, and another 12,000 in a well-trained army that the Landgrave rented out for profit (Ingrao 1987: 132). When Britain needed extra troops for its war against rebellious Americans, it turned to Hesse. As a result, in American folk history "Hessian" signifies crass and unpatriotic – in short, mercenary. On the basis of military business, Frederick II (1760–85) built an enlightened despotism complete with poor relief and maternity hospital; most of the programs, however, collapsed as the American war ended and as Europe's states turned to recruiting their own national armies (Ingrao 1987: 196–201). The age of mercenaries was then ending.

Europe's larger states had long struggled to contain mercenaries within armies commanded by their own nationals and controlled by their own civilians. With the eighteenth century, furthermore, the costs and political risks of large-scale mercenary forces led those states' rulers to enlist more and more of their own citizens, and to substitute them for foreign mercenaries where possible. In the early stages of military expansion by means of rented armies, rulers found the raising of armies from their own populations costly and politically risky; the danger of domestic resistance and rebellion remained large. The wars of the French Revolution and Empire capped the trend, and ended the dominance of mercenary armies. As Carl von Clausewitz reflected after Napoleon's defeat:

Whilst, according to the usual way of seeing things, all hopes were placed on a very limited military force in 1793, such a force as no one had any conception of made its

appearance. War had again suddenly become an affair of the people, and that of a people numbering thirty millions, every one of whom regarded himself as a citizen of the State . . . By this participation of the people in the War instead of a Cabinet and an Army, a whole Nation with its natural weight came into the scale. Henceforth, the means available – the efforts which might be called forth – had no longer any definite limits; the energy with which the War itself might be conducted had no longer any counterpoise, and consequently the danger for the adversary had risen to the extreme.

(Clausewitz 1968 [1832]: 384–5)

With a nation in arms, a state's extractive power rose enormously, as did the claims of citizens on their state. Although a call to defend the fatherland stimulated extraordinary support for the efforts of war, reliance on mass conscription, confiscatory taxation, and conversion of production to the ends of war made any state vulnerable to popular resistance, and answerable to popular demands, as never before. From that point onward, the character of war changed, and the relationship between warmaking and civilian politics altered fundamentally.

Given the general move toward monetization and commodification, the disappearance of mercenary armed forces comes as a surprise. Why on earth would states stop buying their soldiers and sailors and substitute for them standing armies based on conscription? Several factors converged on that outcome. The creation of immense armed forces whose obligation to the crown was purely contractual raised the dangers of foot-dragging, rebellion, and even rivalry for political power; a state's own citizens, commanded by members of its own ruling classes, often fought better, more reliably, and more cheaply. The power over the domestic population that rulers gained through the construction of mercenary armies and the infrastructure to support them eventually shifted the balance; as mercenaries became expensive and dangerous in their own right, the chances of effective resistance on the part of the national population declined. As wars became more expensive, the sheer cost of warfare on the scale established by their large rivals overwhelmed the financial resources of all but the most commercialized states. During the eighteenth century, the vast expansion of rural industry opened up alternative economic opportunities to the people of major regions, such as highland Switzerland, that had been exporting soldiers and domestic servants to the rest of Europe, and thus squeezed the supply of mercenaries. The French Revolution and Napoleon gave the *coup de grâce* to the mercenary system by raising huge, effective armies chiefly from France's own expanding territory. By that time, however, even domestically recruited standing armies had to be paid and supplied. From the fifteenth century onward, European states moved decisively toward the creation of paid forces supported by loans and taxes.

The mercenary system had, indeed, a great weakness: when pay came too slowly or not at all, mercenaries commonly mutinied, lived off the land, became bandits, or all three at once; local people paid the price (see Gutmann

1980: 31–71). In the wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, booty supplemented military income, but fell far short of allowing armies to support themselves. With great variability from state to state, the leasing of armed force from more or less independent entrepreneurs peaked in the seventeenth century, and began to recede during the eighteenth. Over three or four centuries, nevertheless, mercenaries set the European standard of military performance. For the most part, entrepreneurs who served armies bought food, arms, uniforms, shelter, and means of transport either directly or through allowances to subordinate officers. For that, they needed money, and plenty of it. In 1502 Robert de Balsac, veteran of the Italian campaigns, concluded a treatise on the art of war with advice to any prince: “most important of all, success in war depends on having enough money to provide whatever the enterprise needs” (Hale 1967: 276).

SEIZING, MAKING, OR BUYING COERCION

By 1502, most European princes already knew de Balsac’s lesson by heart. Roughly speaking, rulers had three main ways of acquiring concentrated means of coercion: they could seize them, make them, or buy them. Before the twentieth century, few European states ever manufactured a major share of their own coercive means; they rarely possessed the necessary capital or expertise. Such expensive and dangerous manufactures as gunpowder and cannon constituted the chief exceptions. Increasingly after AD 990, European states moved away from direct seizure and toward purchase.

Several important changes pushed them in the same direction. First, as war became more complex and capital-intensive, fewer and fewer people in the civilian population had the means of war; every thirteenth-century noble household owned swords, but no twentieth-century household owns an aircraft carrier. Second, rulers deliberately disarmed their civilian populations as they armed their troops, thus sharpening the distinction between those who controlled the means of war and those whom the monarch ordinarily wanted to pay for war. Third, states involved themselves increasingly in producing the means of warfare, which restated the question as a choice between seizing and buying the means of production instead of the products themselves. Fourth, the mass of the subject population resisted direct seizure of men, food, weapons, transport, and other means of war much more vigorously and effectively than they fought against paying for them. Although various forms of conscription have continued to our own time, European states generally moved toward a system of collecting taxes in money, paying for coercive means with the money thus collected, and using some of the coercive means to further the collection of taxes.

Such a system only worked well under two very demanding conditions: a

relatively monetized economy, and the ready availability of credit. In an economy where only a small share of goods and services are bought and sold, a number of conditions prevail: collectors of revenue are unable to observe or evaluate resources with any accuracy, many people have claims on any particular resource, and the loss of that resource is hard for the loser to repair. As a result, any taxation imposed is inefficient, visibly unjust, and quite likely to stir up resistance. When little credit is available, even in a monetized economy, current spending depends on cash on hand, and surges in spending can only occur after careful hoarding. In these circumstances, any ruler who cannot seize the means of war directly from his subject population or acquire it without payment elsewhere is hard pressed to build up his state's armed force. After 1500, as the means of successful warfare became more and more expensive, the rulers of most European states spent much of their time raising money.

Where did the money come from? In the short run, typically from loans by capitalists and levies on local populations unlucky enough to have troops in their vicinity. In the long run, from one form of taxation or another. Norbert Elias sees an intimate relationship between taxation and military force:

The society of what we call the modern age is characterized, above all in the West, by a certain level of monopolization. Free use of military weapons is denied the individual and reserved to a central authority of whatever kind, and likewise the taxation of the property or income of individuals is concentrated in the hands of a central social authority. The financial means thus flowing into this central authority maintain its monopoly of military force, while this in turn maintains the monopoly of taxation. Neither has in any sense precedence over the other; they are two sides of the same monopoly. If one disappears the other automatically follows, though the monopoly rule may sometimes be shaken more strongly on one side than on the other.

(Elias 1982: II, 104)

Elias's duo, however, actually forms two voices of a trio. The missing member, credit, links the military monopoly to the monopoly of taxation.

Historically, few large states have ever been able to pay for their military expenditures out of current revenues. Instead, they have coped with the shortfall by one form of borrowing or another: making creditors wait, selling offices, forcing loans from clients, borrowing from bankers who acquired claims on future governmental revenues. If a government and its agents can borrow, they can separate the rhythm of their expenditures from that of their income, and spend ahead of their income. Spending ahead of income makes expensive warmaking easier, since expenditures for men, arms, and other requisites of war usually come in surges, while potential and actual state revenues ordinarily fluctuate much less from one year to the next. A state that borrows quickly, furthermore, can mobilize faster than its enemies, and thus increase its chances of winning a war.

The availability of credit depends on a state's previous repayment of its debts, to be sure, but it depends even more on the presence of capitalists. Capitalists

serve states, when they are willing to do so, as lenders, as mobilizers of loans, and as managers or even collectors of revenues to repay the loans. European capitalists sometimes combined all these activities in the much-hated figure of the tax farmer, who advanced money to the state in anticipation of taxes he himself collected with the authority and military force of the state, and charged a handsome cut of the taxes as his payment for credit, risk, and effort. But even more often capitalists served as major organizers and holders of public debt. Their activity also promoted monetization of a state's economy; some of the crucial relationships are summarized in figure 3.2. These are not the only relationships affecting the variables in the scheme. A crown's direct access to easily sold resources, for example, made it more attractive to creditors, and occasionally provided an alternative to borrowing. So long as gold and silver flowed in from the Americas, Spanish kings found willing lenders in Augsburg, Antwerp, Amsterdam, and elsewhere. In the age of mass mobilization and huge citizen armies that began with the French Revolution, the sheer size of a state's population began to figure very largely in the ease of warmaking. Even then the relationships among capitalist activity, monetization, available credit, and ease of warmaking made a major difference among the states of Europe; they gave states that had ready access to capitalists signal advantages in moving quickly to a war footing.



Figure 3.2 How the presence of capital facilitates warmaking.

The relative presence or absence of commercial cities within a state's territories therefore strongly affected the ease of its mobilization for war. Not only did loans and taxes flow more readily into state coffers where cities abounded – given sufficient state attention to the burghers' interests inside and outside the territory – but also urban militias and commercial fleets lent themselves readily to adaptation for defense and military predation. Where cities were weak and rare, rulers either went without large loans or resorted to foreign bankers who exacted high prices for their services, enlisted the cooperation of magnates who controlled armed force and likewise demanded privileges in return, and built up cumbersome fiscal apparatuses in the process of taxing a resistant, penniless population.

During the sixteenth century, as the scale of war expanded and the use of mercenaries generalized, the ability to borrow became more and more crucial to military success. South German merchants such as the Fuggers of Augsburg joined their Italian colleagues in lending to kings; the Fuggers borrowed in

Antwerp, for example, to finance Spanish wars, with future deliveries of American silver as collateral. Long-range borrowing obligated monarchs to foreigners they could not easily control, but allowed them to repudiate their debts with less catastrophic effects on their local economies. Eventually the disadvantages outweighed the advantages, and those monarchs who could moved toward domestic borrowing. Those who could borrow at home were, of course, especially those whose states included important zones of capitalist enterprise. Around the time of Henry IV (1598–1610), France moved rapidly from dependency on other centers of capital (notably Lyon, a conduit for Italian capital) to Parisian financial dominance, from foreign to French financiers, and from negotiation to enforced payment of taxes (Cornette 1988: 622–4). Although insolvency threatened the crown repeatedly during the following two centuries, that consolidation of fiscal power gave France an enormous advantage in the wars to come.

PAYING THE DEBTS

Whether they borrowed heavily or not, all rulers faced the problem of paying for their wars without destroying the ability of their sources to pay again in the future. They adopted very different fiscal strategies. Governmental revenues in general ("taxes," in a loose sense of the word) fall into five broad categories: tributes, rents, payments on flows, payments on stocks, and income taxes. *Tributes* include arbitrary payments levied on individuals, groups, or localities; head taxes which are equal across the population or across its major categories constitute a special kind of tribute. *Rents* consist of direct payments for lands, goods, and services supplied contingently to particular users by the state. (Some states – Russia, Sweden, and the Ottoman Empire, for example – gave a special twist to rents by assigning some military officers and civilian officials the rents from crown lands the officers held so long as they remained in royal service.)

Both rents and tributes can easily be collected in kind. Payments on flows and stocks cannot. *Payments on flows* cover excise, customs, tolls, transaction charges, and other collections on transfers or movements; specialists often call them indirect taxes, because they reflect only quite indirectly the taxpayer's ability to pay. *Payments on stocks* divide chiefly into land and property taxes; specialists often call them direct taxes. *Income taxes* (actually a special case of payments on flows) touch current revenues, especially salaries and other monetary revenues.

The five kinds of taxes form a kind of continuum with respect to their dependence on monetization of the ambient economy. They also differ in terms of the amount of continuous surveillance the collector must apply (see figure 3.3). In general, taxes that require little surveillance rely on open use of force more frequently than those that entail continuous surveillance, and

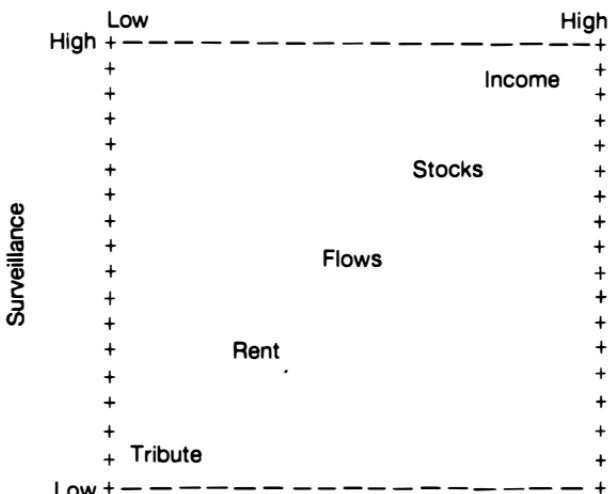


Figure 3.3 Alternative forms of taxation.

therefore promote the development of specialized staffs for evaluation and collection. Governments that have plenty of force at their disposition can collect tributes and rents in relatively unmonetized economies, although even there people's ability to pay cash still depends on their ability to sell goods or services for cash. Even customs revenues depend on the existence of well-defined and well-defended borders; smuggling – the evasion of internal or external customs duties – became a crime precisely to the extent that European states attempted to define and defend their boundaries. In the ages of patrimonialism and brokerage, indeed, states often relied on tolls collected at strategic roads, ports, or waterways instead of customs collected all round a monitored frontier (Maravall 1972: I, 129–33).

Payments on flows depend heavily on monetization, because monetization increases such flows, eases assessors' evaluations of flows, and increases the ability of those who are liable to pay in cash. Payments on stocks, counter-intuitively, also depend heavily on monetization, since in the absence of an active market for the land or property in question assessors lack the means to match tax with value; when the match is poor, the tax is inefficient (see Ardant 1965). Thus monetization strongly affects the effectiveness with which a state can finance its war effort by means of taxation, instead of wresting the means of war directly from its citizenry. The income tax is an extreme case, one that only becomes a durable and effective source of governmental revenue in economies where practically everyone is involved in the money economy and most workers toil for wages.

Highly commercialized states, however, draw some important advantages from

these relationships. Given an appropriate level of monetization, the taxes toward the upper end of the continuum are relatively efficient. They build on the measurement and visibility a commercial economy applies to property, goods, and services. Participants in markets already do a significant share of the requisite surveillance through the recording of prices and transfers. Properly socialized citizens, furthermore, come to attach moral value to the payment of taxes; they monitor themselves and each other, blaming tax evaders as free riders. Taxes on flows, stocks, and especially income therefore yield a high return for a given amount of effort at collection, and adapt more readily than tribute or rents to alterations in state policy. A state attempting to collect exactly the same amount from the same tax in a less commercialized economy faces greater resistance, collects less efficiently, and therefore builds a larger apparatus of control in the process. If two states of similar size but different degrees of commercialization go to war and attempt to extract comparable sums of money from their citizens by means of the same sorts of taxes, the less commercialized state creates a bulkier state structure as it wars and pays for war. The more commercialized state, on the average, makes do with a slimmer administrative organization.

The direct supplying of armies, the imposition of taxes, and the management of royal credit all went more easily in commercialized, capital-rich economies. Wherever they occurred, however, they multiplied the state's civilian servants. A major war effort generally produced a permanent expansion of the state's central apparatus – the number of its full-time personnel, the scope of its institutions, the size of its budget, the extent of its debt. When Holland and Spain reached a truce in their draining war over Dutch claims to independence in 1609, many observers on both sides expected relief from the extraordinary taxation that had beset them during the previous decade. As it turned out, debt service, building of fortifications, and other state activities easily absorbed the revenues freed by military demobilization. Taxes did not decline significantly in either country (Israel 1982: 43–4).

Some historians speak of a "ratchet effect" by which an inflated wartime budget fails to return to its prewar level (Peacock and Wiseman 1961; Rasler and Thompson 1983, 1985a). The ratchet does not occur universally, but it does appear quite often, especially in states that have not suffered great losses in the war at hand. It occurs for three reasons: because the wartime increase in state power gives officials new capacity to extract resources, take on new activities, and defend themselves against cost-cutting; because wars either cause or reveal new problems that call for state attention; and because the wartime accumulation of debt places new burdens on the state.

National debts arose largely from borrowing for and during wars. The ability to borrow for military expenditure strongly affected a state's ability to mount effective military campaigns. The seventeenth-century claims of the Dutch Republic on the financiers of Amsterdam and other major trading cities allowed

a small state to raise enormous sums rapidly for its armies and navies, and to become the dominant European power for a time. The critical innovations had occurred between 1515 and 1565, when the States General of the Habsburg Netherlands (of which the northern provinces, after their rebellion of 1568, would eventually become the Dutch Republic) took steps toward issuing state-backed annuities secured by specific new taxes and bearing attractive interest (Tracy 1985). As a result, “in an emergency, the Dutch Republic could raise a loan of 1 million florins at only 3 percent in two days” (Parker 1976: 212–13). State securities became a favorite investment for Dutch rentiers, whose representatives taxed the entire economy for their benefit. Indeed, the word “capitalist” in its modern use seems to have come from the word for those Dutch citizens who paid the highest per capita tax rate, thereby advertising their wealth and creditworthiness.

Dutch bankers were so affluent, adept, and independent that after 1580, as the war of the northern Netherlands against their former Spanish masters continued, the bankers were able to make money by shipping silver diverted from the Spanish fleet to Antwerp, where it paid for Spanish expenses of the war (Parker 1972: 154–5). When in 1608 Spain proposed to recognize Dutch independence if Holland withdrew from the East and West Indies, Dutch negotiator Oldenbarneveldt “retorted that too many prominent personages in the Republic were involved in the East India Company for it to be disbanded” (Israel 1982: 9). On the whole, however, the merchants' affluence worked to the advantage of their own Dutch state. An intensely commercial economy permitted the seventeenth-century Dutch state to follow a path that the neighboring Prussians found barred and that the English, newly blessed with a Dutch king, borrowed in the 1690s. By adopting Dutch fiscal techniques, the English managed to reduce their previous dependence on Dutch bankers, and eventually to best the Dutch at war.

The seventeenth-century Dutch occupied an extreme position on the axis of commercialization. Other capital-intensive states, such as the Italian commercial powers of Genoa and Venice, adopted similar approaches to the raising of military force through public ~~credit and taxation~~ on flows of goods. In coercion-intensive regions, resources that might be used for war remained embedded in agriculture, and in the hands of magnates who wielded considerable autonomous force; there, the extraction of military resources obviously took very different forms: various combinations of expropriation, co-optation, clientage, conscription, and heavy-handed taxation. In between the two extremes, in areas of capitalized coercion, the ~~more~~ even balance of capital and coercion allowed rulers to play one against the other, using purchased force to check the holders of private armies and national armies to persuade the holders of private capital; in the long run, as the sheer bulk of military requirements rose, the combination gave rulers of capitalized-coercion states the decisive advantage in warfare; as a consequence, their sort of state – the national state –

won out over city-states, empires, urban federations, and other forms of state that had sometimes prospered in Europe.

THE LONG, STRONG ARM OF EMPIRE

By the end of the seventeenth century, a significant part of European war – including war between neighboring Holland and England – was taking place at sea, far from the continent. The struggle for maritime empire complemented European land warfare in shaping distinctive kinds of European states. Before they created national states, Europeans had plenty of experience with empires. Norsemen constructed fleeting empires well before the Millennium. Mongol, Russian, Ottoman, Swedish, Burgundian, and Habsburg empires long dominated significant parts of Europe. Great trading cities such as Genoa and Venice conquered or purchased their own scattered empires. Napoleon built a vast, if short-lived European empire. Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, Russian, and German empires existed up to World War I. As the centuries rolled on, to be sure, European empires came increasingly to resemble national states. In their heterogeneity and their residues of indirect rule through viceroys or the equivalent, nevertheless, they faced distinctive problems of control over their subject populations.

Beginning in the fifteenth century, European powers moved toward the creation of empires far outside of the continent. Portuguese Christians had eliminated the last Moorish kingdom from their end of the peninsula in 1249. For another century and a half the Portuguese confined their maritime attentions to trade in Europe and Africa, but in 1415 their capture of Ceuta on the Moroccan coast launched an expansion that did not cease for two hundred years. By the time of the death of Prince Henry (the so-called Navigator) in 1460, his forces had extended their control, both political and commercial, well down Africa's western coast as well as seizing Madeira and the Azores in the Atlantic. With the assistance of Genoese *condottieri* and entrepreneurs, they began almost at once to make new colonies commercially viable. Before the century's end Vasco da Gama had sailed around Africa to Calicut, thus extending Portuguese influence into the Indian Ocean and the Pacific.

The Portuguese sought deliberately to break Muslim–Venetian control of European access to Asian spices and luxury goods, and to establish their own hegemony in the sea lanes to Asia. Through great energy, exceptional risk-taking, and supreme ruthlessness, they almost succeeded. During the sixteenth century Portuguese carracks and galleons commanded much of the Indian Ocean, and carried close to half of all spices shipped to Europe and the Ottoman Empire (Boxer 1969: 59). In the course of the same century Portuguese settlers began migrating to Brazil; they started to export sugar produced by the labor of impressed Amerindians and, increasingly, slaves

imported from Angola, Congo, and Senegambia. The Portuguese crown then received a major share of its income from customs duties on goods from its colonies.

Portugal, however, suffered some severe handicaps. Its domestic supply of men, timber, and other resources for imperial adventure remained perilously thin, so much so that sixteenth-century "Portuguese" ships often bore no native Portuguese but their commanders. From 1580 to 1640 Portugal merged with the Spanish crown, and thus inherited Spain's war with the fearsome Dutch. With its rebellion against Spain in 1640, the small kingdom warred against both the Dutch and the Spanish until 1689. Wars with maritime rivals endangered Portuguese merchants on the high seas. That Portugal remained powerful for so long testifies to extraordinary toughness and ingenuity.

As they attached an immense empire to a fragile home base, Portuguese conquerors established characteristic forms of rule overseas, and transformed their own state. Overseas, Portugal made most of its colonies into military outposts, one of whose chief activities was to generate revenues for the crown. Unlike the Dutch, the English, and the Venetians, Portuguese rulers did not license merchants to organize colonial rule. Unlike the Spanish, they did not tolerate the creation of great autonomous domains in their overseas territories. But they could not stop colonial administrators, priests, and soldiers from trading on their own account, or from accepting payoffs for illegal uses of their official powers. Colonial revenues thus made Lisbon and its king relatively independent of powerholders elsewhere in Portugal, but dependent on frequently corrupt officials. Such a monarchy could only prosper when gold and goods flowed freely from the colonies.

As compared to the neighboring Portuguese, Spaniards were latecomers to overseas conquest. In 1492, Granada, last Muslim stronghold on the Iberian peninsula, fell to Castile. By then, the south-driving Spaniards were already beginning settlement of the Canary Islands. The same year, Queen Isabella authorized the Genoese *condottiere* Christopher Columbus to sail west, via the Canaries, in search of India and Cathay. Within fifteen years Spain had functioning colonies in the Caribbean. A century after Granada's fall, Spaniards ruled – however thinly – almost all of Central and South America except Brazil, and had reached out to conquer the Philippines as well.

About that time, Dutch and English seafarers sailed onto the scene. The two nations' civilian-run East and West India companies, not to mention their freebooters, moved aggressively into Portuguese and Spanish waters in the South Atlantic, the Indian Ocean, and the Pacific. During their eighty-year war of independence against Spain, ironically, Dutch merchants made their greatest profits by trading with the enemy; they brought goods from northern Europe to Iberia, and used old commercial ties to penetrate the trading networks of the Spanish and Portuguese empires. That initiated their construction of a world-wide Dutch empire. In the Atlantic, English merchants attached

themselves to Portuguese trade, and became specialists in outwitting royal customs officers. They started as parasites, but soon became the chief organisms in their territories.

Throughout the history of European imperialism, indeed, a new phase usually began with competition between an established dominant in one world region or trade route and a newcomer who attempted either to challenge the hegemon or to outflank him, or both. The early targets of European attack were usually Muslims, but by the fifteenth century Europeans were battling each other for access to the East. Sixteenth-century Portuguese adventurers almost succeeded in reaching around the Venetians who controlled the western end of Europe's land connection with East and South Asia, only to find themselves challenged on the sea by Spain, Holland, and England a century later. The English and Dutch never expelled Portuguese merchants and viceroys from their entire domain, but they ended the supremacy Portugal had enjoyed until 1600. (During the Dutch war of 1647–8, for example, enemy action took 220 vessels from the Portuguese Brazil fleet: Boxer 1969: 221.) The Dutch East India and West India companies governed great empires of their own, gaining the advantage over their competitors "by virtue of their greater control of the market and the internalization of protection costs" (Steensgaard 1974: 11). Over the seventeenth century as a whole, the Dutch became the world's greatest naval and commercial power.

Then the British displaced the Dutch. As Dutch naval strength faltered, British ships came to prevail on most of the world's seas. By the eighteenth century, French corsairs, men-of-war, and merchantmen were likewise venturing to the Americas, Asia, and the Pacific – they made little impact in Africa before the nineteenth century – and further crowding the sea lanes. The eighteenth-century discovery of gold and diamonds in Brazil revived the Portuguese colonial economy, but failed to restore anything like Portugal's sixteenth-century hegemony. France and Britain came late to territorial conquest outside of their own immediate perimeters, but swiftly made up the lag after 1700. By the end of the eighteenth century, Spain, Portugal, the United Provinces, France, and Great Britain all had large overseas empires and world-wide webs of trade; Britain stood above all the rest. Imperial conquest accelerated in the nineteenth century. "Between 1876 and 1915," notes Eric Hobsbawm, "about one-quarter of the globe's land surface was distributed or redistributed as colonies among a half-dozen states" (Hobsbawm 1987: 59). By World War I, Spain, Portugal, and what was then the kingdom of the Netherlands held little more than shreds of their former empires, while the fabric of French and, especially, British dominion stretched across the world.

All these empires combined conquered territories with "factories," recognized trading settlements at the edges of lands governed by indigenous rulers. With exceptions such as Portuguese Macao, no European powers conquered in Japan or China. But the Portuguese, the Spanish, and then the Dutch

maintained commercial enclaves in Japan; during the closed years of the Tokugawa shogunate (1640–1854), the Dutch outpost at Deshima was practically Japan's only point of contact with Europe (Boxer 1965: 237). Over time, however, the European pattern shifted toward conquest and partial settlement. Starting in 1652, for example, even the Dutch – who actually colonized very few of the lands in which they gained commercial hegemony – began to conquer, administer, and settle around the Cape of Good Hope; the word *Afrikaner* began to apply to transplanted Europeans early in the eighteenth century (Boxer 1965: 266). In the nineteenth century especially, European states tried to carve up most of the non-European world into mutually exclusive colonial territories.

Empire overseas did not build up state structure to the same extent as land war at home. Nevertheless, the connection between state and empire ran in both directions: the character of the European state governed the form of its expansion outside of Europe, and the nature of the empire significantly affected the metropole's operation. Capital-intensive states such as Venice and the Dutch Republic reached out chiefly by the ruthless pursuit of trading monopolies, but invested little effort in military conquest and colonization. Coercion-intensive states such as the Norse and the Spanish devoted more of their energy to settlement, enslavement of the indigenous (or imported) labor force, and exaction of tribute. The in-between states, such as Britain and France, entered the imperial game relatively late, and excelled at it by combining the capitalist and coercive strategies.

The capitalist strategy added relatively little bulk to the central state, especially when conducted through essentially private organizations such as the Dutch East India Company. These commercial megaliths, however, became political forces to be contended with in their own right; thus privatization pushed the state toward bargaining with its subject population, or at least with the dominant commercial class. The strategy of conquest and settlement, which inevitably called forth durable armies and navies, added to the central state bureaucracy, not to mention the world-wide web of officialdom it called into being. Where it brought in riches – especially in the form of bullion, as in Spain – conquest created an alternative to domestic taxation, and thereby shielded rulers from some of the bargaining that established citizens' rights and set limits on state prerogatives elsewhere.

On both the domestic and overseas fronts, how much state apparatus emerged from the interaction between the creation of a military machine and the development of markets depended on several factors: the bulk of the machine in relation to the population that supported it, the prior commercialization of the economy, and the extent to which the state relied on the wartime mobilization of powerholders who provided their own military force and retained the ability to return it to peacetime uses at the end of war. We might imagine a continuum from an imperial Russia in which a cumbersome state

apparatus grew up to wrest military men and resources from a huge but uncommercialized economy to a Dutch Republic which relied heavily on navies, ran its military forces on temporary grants from its city-dominated provinces, easily drew taxes from customs and excise, and never created a substantial central bureaucracy. In between we would place cases such as France and Prussia, where kings had access to important regions of agricultural and commercial capitalism, but had to bargain with powerful landlords for support of their military activity. In the long run, military requirements for men, money, and supplies grew so demanding that rulers bargained with the bulk of the population as well. The next chapter focuses on that bargaining and its variations from one sort of state to another.