

Author and title of article/chapter:

Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," in Peter Evans, et al. eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 169-186.

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Question(s) asked by the author:

How does fighting wars affect the ways states take shape and evolve?

Argument summary:

Tilly argues that "war makes states." Historically, competition among "wielders of coercion" for control over territory and resources led to the characteristic European-style state familiar to us today, complete with a military, police force, tax bureaucracy, and courts of law.

- a) Successful war making (defeating external enemies) also helped rulers use force to disarm domestic rivals (like lords with private armies, or—in a more contemporary sense—warlords, leaders of local militias). It allowed the concentration of coercive power in the hands of the ruler. (*state making*)
- b) War making spurred the development of state apparatuses, such as tax bureaucracies to extract taxes from society to finance the war effort. (*extraction*)
- c) To facilitate further success in war making, states promoted capital accumulation to ensure adequate resources would be available to the state. Courts of law provided one way to protect the property claims of powerful subjects/citizens without allowing those subjects/citizens to use force directly to defend their property. (*protection*)

Hypothesis:

When war is present in the formation of states (as in European history), then states are more likely to have eliminated domestic rivals to state authority and are more likely to have strong institutions of military, police, taxation, and law.

When war is absent in the formation of states (as in the wave of decolonization that followed World War II), then states are less likely to have eliminated domestic rivals to state authority and are less likely to have strong institutions of taxation and law.

"Each of the major uses of violence produced characteristic forms of organization. War making yielded armies, navies, and supporting services. State making produced durable instruments of surveillance and control within the territory. Protection relied on the organization of war making and state making but added to it an apparatus by which the protected called forth the protection that was their due, notably through courts and assemblies. Extraction brought fiscal and accounting structures into being. The organization and deployment of violence themselves account for much of the characteristic structure of European states (p.181)."

Evidence (type, examples):

Tilly tells us that this short piece contains "few illustrations and no evidence worthy of the name." Nevertheless, he provides a few historical examples: evidence of establishing monopoly of violence (p. 174)—France's Louis XIII destroys the castles of rebel local lords. Tilly also shows how establishing the monopoly of violence strengthens the state: he points to the fact that there were no armed uprisings after death of Louis XIV, unlike earlier transitions.

Important terms/concepts to note:

National state

National states are "relatively centralized, differentiated organizations the officials of which more or less successfully claim control over the chief concentrated means of violence within a population inhabiting a large, contiguous territory (p. 170)." In my own words: a state is an organization in a territory with a population, staffed by officials who have a monopoly over coercion (such as the military and the police).

Monopoly on violence p. 171

A monopoly captures the idea of a single supplier. In Tilly's work, the state becomes the sole supplier of violence/coercion/force in the territory. (cont'ed on next page)

Legitimacy p. 171

Tilly writes that, “Legitimacy is the probability that other authorities will act to confirm the decisions of a given authority (p. 171).” In my own words, legitimacy refers to the belief on the part of subjects/citizens that the dictates of the state are right and proper. (Tilly’s “other authorities” refers to relatively powerful subjects/citizens within the state). Tilly refers to legitimacy as “depending on the assent of the governed” or “depending on conformity to an abstract principle” (or both at once).

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2 or more comments or critical questions for discussion:

Tilly does not think that younger, newer (20th, 21st C) states will be made by war in the same way. Why not?

Tilly puts little emphasis on legitimacy. Why?