WAR AND THE POWER OF WARMAKERS IN WESTERN EUROPE AND ELSEWHERE, 1600-1980

Charles Tilly

University of Michigan

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Center for Research on Social Organization
University of Michigan
330 Packard Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

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The Rise and Fall of Civilian Government

Once, it seems, armed conquerors personally ran almost every government worthy of the name anywhere in the world. Conquest created government, and armed might held it in place. Then, fitfully and painfully, rulers fashioned civilian government: Warriors dismounted; kings, priests, and their lieutenants fought less or no at all; vassals and hirelings carried on the work of conquest and control. Over the centuries after 1500, western sovereigns brought these processes to their paradoxical height. The making of war created the structures of national states. Yet as big, destructive wars called forth the mobilization of ever more men, food, weapons, ammunition, uniforms, horses, lodgings, and cash, corps of non-soldiers arose to manage that mobilization. Thus the very changes that permitted western states to wage war on a previously unimaginable scale and to extend their military conquests throughout the world also created bulky, powerful civilian staffs, as well as armies subordinate to the holders of land and capital. Within limits, large-scale war civilianized western states.

Our twentieth century compounded the paradox. On one side, open military conquest of one government by another declined. Although twentieth-century wars wroughly incalculable damage and displaced people as never before, the race for direct territorial

expansion slowed. Although economic control of land, labor, and capital in one country by people in another country may well have increased, it became unusual for one government to pass formally into the control of another.

As the twentieth century moved on, the great colonial powers stabilized their overseas rule, shifted toward the establishment of civilian government in their colonies and dependencies, then -- however reluctantly -- participated in the creation of formally autonomous states on the sites of their former empires. What is more, those new states typically emerged with formal structures greatly resembling those of their former overlords: constitutions, representative institutions, civilian bureaucracies, non-military executive officers, subordinated armies. Even those states in which soldiers ruled directly justified their rule as a transition to stable democracy. Almost everyone honored civilian rule in principle.

Yet the long-term trend toward civilian government reversed itself. In the former colonial areas of Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, the coup d'état became the standard form of governmental succession. In those regions, professional soldiers -- often men trained in the military schools and armies of the great colonial powers -- increasingly took direct control of the state. Models of westernized civilian control such as

Nigeria and Burma moved into the ranks of military states. As of 1981, by one count, armed forces dominated 54 of the world's 141 independent states. Those states concentrated almost entirely in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and the Pacific (Sivard 1981:7). By Samuel Finer's more stringent criteria for military rule, 35 states qualified as of the late 1970s; those 35 followed essentially the same geography as Sivard's 54 (Finer 1982).

After World War II, the great western powers became more and more heavily involved in shipping arms to the new states, in training their armies, and in influencing their military policies. Between 1960 and 1980, world arms exports tripled. The Warsaw Pact and NATO powers ended up shipping about the same quantity of arms to the rest of the world; between them, they accounted for about nine tenths of the world's arms exports (Sivard 1981: 6). Over the same two decades, NATO and Warsaw Pact armed forces declined slightly in numbers, and their combined military expenditures in constant dollars increased by less than 50 percent. In the rest of the world, armed forces increased by about half and military expenditures roughly quadrupled.

Three crucial changes occurred: 1) The whole world shifted to more expensive varieties of armament. 2) Armed forces grew disproportionately outside of Europe and North America. 3)

European and North American powers specialized increasingly in arming other states. They not only shipped arms, but also organized and trained national armed forces.

The USA and the USSR, in particular, became the great entrepreneurs of armed forces throughout the world. No other states came close to their efforts. Military support, at a price, became an even larger part of great-power foreign policy. These reversals threatened to remilitarize the great powers themselves. As Table 1 shows, the regions of the world with very high military expenditures per capita were North America, the Warsaw Pact region, the Middle East, and NATO Europe. In terms of proportion of Gross National Product spent on military activity, the Middle East led the rank order, but the Warsaw Pact and North America followed. Rich countries were spending more on military might, both absolutely and proportionately. However, they were spending it increasingly on arming the rest of the world.

Since these matters are easily misunderstood, let me state clearly what I am saying, and what I am **not** saying. Above all, I am **not** proposing a contrast between an "orderly", "gradual", "peaceful" path to the state in Europe and a "rapid", "turbulent", "violent" path elsewhere. On the contrary: European states took shape through external war and internal coercion. After 1500 or so, the national states of western Europe and its extensions

Table 1. Military Expenditure Per Capita and as Percentage of GNP, 1978 (U.S. dollars), by World Region

Region	Military Expenditure per Capita	Percent of GNP Military Expenditure
North America	468	4.9
Latin America	22	1.5
NATO Europe	237	3.6
Warsaw Pact	311	8.2
Other Europe	121	2.3
Middle East	250	12.2
South Asia	5	2.8
Far East	30	2.7
Oceania	156	2.4
Africa	22	3.6
World	97	4.5

(**Source:** Sivard 1981)

became the world's most powerful organizations. Within those powerful states, their armies were long the most extensive, costly, and powerful structures. The states competed with each other by means of war followed by economic exploitation, and by means of economic exploitation backed by the threat of armed force. From around 1500 to 1900, the survivors of competition within Europe increasingly extended the same combination of conquest and commerce to other parts of the world.

Building of armed forces involved managers of national states in struggles to wrest the wherewithal of war from a generally reluctant population within their own territories. In the process, more or less inadvertently, the managers of national states created most of the apparatus we now think of as central to those states: the apparatus of tax-collection, of budgeting, of supply, of surveillance, of control. The struggle also hammered out bargains between statemakers and the subject population: some limits on the state's power to tax, some forms of representation vis à vis the sovereign, some reinforcement of the local institutions -- assemblies, systems of landholding, courts, gilds, communities -- that played parts in the state's extraction of resources for war.

Thus formed strong, centralized national states with at least a modicum of popular participation. In that sense, warmaking

created national states as we know them. From beginning to end, then, the creation and use of armed force remained central to the activity of states. By the twentieth century, successful statemakers were waging ferocious wars on an international scale. Yet, paradoxically, the creation of support structures for the state's armed force civilianized domestic political administration. Increasingly, the day-to-day operation of the national state on its own ground fell into the hands of non-military people. The dominant classes and the managers of the state withdrew more and more from personal involvement in war and in the display of armed force; more and more they entrusted those activities to specialists, to professional soldiers. Soldiers, however, became ever more dependent on their civilian supporters for the wherewithal of war. The net effect of these changes was **not** to diminish the importance of war or armed force, but to decrease the autonomy and personal power of the men who actually wielded armed force.

In that light, the twentieth-century experiences of Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia look strange. For in those parts of the world, military men have not lost autonomy and personal power. If anything, they have gained strength. As Table 2 shows, both the frequency of coups and the success rates of coups increased in almost all Third World regions

Table 2. Coups d'Etat in Third World Regions, 1945-1972

Region	Number of States	1945-59 Number of Coups	1945-59 Percent Success	1960-72 Number of Coups	1960-72 Percent Success	% of Governments Military in 1981
Central America	9	8	12.5	23	47.8	55.5
Caribbean	6	2	0.0	2	50.0	33.3
South America	9	19	21.1	27	40.7	66.7
Mainland Asia	18	12	41.7	21	42.9	61.1
Pacific	8	4	75.0	5	60.0	25.0
Middle East	16	20	35.0	57	52.6	25.0
Subsaharan Africa	38	?	?	78	59.0	60.5

(**Source:** Compiled from lists in Kennedy 1974)

between 1945-59 and 1960-72; by 1981, the majority of governments were military-run in most Third World regions. If anyone still believes that Third World states are essentially recapitulating the statemaking experiences of western Europe and its extensions, the increasing visibility of soldiers in the politics of those Third World states should give the believer pause.

Why might that be? Let me confess at once that I know too little Third World history and social structure to offer a convincing answer to such a large question. Let me concede immediately that the proper way to search for an answer passes through soundly-documented historical comparisons. Let me grant without complaint that the nations of the Third World vary far too much in wealth, size, and history to permit any single explanation to cover most of their experiences. Let me admit without delay that I write as a student of western European history confronting a perplexing fact: The rest of the world is **not** recapitulating Europe's experience. Why should the world be so uncooperative?

The point of my speculations, then, will be to see whether variation within Europe, properly understood, provides any insight into variation in the contemporary world. My main speculation will follow this line: To the extent that a state builds up its military power through the direct wresting of military means from its own subject population, it creates barriers to military rule.

to the extent that a state depends on other states for its military organization and personnel, it becomes vulnerable to military rule.

Creation and Extension of the European System of States

Let us consider an organization to be a **national state** to the extent that it a) controls the principal concentrated means of coercion in a bounded and contiguous territory larger than a single city and its hinterland, b) claims the right to control the movement of people and goods across its boundary, c) is formally centralized, differentiated, and autonomous. A full-fledged national state, by such a definition, lives with a fairly clear distinction between "internal" and "external" political arenas. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, by such a definition, none of the larger European powers had become a full-fledged national state. On one side, in 1500 every nominal monarch faced great lords who operated their own private armies, police forces, and systems of justice, and whose cooperation the monarch had somehow to enlist in order to carry on repression within the territory and war with other monarchs outside it. On the other, so-called national territories were commonly discontinuous, divided by enclaves of alien power, and bounded only approximately.

Over the next two hundred years, royal conquests -- both

"inside" and "outside" the national territory -- deeply altered that situation. By 1700, most of western Europe mapped into bounded, contiguous territories within which a single relatively centralized, differentiated, and autonomous organization controlled the principal concentrated means of coercion. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, then, brought the heyday of statemaking in western Europe.

As that process went on, the managers of different states regularized their relations to each other, increasingly differentiating their treatment of other people according to whether they were a) citizens of their own state, b) citizens of another state, c) officials or representatives of their own state, d) officials or representatives of another state. One can reasonably say that not merely a congeries, but a **system** of interdependent national states, confirming each other's sovereignty, came into being.

Three kinds of relations linked the system of states. First, there were the flows of resources in the form of loans and supplies, especially loans and supplies devoted to warmaking. Second, there was the competition among states for hegemony in disputed territories; although that competition obviously divided particular pairs of states, other states acted to contain the conflict and to influence its outcome. Third, there was the

intermittent creation of coalitions of states that temporarily combined their efforts to force a given state into a certain form and a certain position within the international system. The warmaking coalition is one example, the peacemaking coalition another.

Peacemaking coalitions were probably the more important; from 1648, with the settlement of the Thirty Years War, we find all effective European states coalescing temporarily to bargain out the boundaries and rulers of the recent belligerents -- especially the losers, when one state clearly defeated another. From that point on, the major reorganizations of the European state system came in spurts, at the settlements of widespread wars. From each large war, in general, emerged fewer national states than had entered it. The international compact of interested states, having negotiated the new boundaries and rulers, acquired a commitment to maintain both of them, or at least to defend them against the maneuvers of other states.

This does not mean states developed a commitment to peace. On the contrary, war became the normal condition of the international system of states. War became the normal means of defending or enhancing a position within the system. Why war? No simple answer will do; war, as a potent means, served more than one end. But surely part of the answer goes back to the central

mechanisms of statemaking: The very logic by which a local lord extended or defended the perimeter within which he monopolized the means of violence, and thereby increased his return from that monopoly, continued on a larger scale into the logic of war. Early in the process, external and internal rivals overlapped to a large degree. Only the establishment of large perimeters of control within which great lords had checked their rivals sharpened the line between internal and external. Then the existence of a system of states became a greater advantage, since in the process of conquest a ruler could bargain out not only the acquiescence of people in the conquered territories, but also the assent of those who ran adjacent states. Thus developed the practical definition of legitimacy that prevails among states today: willingness of subject populations to accept a state's commands, coupled with readiness of neighboring states to enforce those commands when asked.

Whether they contested or assented, furthermore, the interaction of those adjacent states with a conquering state tended to make them more similar to the conqueror: Either they adopted some of the same organization for war, or they borrowed models of administration for peace, or both. When states concerted among themselves, in peace or in war, they tended to force upon other states that fell within their zones of control

the forms of government they preferred. A transition occurred: From a situation in which states took shape mainly through a great lord's own efforts to conquer or check adjacent competitors, Europe moved to a situation in which existing states, in concert, played a large part in creating or reorganizing other states. Roughly speaking, a transition from **internal** toward **external** processes of statemaking.

With due recognition that the distinction between internal and external processes is fragile and arbitrary, we might schematize European statemaking's history as three stages:

> 1. The differential success of some powerholders in "external" struggles establishes the difference between an "internal" and an "external" arena for the deployment of force.
>
> 2. "External" competition generates "internal" statemaking.
>
> 3. "External" compacts among states influence the form and locus of particular states ever more powerfully.

With renewed caution, we might then think of France and England as states that took shape mainly in the first stage of the process, of Norway and Austria as states showing significant impact of the first two stages, of Finland, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the two Germanies -- despite glorious earlier experiences of pristine statemaking -- as states whose current structure shows clear effects of the

third stage, of compacts among many other states.

In this perspective, state-certifying organizations such as the League of Nations and the United Nations simply extended the European-based process to the world as a whole. Whether forced or voluntary, bloody or peaceful, decolonization simply completed the process by which existing states leagued to create new ones.

Does Europe Predict the Third World's Future?

As a model for the formation of national states in the rest of the world, it turns out, European experience offers an ambiguous lesson. On the one hand, with generations of western political analysts, we might consider the pristine European statemaking experiiences -- those of France, England, Spain, perhaps Brandenburg-Prussia or Sweden -- the proper and probable models for the rest of the world. On the other, we might reason from the same experience that 1) the forms of particular states tend to crystallize at well-defined moments of strenuous organization or reorganization, then to change only slowly and in secondary ways between such heroic moments, 2) where the last such moment appeared with respect to the development of the whole **system** of states deeply affects their present form, and, more precisely, 3) since 1500 or so, the more recent that heroic moment of

crystallization, the stronger the impact of other states' bargaining with respect to the form of the state in question. Although I began my own explorations of European statemaking with a naive hope that some version of the first might be true, I now think that if the European experience in forming national states has any relevance for the current experience of the Third World, it must be through the second and third lines of reasoning.

Certainly the extension of the Europe-based statemaking process to the rest of the world did not create states in the strict European image. Broadly speaking, in Europe internal struggles such as the checking of great regional lords and the imposition of taxation on peasant villages produced important organizational features of states: not only the relative subordination of military power to civilian control, but also the extensive bureaucracy of fiscal surveillance, the representation of wronged interests via petition and parliament, and the reinforcement of the local community as a fundamental unit of government. Some European states lay far outside this process, and proved vulnerable to military takeovers. Portugal, Spain, and Greece are the prominent twentieth-century examples. One might likewise make a case for the France of 1958, although the final result of de

Gaulle's arrival in power was another round of civilianization.

On the whole, states elsewhere developed differently. In general, the more recent a state's creation, the more likely that other states had fixed and guaranteed its external boundaries and played a direct part in the designation of its rulers, the less likely that those rulers faced well-organized internal rivals other than their own military forces. An initial coalition government such as that of Zimbabwe is the exception, not the rule.

The most telling feature of that difference appears in military organization. European states built up their military apparatuses through sustained struggles with their subject populations, and by means of selective extension of protection to different classes within those populations. Agreements on protection constrained the rulers themselves, making them vulnerable to courts, to assemblies, to withdrawals of credit, services, and expertise.

To a larger degree, states that have come into being recently through decolonization or through reallocations of territory by dominant states have acquired their military organization from outside, without the same internal forging of mutual constraints between rulers and ruled. To the

extent that outside states continue to supply military goods and expertise in return for commodities, or military alliance, or both, the new states harbor powerful, unconstrained organizations which easily overshadow all other organizations within their territories. To the extent that outside states guarantee their boundaries, the managers of those military organizations exercise extraordinary power within them. The advantages of military power become enormous, the incentives to seize power over the state as a whole by means of that advantage very strong.

The apparent exceptions are those states, such as Angola, brought into independence by coalitions of guerrilla forces each supported by different external powers, and each retaining a degree of autonomy past the moment of the state's independence. Within a new state, a unified military organization gives its commanders enormous leverage. Despite the great place that warmaking occupied in the making of European states, the old national states of Europe almost never experienced the great disproportion between military organization and all other forms of organization that seems the fate of client states throughout the contemporary world.

In our own time, not all states entering the Europe based system of states have been clients and not all have

been equally vulnerable to military control. As a first attempt to reason from possible lessons of the European experience to alternative paths through the contemporary world, let me propose a simple fourfold classification. As usual, the four categories result from arbitrarily cutting each of two continua in half. The continua are: a) the extent to which a state's military organization is created, trained, staffed, and supplied by other states: internal vs. external; b) the extent to which the resources to support military organization are generated directly by the export of labor or commodities to one other country: dependent vs. independent.

		DEPENDENCE ON EXPORTS TO A SINGLE COUNTRY FOR MILITARY RESOURCES	
		DEPENDENT	INDEPENDENT
SOURCE OF MILITARY ORGANIZATION	EXTERNAL	client states e.g. Honduras	clones e.g. South Korea
	INTERNAL	merchants e.g. Iraq	autonomous states e.g. China, South Africa

In general, runs the reasoning, states that acquire their military organization, training, personnel, and supplies from outside powers are less likely to have struggled through to

civilian constraints on their own armed forces. The table also indicates that a state depending on exports to a single destination for the funds paying for its armed force is deeply vulnerable to outside influence, because fluctuations in the target country's economy affect its own ability to sustained armed force so directly, and because the receiving state can so easily influence the sending state's welfare by manipulating the terms of trade. If we take European experience seriously, we should expect client states to follow signals from their patrons, clones to be especially vulnerable to military coups, merchants to wax and wane as a function of the market for their commodities or labor, and autonomous states to occupy similar positions to the old members of the European state-system.

Over the last century or so, our world has seen a decisive net shift from the lower right-hand corner of the diagram to the upper left-hand corner: from internal creation, staffing, and supplying of military organization by states depending rather little on exports to a single trading partner toward a situation in which military forms, personnel, and supplies flow into a state while exports flow out to a single destination and pay for the military wherewithal. The twentieth-century drive of great powers to

surround themselves with rings of poorer, militarily dependent states fosters just such a shift.

Tables 3 and 4 display some outcomes of that process. Their categories, regrettably, do not correspond to those of my diagram; for that, we would need information about export-dependency and about the sources of military organization and training. They do, however, provide a preliminary indication of the dependence of states in different parts of the Third World on arms imports for their own military. The first fact to note is that three-fifths of the world's states having military rule in 1981 also relied on a single supplier for the great bulk of their arms. Latin America, where the U.S. had eight clients while the U.S.S.R. supplied Cuba, led the pack. Middle Eastern states, although great consumers of arms, managed to diversify their sources of supply; both their oil revenues and their geopolitical position probably helped that endeavor. Asian states, nevertheless, were the ones most heavily involved in international military networks. Over 55 percent of all Asian states had military rulers, while almost 70 percent had either military rule, or heavy arms shipments, or both. In terms of per capita expenditures for military activity, the Middle Eastern states overshadowed all the rest. On the

Table 3. Distribution of Third World States by Military Type, 1981

Type	Region: Middle East	Asia	Latin America	Africa	Total
Military Rule, One Big Supplier	23.5	34.8	37.5	27.3	30.6
Military Rule, Several Suppliers	5.9	21.7	16.7	25.0	19.4
Non-Military, Heavy Arms Imports	29.4	13.0	8.3	6.8	12.0
Other	41.2	30.4	37.5	40.9	38.0
TOTAL	100.0	99.9	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of States	17	23	24	44	108

Definitions:

One Big Supplier: One state supplies at least 75 percent of the state's arms imports.

Heavy Arms Imports: State imports at least 0.5 billion dollars worth of arms in year.

(**Source**: Sivard 1981)

average, non-military states outspent military states, a fact which suggests that military rulers benefited more significantly from the protection and subsidy of great powers than did their civilian-led neighbors. Not the sheer level of military expenditure, but the relationship between military forces and other organizations, appears to have forwarded or checked military hegemony.

If the building up of circles of dependents around the great powers were the only trend, to be sure, the world would divide neatly into autonomous states and clients; clones and merchants would not exist. But the world actually contains some clones, and plenty of merchants. Competition among the great commercial and military powers has made it possible for some states to bargain their strategic locations into claims on extensive military support from another power, and thus to become **clones**, while states having their own military establishments as well as a valuable export have bartered the export for military supplies, thus becoming **merchants.** Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, all of which enjoy extensive military protection while spending exceptionally low shares of their national income on military might, show some of the advantages of cloning.

In the light of European experience, merchants --

Table 4. Military Expenditure per Capita in Third World Regions, by Type of Regime, 1981

Type	Region				
	Middle East	Asia	Oceania	Latin America	Africa
Military Rule, One Big Supplier	114	32	—	20	31
Military Rule, Several Suppliers	52	22	—	40	7
Non-Military, Heavy Arms Imports	402	25	—	28	44
Other	574	142	80	13	19
Percent of GNP in Military Expenditure	12.2	2.8	2.4	1.5	3.6

(**Source:** Sivard 1981).

especially, in our own time, exporters of oil -- pose some especially interesting questions. To the extent that their buyers league to form a single bloc, they become as vulnerable as a country having but one destination for its exports. Their situation most resembles that of Spain when riches were flowing in from America. On the one hand, when demand for their exports is high, they avoid much of the statemaking effort, and the consequent fighting out of agreements with major classes in their own territories, that so marked European preparation for war. That side of the equation suggests the possibility of an acquiescent population, and a relatively peaceful exercise of power by those who control the essential commodities. On the other, their military organizations acquire a fearsome power relative to other organizations in their vicinities. Where it is technically possible for the same small group to seize control of the military apparatus and the sources of exports, we should witness an incentive to military coups that will outshadow the petty maneuvers of the clones.

Where the export is extremely valuable, as in the case of oil, we might expect the great powers themselves to support military factions that a) show promise of being able both to seize control of the state and to assure the

continuation of the export, b) are willing to barter a promise to export to the great power for support from that great power.

What will happen if and when the merchants' income rises? Two complementary dangers arise. The first is that merchant states will build their military might to unprecedented levels, thus increasing the stakes in domestic struggles for power and the destructiveness of international war. The second is that their demand for arms will feed the military industries of the great powers, thereby promoting the remilitarization of the great powers themselves. Today's large shipments of American, Russian, and French weaponry to various Middle Eastern states augur ill for peace -- domestic or international -- in that troubled region. Increased military power there and elsewhere in the Third World provides no guarantee of stable government or nonviolent settlement of international disputes.

GENERAL NOTE: This is a revised version of "Speculations on Warmaking and Domestic Military Power," Working Paper 280, Center for Research on Social Organization, University of Michigan, December 1982. I have also borrowed a few passages from my "Warmaking and Statemaking as Organized Crime," CRSO Working Paper 256, February 1982. In compensation for an undocumented general argument, I am providing an extensive bibliography of the reading that has led me to the positions taken in the paper.

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