

Except for highways, gendarmes deal chiefly with those portions of the territory in which private property occupies most of the space, and therefore spend most of their time patrolling communication lines and responding to calls from civilians. Urban police, in contrast, crisscross territories dominated by public space and having valuable property within reach of that public space; they correspondingly spend more of their effort reaching out to control and apprehend without calls from civilians. Ultimately, any such geographic division separates the military from political power and makes it dependent for survival on civilians whose preoccupations include fiscal soundness, administrative efficiency, public order, and the keeping of political bargains as well as (perhaps even instead of) military efficacy. This complex logic strongly affected the spatial differentiation of European states.

To be sure, the discrepancy was more than geographic. As we have seen, the people who ran the state's civilian half had little choice but to establish working relations with capitalists, and to bargain with the rest of the population over the yielding of resources for an expanding range of state activities. As they pursued revenue and acquiescence, officials built organizations that grew quite distinct from the military, and for most purposes became increasingly independent of it. In Europe as a whole, these processes did not prevent steadily increasing military expenditure or ever more destructive wars, but they did contain domestic military power to a degree that would have astonished a European observer of AD 990 or 1490.

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## 5 Lineages of the National State

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### CHINA AND EUROPE

G. William Skinner portrays the social geography of late imperial China as the intersection of two sets of central-place hierarchies (Skinner 1977: 275-352; see also Wakeman 1985, Whitney 1970). The first, constructed largely from the bottom up, emerged from exchange; its overlapping units consisted of larger and larger market areas centered on towns and cities of increasing size. The second, imposed mainly from the top down, resulted from imperial control; its nested units comprised a hierarchy of administrative jurisdictions. Down to the level of the *hsien*, or county, every city had a place in both the commercial and the administrative hierarchy. Below that level, even the mighty Chinese Empire ruled indirectly via its gentry. In the top-down system, we find the spatial logic of coercion. In the bottom-up system, the spatial logic of capital. We have seen two similar hierarchies at work repeatedly in the unequal encounter between European states and cities.

In some Chinese regions, imperial control was relatively weak and commercial activity relatively strong; there, cities generally occupied higher ranks in the order of markets than in the imperial order. Elsewhere (especially at the empire's periphery, where regions were typically more valuable to the center for security than for revenue), imperial control placed a city higher than did commercial activity. Skinner sketches some critical correlates of a city's relative position in the two hierarchies; for example, imperial administrators assigned to cities occupying relatively high positions in the market hierarchy accomplished more of their work by dealing with "parapolitical" networks of merchants and other prospering notables than did their colleagues in less well-favored areas, while the regions including those major market cities financed more than their share of candidates for the imperial examinations that led to

careers in the bureaucracy. Many other consequences flowed from that interplay of top-down and bottom-up systems.

How did China differ from Europe? In a pamphlet published in 1637, Jesuit Giulio Aldeni reported that his Chinese friends often asked of Europe "If there are so many kings, how can you avoid wars?" He reported answering, naively or disingenuously, "The kings of Europe are all connected by marriage, and therefore live on good terms with one another. If there is a war, the Pope intervenes; he sends out envoys to warn the belligerents to stop fighting" (Bünger 1987: 320). This in the middle of the frightful Thirty Years' War, which eventually drew the vast majority of European states into the bloodletting. The difference is critical: although China had once lived through an era of Warring States that had much in common with the international anarchy of Europe, and if insurrections and invasions from the frontiers recurrently threatened imperial control, most of the time a single center dominated much of Chinese space, a zone that was unimaginably large by European standards. Empire was long China's normal condition; when one empire declined, another seized its place. During the eighteenth century, furthermore, while direct rule from a single center was beginning to take hold in Europe, Qing emperors were imposing an even more far-reaching direct rule throughout their domains; in 1726 Emperor Yongzheng went so far as to replace the chiefs of ethnic minorities in southwest China with administrators of his own regime (Bai 1988: 197). In Europe, fragmentation into multiple competing states has prevailed over all of the last millennium.

Although Russian tsars eventually commanded a huge expanse of Asia, Europe itself never hosted an empire of the scale of China's at its prime. After the fragmentation of Rome's domains, nonetheless, many rulers attempted to build empires in Europe, or to extend them into Europe. A succession of Muslim empires reached into Spain and the Balkans, but got no farther. Byzantine, Bulgarian, Serbian, and Ottoman empires sometimes straddled the Balkans and the Middle East, while Mongols and other Asian invaders left an imperial heritage in Russia. In Europe's heartlands, Charlemagne pieced together a fissiparous empire, Normans made several attempts at empire-building, and both a Holy Roman empire (*de jure*) and a Habsburg empire (*de facto*) made their presence felt. Yet these imperial efforts all fell far short of grasping the entire continent. After Rome no large section of Europe felt the rule of another empire on a Roman, much less a Chinese, scale.

Nevertheless Europe experienced in its own more segmented way the interplay of the two processes Skinner detects in China: the bottom-up building of regional hierarchies based on trade and manufacturing, the top-down imposition of political control. Europe's urban networks represented the hierarchy of capital; they comprised the higher levels of commercial connections that reached into towns and villages, linked by *colporteurs* (etymologically, those who carried goods on their shoulders), peddlers (etymologically, those who

walked their goods from place to place), and other more substantial merchants who made capital accumulation through local and regional trade their business. As an English king or a Burgundian duke reached into the countryside for taxes and soldiers, he found well-established commercial connections he had played little part in creating, and could not completely control. Indeed, Europe's bottom-up hierarchies long remained more complete, connected, and extensive than its top-down structures of political control. That was a major reason for the failure of the many post-Roman attempts to build empires spanning the continent.

R. Bin Wong's comparison of struggles over food in Europe and China suggests some important Skinnerian parallels between the experiences of the two continents (Wong 1983; Wong and Perdue 1983). Despite significant differences in structure, people in both regions seem to have been especially likely to seize food forcefully in times of shortage and/or high prices where and when the gap was widening between the extent of food marketing and the degree of governmental control over food supply. Poor people who depended on local markets for their food substituted themselves for authorities who could or would no longer enforce the locality's claims to food stored, marketed, or shipped within its perimeter. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century China experienced a decline in imperial control as markets held their own or even expanded, and local people blocked shipments, bullied merchants, or seized stored grain to enforce their claims to the supply.

Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, for its part, saw marketing of food expand even faster than the local strength of governments: its local people seized grain to enforce claims that *their* officials would no longer respect (Bohstedt 1983, Charlesworth 1983, Tilly 1971). No one has done a sufficiently broad geography of grain seizures in Europe to determine whether they followed an appropriately Skinnerian pattern. Given the marked tendency of grain seizures to ring major cities and ports, however, such a pattern is quite plausible. China's banditry, rebellion, and other forms of collective conflict also showed marked regional differences that bear at least a rough correspondence to the joint distribution of imperial and mercantile activity. From that fact, we might reasonably search for similar geographic inequalities within Europe. Popular collective action might well display a Skinnerian logic.

The patterns of political covariation Skinner describes also have European counterparts: the administrative capitals in regions of scanty commerce in which a viceroy held power through direct military control but could produce little revenue for the king, the lower-ranking royal officials surrounded by prosperous landlords and merchants with whom they had no choice but to negotiate. Consider the contrast between eastern Prussia, where the state's administrative apparatus overwhelmed merchants in favor of great landlords, and western Prussia, where a similar apparatus almost dissolved in the region's commercial activity. Gabriel Ardan pointed out thirty years ago that the "fit"

between fiscal system and regional economy determines the cost and effectiveness of attempts to tax (Ardant 1965). In an area with little market activity, a land tax based on estimated value and levied in cash is likely to cost a great deal to collect, strike the population very inequitably, miss a good deal of potential revenue, and incite widespread resistance. In a highly commercialized area, in contrast, a flat head tax generates less revenue at higher cost than a comparable tax designed to fit the loci of capital and the paths of commerce.

On the other hand (as Ardant did not observe), with high levels of commercial activity, merchants often hold considerable political power, and therefore are in a position to prevent the creation of a state that will seize their assets and cramp their transactions. In Europe, as we have seen, the extent of commercial activity strongly affected the viability of the various tactics used to build state strength. Outside of Gdansk, which prospered with the quickening of Baltic trade, Polish merchants were unable to break the grip of great landlords. (Ironically, the power of Polish landlords also cramped Poland's elected king, and thereby made him an attractive suzerain for Prussian cities that were trying to escape the more demanding tutelage of the Teutonic Knights.) But the merchants of Amsterdam, Dubrovnik, Venice, and Genoa, high points in the commercial hierarchy, could dictate the terms on which any state would operate in their territories. Thus Skinner's model of China sheds light on the geography of state formation in Europe.

In fact, earlier chapters have laid out a model of Europe a Skinnerian can easily recognize. It has three elements:

- 1 a set of social relations characterized by exchange and capital accumulation in which concentration produces cities and inequality rests on exploitation;
- 2 another set of social relations characterized by coercion in which concentration produces states and inequality rests on domination;
- 3 a set of activities carried on by states which involve their agents in acquiring resources from others.

The networks defined by the two sets of social relations articulate unevenly: at some locations dense concentrations of coercion meet equally dense concentrations of capital, at others dense coercion encounters sparse capital, and so on. Similar state activities carried on at different locations therefore work differently, and have different organizational consequences. That sums up, very abstractly, the main message of this whole book so far.

#### STATES AND CITIES REEXAMINED

Recall what a state is: a distinct organization that controls the principal concentrated means of coercion within a well-defined territory, and in some

respects exercises priority over all other organizations operating within the same territory. (A national state, then, extends the territory in question to multiple contiguous regions, and maintains a relatively centralized, differentiated, and autonomous structure of its own.) Armed men form states by accumulating and concentrating their means of coercion within a given territory, by creating an organization that is at least partially distinct from those that govern production and reproduction in the territory, by seizing, co-opting, or liquidating other concentrations of coercion within the same territory, by defining boundaries, and by exercising jurisdiction within those boundaries. They create national states by extending the same processes to new adjacent territories and by elaborating a centralized, differentiated, and autonomous organization as they go.

The formation and transformation of state organization occur largely as consequences of efforts to conquer, and to maintain control over the people and property in the territory. Although statemakers always have models of conquest and control in mind, and frequently follow them self-consciously, they rarely plan out the step-by-step construction of the state that these activities bring into being. Nevertheless, their activity inevitably creates top-down hierarchies of coercive control.

As rulers form and transform states, they and their agents consume large quantities of resources, especially resources that lend themselves to military applications: men, arms, transport, food. Those resources are, for the most part, already embedded in other organizations and social relations: households, manors, churches, villages, feudal obligations, connections among neighbors. The ruler's problem is to extract the essential resources from those organizations and social relations, while ensuring that someone will reproduce and yield similar resources in the future. Two factors shape the process by which states acquire resources, and strongly affect the organization that results from the process: the character of the bottom-up hierarchy of capital, and the place within that hierarchy of any location from which a state's agents try to extract resources.

The range of cities a would-be statemaker faced in Europe was very large. Resorting to yet another two-dimensional diagram (figure 5.1), we might array cities by the extent to which their activities articulated with those of their hinterlands (from a superficial to a profound connection) and by their market position (from a purely local or regional market to an international center of trade, processing, and capital accumulation). Thus thirteenth-century Florence, whose merchants and rentiers exercised extensive control over land, production, and trade in its *contado*, qualified as more of a metropolis than Genoa, an international link having weaker ties to its own hinterland. Fifteenth-century Madrid, rather closed in upon itself and its section of Castile, looked more like a regional market than Lisbon, whose dominance extended both inside and outside of Portugal.

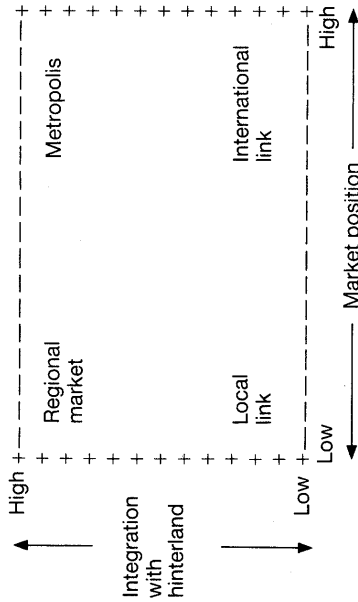


Figure 5.1 Types of cities.

The distinctions matter because they significantly affected the prospects for the formation of different kinds of states. The higher a city's market position, the more likely that anyone building up concentrated force had to negotiate with the capitalists based there, or even be one of them. The greater its economic articulation with its hinterland, the less likely that a separate group of landlords would serve as the city's counterweight or enemy in any process of state formation. In the early stages of European state formation, a city that dominated its own hinterland and occupied an international market position had a strong probability of constituting its own autonomous state, whether a city-state like Milan or a city-empire like Venice.

Under the conditions prevailing in Europe before 1800 or so, in regions where cities proliferated, international trade was intense. Some of the cities occupied central positions in international markets, and capital accumulated and concentrated. In those circumstances, no one created or altered a state except in close collaboration with the local capitalists. Flanders, the Rhineland, and the Po Valley illustrate the principle dramatically. Conditions differed where cities were sparse; there, international trade played a small part in economic life, few cities (if any) occupied high positions in international markets, and capital neither accumulated nor concentrated at a rapid rate. In such regions, states commonly formed without either the collaboration or the effective opposition of local capitalists. There, coercion reigned. Poland and Hungary stand as exemplars. In between, the presence of at least one major center of capital accumulation in a region otherwise dominated by landlords made possible an intermediate path to the state, a path in which holders of capital and of coercion struggled, but ultimately bargained out a *modus vivendi*. Aragon and England provide cases in point.

These differences followed a well-defined geographic pattern in Europe. Although seacoast regions had more than their share of cities, ports outside of the Mediterranean generally had shallow hinterlands, and backed on larger

regions controlled by landlords. The broad urban column that reached roughly northwest from the Italian peninsula to southern England dominated the map of fragmented sovereignty, the zone of capitalist strength in state formation; as commerce on the Atlantic coast, the North Sea, and the Baltic gained importance, the column acted as a kind of percolator, pumping merchandise, capital, and urban population up from the Mediterranean and the various Easts to which it connected. Big, powerful national states formed chiefly at the edges of the urban column, where cities and their capital were accessible but not overwhelming. Farther out, states occupied even larger territories, but until fairly late exercised only episodic control over the people and activities within them.

These contrasting circumstances marked out different paths of change in states. To make discussion feasible, let us again schematize (see figure 5.2), reducing many paths to just three. The diagram argues that when men began to concentrate coercion in various parts of Europe the relative presence or absence of concentrated capital predicted (and to some degree caused) different trajectories of change in state structure; although all regions of Europe eventually converged toward the large national state, states actually diverged over a long period; for several centuries, coercive, capitalist, and capitalized-coercion states moved further apart in structure and action. For all its crudity, the diagram allows some useful distinctions. Within the Nordic countries, for example, we might sketch the alternative paths as in figure 5.3. In order to take the scheme seriously, to be sure, we would have to recognize that at various times Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark all belonged to empires and federations dominated by others, that the boundaries of the states and dependencies designated by those names fluctuated significantly as a result of conquest and negotiation, that before the middle of the seventeenth century Denmark operated a classic coalition between powerful landlord nobles and a

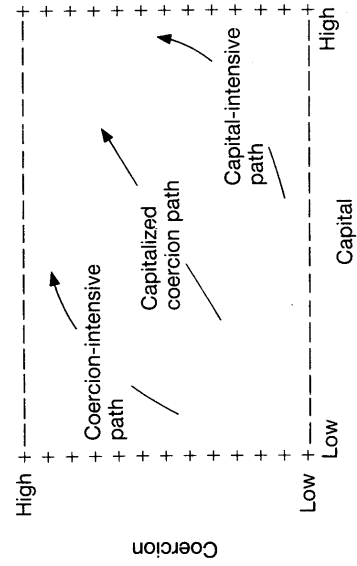


Figure 5.2 Relative concentration of capital and coercion as determinants of states' paths of growth.

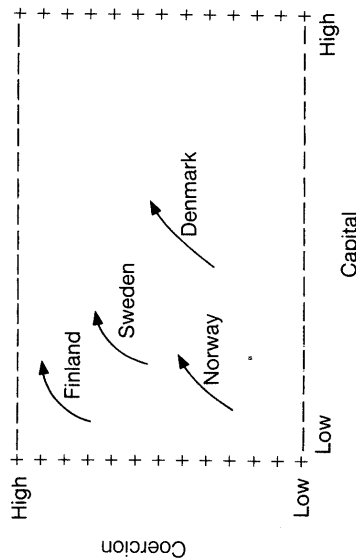


Figure 5.3 Paths of state formation in Scandinavia.

landlord king, and that over the entire time since AD 900 Finland has enjoyed only a few decades of existence independent of neighboring powers. With those qualifications, the diagram provides an opportunity to sketch how Denmark began the millennium as a relatively uncommercialized conquering power, then capitalized on growing trade between western Europe and the Baltic to become significantly more prosperous than its neighbors, while Finland remained a commercial backwater, governed by force, much longer.

The Nordic countries created their own variant of coercive state formation. Before the seventeenth century, they comprised one of Europe's most profoundly rural regions. Many towns came into being as fortified outposts of royal power rather than as significant commercial centers. Despite the early importance of Bergen, Copenhagen, and other commercial centers as outposts for trade, in 1500 no city in the region had as many as 10,000 inhabitants (de Vries 1984: 270). German merchants long dominated Scandinavian trade, to the extent that city councils and urban geography alike often split into distinct German and local sections.

Scandinavian trade became a near-monopoly of the Hanse. The Hanse cities resolutely excluded Italian bankers and refused to create banks and credit institutions of their own. Instead they relied on bilaterally balanced trade, often in kind (Kindleberger 1984: 44). Only with the quickening of Baltic trade during the sixteenth century did significant concentrations of capital and urban population start to appear in Norway, Sweden, Finland, or Denmark. Even then, the Dutch merchants who succeeded the Germans managed much of the trade, capital, and shipping. Yet the region's warriors left their mark on many parts of Europe.

In the centuries around AD 900 Vikings and their cousins conquered widely outside of the North, and often set up states dominated by warrior-landlords. They were generally unable, however, to follow the same course in their homelands. There the salience of forestry and fishing, the thinness of

settlement, the openness of frontiers, and the rarity of external invasions combined to assure the survival of smallholders and to set limits on the ability of warriors to become great landlords. In seeking to secure military service, Swedish kings made grants that actually multiplied small landowners. Up to the seventeenth century, they drew most of their troops by means of variants of the same system: nobles (and later rich peasants) qualified for tax exemption by fitting out cavalrmen for poorly-paid royal service, while commoners shared the responsibility for supplying infantrymen as well as providing land to them and their families. Except for mercenaries stationed in war zones and frontier provinces, the arrangements sustained themselves without large cash outlays by the crown.

Sweden and Denmark maintained major military forces for several centuries. Under Gustav Vasa (1521–60) and his successors, Sweden built up formidable military power at the cost of subjecting large parts of the economy to demands of the state. The Scandinavian Union of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway (1397–1523) formed largely as a means of asserting royal power against the commercial dominance of German merchants and the Hanseatic League. Among other moves, Vasa dispossessed the clergy and created a Protestant church subordinated to the state. Like his Russian contemporaries, Gustav Vasa also forwarded the view "that all land belonged to the crown and those non-nobles enjoying temporary possession of it could only expect continued tenure while they fulfilled their fiscal obligations to the government" (Shennan 1974: 63). The state's search for cash to pay for war in a largely subsistence economy motivated an expansion of mining and manufacturing, an elaboration of the fiscal apparatus, the beginning of a substantial national debt, a bypassing of older representative assemblies, and an increasing involvement of the clergy (now Protestant and national) in record-keeping for the crown (Lindegren 1985, Nilsson 1988).

More commercial Denmark financed its warmaking from the income of crown lands up through the Thirty Years' War. Indeed, until 1660 no commoner could own land in Denmark. The war between Sweden and Denmark in the 1640s combined with economic depression to precipitate a struggle over revenues between the Danish aristocracy and the elected king. In a coup d'état, the crown established a hereditary monarchy and greatly reduced noble power. But that meant reduced cooperation from the nobility. As a result Denmark made a decisive shift to taxation, including the lucrative tolls of the Sound. "Whereas 67% of Danish state revenues in 1608 consisted of income from crown lands, a half century later such revenues amounted to only 10%" (Rystad 1983: 15). To liquidate its war-induced debts, indeed, the monarchy sold off the bulk of its lands between 1660 and 1675 (Ladewig Petersen 1983: 47). Thus the expense of seventeenth-century warmaking produced major governmental changes in both Denmark and Sweden.

Sweden (like Denmark) relied largely on mercenaries during the Thirty

Years' War, but shifted back toward a conscripted national force as its troop requirements rose during the later seventeenth century. Charles XI (1672-97) engineered his own coup d'état by wresting from magnates crown lands his predecessors had been selling off to pay for their warmaking, and then allocating much of the land to part-time soldiers who thus owed military service for their means of subsistence. By 1708 Sweden and Finland (then a Swedish province) were fielding 111,000 troops from a total population of about two million (Roberts 1979: 45). The Swedish monarchy was constantly short of funds, but was able to pay for war without bankruptcy by exporting copper and iron, by building its own large arms industry on its rich base of minerals, and by exacting enormous payments from the territories it won. That system of tribute worked well enough so long as conquest continued, but collapsed at the advent of peace and stable rule.

With the assassination of Charles XII (1718), Sweden abandoned its drive for imperial power. By that time, however, the creation of a large military force on the basis of a small population, a relatively unmonetized economy, and an exiguous bourgeoisie had produced a very substantial state apparatus in which civil bureaucrats and clergy did a great deal of work for the crown. Norway (which lived under Danish, and then Swedish, rule until 1905) and Finland (which was a province of Sweden until 1809 and then a Russian grand duchy until 1917) underwent similar evolutions despite their dependent positions and greater peripherality with respect to European markets. Denmark, commanding the traffic of the Sound with the substantial tolls that traffic generated, putting a much larger part of its military effort into the navy than its neighbors, and building commercialized agriculture in trade with Germans to the south, created a larger bourgeoisie and a smaller state apparatus.

Although Swedish landless laborers increased greatly in number with the consolidation of holdings after 1750 (Winberg 1978), they never fell under the control of big landholders. Instead, the state bureaucracy extended its monitoring directly to peasants and laborers, who retained considerable bargaining power; in Sweden, indeed, peasants maintained representation through a separate Estate from those of the clergy, nobility, and bourgeoisie. The resulting states organized around coercion and gave little scope to capital, but lacked the great territorial lords of their neighbors to the south.

In comparison with the rest of Europe, then, the Nordic areas all clustered along the coercion-intensive path to statehood. At the other extreme, the commercial city-states and city-empires of Italy followed a distinctly different path to the state, relying on high concentrations of capital, but concentrating coercion less decisively and more temporarily than their North European cousins. That is the main point: trajectories of change in European states differed dramatically, and produced contrasting kinds of state. Those that followed the capitalized-coercion path eventually became dominant in Europe, and other states converged on their characteristics. But before that late

consolidation of the European state system, many other kinds of state formed and performed quite effectively.

Let me recall the crucial points. Interacting with each other and jointly involved in international wars, rulers in different parts of Europe pursued similar activities: they sought to create and use warmaking capacity to their own advantages. But each one did so under the highly variable conditions set by the combination of coercion and capital that prevailed in his own territory. Alternative combinations meant different class configurations, different potential allies and enemies, different organizational residues of state activity, different forms of resistance to state activity, different strategies for the extraction of resources, and therefore different levels of efficiency in resource extraction. Because each interaction produced new organizational residues and social relations, the path followed by a state up to a certain point in time limited the strategies open to its rulers beyond that point. For that reason, even states occupying identical locations with respect to coercion and capital at different points in time behaved somewhat differently. Nevertheless, the great distinctions separated coercion-intensive, capital-intensive, and capitalized-coercion trajectories of state formation.

#### COERCIVE TRAJECTORIES

Take the path that led through high coercion. In the European portion of what is now the USSR, trade routes were thin and capital lacking. In AD 990, the chief center of commerce and manufacturing was Kiev, which served as a northern offshoot of the great commercial band connecting Byzantium with India, China, and the rest of the civilized world; Kiev also lay on the lesser north-south trade route linking the Baltic to Byzantium. In the year 988, tradition says, Prince Vladimir of Kiev had cemented the Byzantine connection by accepting baptism into its branch of Christianity. Princes of Kiev, descendants of Vikings who had moved south to conquer, exercised weak sovereignty over the rulers of other Russian city-states and regional dukedoms. At a local level, much of the land remained under the control of peasant communes; as in the rest of eastern Europe, landlords were able to coerce income from peasants in the form of dues, fines, use fees, and part-time labor on their estates, but could only intervene with difficulty in households' and communities' management of their own plots. The thinness of settlement made it relatively easy for cultivators to flee oppressive masters and seek refuge in the lands of other lords. Great landlords also suffered repeated raids and conquests from the mobile peoples of the steppe. On a larger scale, nevertheless, relatively autonomous armed landlords dominated most of the territory.

To the west, in AD 990, a Polish state was aggrandizing by conquest of territories nominally belonging to the Holy Roman Empire. It was also

expanding eastward; in 1069 its grand duke drove his armies to Kiev and put one of his kinsmen on the Russian throne. To the northwest, Viking states made periodic attempts to extend their frontiers into the lands claimed by Russia and Poland. A bellicose Bulgarian state flexed its muscles to Russia's southwest. In the same region, kings of Bohemia and Hungary (the latter newly crowned) were likewise marking out their own zones of control. Around Europe's western rim — notably in the British Isles, the Iberian peninsula, and Italy — the armed invaders that rolled continually out of Scandinavia and the Middle East commonly seized land and created states based on agriculture; however thinly, they settled on the land. Almost all of Europe's eastern third, in contrast, was forming into tribute-taking states that claimed priority in large territories but governed them only loosely, if at all.

In the East, nomadic conquerors simultaneously threatened the hegemony of any substantial state and maintained a strong investment in the continued existence of agrarian states they could exploit. When their numbers were large and their force too great for them to fix themselves as parasites on existing states, some of them gradually settled and formed their own exploitative states. In all these ways, they shaped the east European pattern of state formation for a thousand years after AD 500. One after another, they roared out of the steppe: Bulgars, Magyars, Petchenegs, Mongols, Turks, and many lesser peoples.

Invasions from the southeast continued well past the Millennium, reaching their peak in the 1230s, when Mongols sacked Kiev and established hegemony in its domains. At that point, Mongols were on their way to ruling most of Eurasia, from Russia to China. In much of their domain, to be sure, that "rule" consisted of little more than the requirement of formal submission, the exaction of tribute, the fighting off of rival claimants, and the conduct of occasional military raids on insufficiently cooperative subjects. For two centuries, nevertheless, Russian princes paid tribute and homage to the Golden Horde, who set their capital on the lower Volga. Indeed, the Horde's khans commonly forced sons of ruling Russian princes to inhabit the Mongol capital, and thus to serve as hostages to their fathers' performances (Dewey 1988: 254).

From the fifteenth century onward the frequency and intensity of attacks from the southeast seems to have declined as the central Mongol empire collapsed and the steppe's armed horsemen turned their attention to the vulnerable, and much richer, states along their southern flank. When Tatars sacked Moscow in 1571, they unknowingly marked the end of major incursions into Russia. During the seventeenth century, Zunghar Mongols actually collaborated with the Russians in the conquest of Siberia. Very likely the combination of devastating disease (especially plague) on the Eurasian steppe and the European opening of sea routes that offered viable alternatives to the ancient caravan road from China and India to Europe diminished the threat from the steppe to creators of Russian states (McNeill 1976: 195-6).

By 1400, Europe from the Vistula to the Urals was consolidating into large states, including Lithuania, the republic of Novgorod, and the realm of the Golden Horde. To the northwest, the Prussia of the Teutonic Knights and a Denmark temporarily including Sweden and Norway dominated the Baltic. During the first half of the sixteenth century, the vast grand duchies of Lithuania and Moscow divided the area above the band of Muslim kingdoms that extended from the east along the north shore of the Black Sea all the way to Hungary, Greece, and the Adriatic. (In 1569, Lithuania would unite with Poland, to its west, placing a huge, if thinly-governed, state between Russia and the rest of Europe.) The sixteenth-century establishment of an Arctic sea route from England and Holland to Archangel fortified the European connections of the growing Russian state.

Conquests of Peter the Great (1689-1725) and Catherine the Great (1762-96) brought Russia's boundaries definitively to the Black Sea and provisionally to Estonia, Latvia, and Karelia. Both rulers intensified the involvement of Russia in the culture and politics of western Europe. The end of the Napoleonic Wars left European Russia within something like its present borders, adjacent to Prussia, Poland, Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman state, itself an outgrowth of conquest from the east, covered the Balkans and reached west to touch the thin strip of Austrian territory bordering the Adriatic. Between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, Europe's entire eastern frontier consolidated into states that claimed control over large expanses of land. At the same time, the Russian state and economy shifted their orientations from southeast to northwest. As compared with the tribute-collecting states of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries these states exercised significant control over their borders and substantial power over the populations within them.

Poland remained for centuries the exception that proved the rule, the country in which the nominal ruler could never rule the great landlords, and could rarely get them to join in a sustained, coordinated military effort. During the 1700s, when the Polish state still occupied a territory larger than that of France, the national army mustered only 16,000 men, while Polish nobles had some 30,000 men under arms. This at a time when adjacent Russia, Austria, and Prussia stood by with armies of 200 to 500 thousand men (Ratajczyk 1987: 167). As mass armies formed, failure to match your great neighbors, or to ally with at least one of them, invited conquest. In the later eighteenth century Russia, Austria, and Prussia swallowed adjacent sections of Poland, eventually leaving none behind.

Poland again fell prey to Prussia, Austria, and Russia in the nineteenth century, but otherwise Russia's European borders remained relatively stable until World War I, whose settlement placed a series of small republics, plus a substantial Poland, to the west of the newly-formed Soviet Union. World War II brought some of those republics back into the USSR's state territory, and the

rest of them into its orbit. To discuss the formation of the "Russian" state is thus to follow a titanic series of changes in hegemony and territory.

Before the twentieth century, none of that territory contained a great concentration of cities, and little of it even reached into the continent's regions of intense trade. After 1300, indeed, with the contraction of the old commercial belt that ran from China to the Balkans (and therefore of its northward extension to the Baltic), and with predatory Mongols blocking access to the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, the once-thriving network of cities including Kiev, Smolensk, Moscow, and Novgorod thinned out. The sixteenth-century revival of trade multiplied towns, but did not bring into being anything resembling the urban density of western and Mediterranean Europe. The Russian state took shape in a capital-poor environment.

The environment was also coercion-rich. For five centuries after AD 990 the various states that grew up in that part of Europe operated through conquest, fed on tribute, and ruled (the word exaggerates) chiefly through regional magnates who had their own bases of power. Under Mongol hegemony, the largely independent princes of the North parceled out their sovereignty to landlords who fused economic and political control of the peasants in their jurisdictions. During the sixteenth century, as the Mongol states collapsed, Russian conquests to the south and east brought into being a system of land and labor grants to warriors, forced labor by peasants, restrictions on their right to move, and rising taxation for war; the durable traits of Russian serfdom began to appear.

Up to that point, Russian emperors were trying to rule a vast territory with insufficient force. They governed quite indirectly, through a church and a nobility that held tremendous powers and retained the ability to check royal demands. Muscovite tsars Ivan III (the Great, 1462-1505) and Ivan IV (the Terrible, 1533-84) began to establish more direct rule by sapping the power of independent landlords; in their place they created an army and a bureaucracy attached to the crown through the imperial land grants their chief officers enjoyed. "Ivan [the Great] and his successors," reports Jerome Blum,

were intent upon building up the military forces they needed to conquer their brother princes, to crush the oligarchic ambitions of their own boyars, to stave off foreign invasions, and to expand their realm. They needed an army that was as dependent as possible upon them, and upon whose loyalty, therefore, they could themselves depend. But they lacked the money to buy the men and the allegiance they required. So they decided to use land.

(Blum 1964: 170-1)

That was the quintessential coercion-intensive strategy. Since most of the essential land belonged to armed, semi-independent landlords, the tsars' reorganization precipitated bloody battles with the nobility. The tsars won. In the process, landlords who enjoyed imperial favor gained a signal advantage

over their rebellious neighbors: they could count on the government's armed force to fix an otherwise footloose peasantry on their lands. Thus the logic of war-making and statemaking in a region of little capital led rulers to buy officeholders with expropriated land. Eventually Russia's rulers established the principle that only servants of the state could own land; although exceptions and violations abounded, the principle provided yet another incentive for the multiplication of offices, and for collaboration between officials and landholders in the exploitation of the peasantry.

The placing of small estates in the hands of profit-seeking officeholders increased the pressure on peasants in the northwest. Combined with the opening of new territories to the south and east, that pressure induced a depopulation of the old areas of settled agriculture, which only increased the incentive to fix peasants in place by local practice and imperial decree; the so-called Assembly Code of 1649 codified a system of serfdom that had been developing for two centuries. In addition, slave labor, especially in the newer areas of settlement, continued to expand during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. During the eighteenth century, in seeking to extract revenue from slaves as well as serfs, the tsars practically eliminated the legal distinction between them. After an abortive attempt to tax individual peasants, Peter the Great made landlords responsible for the soul tax, an act that reinforced the interdependence of crown and landlords, not to mention the state-backed power that landlords wielded over their hapless serfs. Peter decreed in 1700 that any freed slave or serf must report immediately for military service, and if rejected for service bind himself to another master. Peter likewise created a distinctive nobility, neatly graded by rank of service to the tsar. To a degree unimaginable in western Europe, Russia acquired a social hierarchy defined, supported, and dominated by the state.

From top to bottom, the emerging structure of social relations depended on coercion. As the Russian state began seriously to engage in war with its heavily armed western neighbors, the effort to extract essential revenues from an uncommercialized economy multiplied the state structure. At the same time, the conquest of lands lying between Muscovy and the Ottoman Empire expanded the military apparatus, exported the Russian mode of serfdom and landholding, and built up the imperial bureaucracy to its full, ponderous form. Peter the Great began the great effort to eliminate separatisms, to subject all segments of the empire - and their revenues - to Muscovite regulations and central administration:

Accompanying Peter's campaign to weed out Ukrainian separatism was a policy of extracting the maximum in economic and human resources from the Hetmanate. Regulations on trade routes, state monopolies, tariffs on foreign goods, and import-export taxes were introduced for the first time . . . Peter also began a massive conscription of Cossacks, not for war but for imperial public works - the building of



canals, fortifications, and, especially, Peter's favorite project, the new capital of St. Petersburg.

(Kohut 1988: 71; see also Raeff 1983)

Catherine the Great completed the incorporation of the Ukraine by abolishing the semi-autonomous Hetmanate outright. The same bureaucracy then reached all parts of the empire. The challenge of war with Napoleonic France, which transformed state structure through much of Europe, fortified the Russian state, magnified its budget, taxation, and staff, expanded its military, and locked into place a deeply coercive state.

In broadly similar ways, Russian, Polish, Hungarian, Serbian, and Brandenburger states formed on the basis of strong alliances between warmaking princes and armed landlords, large concessions of governmental power to nobles and gentry, joint exploitation of the peasantry, and restricted scope for merchant capital. Repeatedly, leaders of conquering forces who lacked capital offered their followers booty and land, only to face the problem of containing the great warrior-landlords they thereby created. Mongols stood out as exceptions because they rarely settled down to run their own lands, and usually continued to live on tribute exacted by the perpetual threat of devastating invasion.

Although the relative weight of crown and nobility (and therefore the extent to which warfare created durable state structure) varied significantly from state to state, all these states stood out from their European neighbors by heavy reliance on brute coercion. When, in the sixteenth century, large volumes of eastern European grain began to flow westward, the existing structure of control permitted great landlords to profit directly from those shipments; they used state power to contain merchants and coerce peasant producers, building a new serfdom in the process. In that balance of power, even extensive commercialization did not build cities, an independent capitalist class, or a state more greatly resembling those of urban Europe.

The experience of Sicily curiously parallels that of eastern European powers. Sicily was for centuries a breadbasket, a rich source of grain for all the Mediterranean. Yet its Arab and Norman rulers clamped on the island a system of alliance with militarily-active landlords that left little scope for cities and capitalists. King Frederick II, who came to power in 1208, subordinated cities to his glorious state. "Frederick's subjection of the towns," reports Dennis Mack Smith,

helped to ensure that there was never any class of merchants or civic officials independent and vigorous enough to offset the landowning aristocracy; and this lack of challenge to the aristocracy was to be a fundamental factor in the political, cultural and economic decline of Sicily. Whenever strong government failed, it was the nobles and not the local cities which filled the vacuum of power. It was therefore foreign towns - Pisa, Genoa, Venice, Amalfi, Lucca - which dominated Sicilian commerce.

(Mack Smith 1968a: 56)

That external control over commerce continued for six centuries, with the result that an agriculturally rich Sicily remained capital-poor and subject to coercive control.

We begin to see a pattern of uniformity and variation among coercion-intensive paths of state formation. All Europe's areas of high coercion began with some combination of two conditions: (1) a major effort to expel a tribute-taking power, (2) few cities and little concentrated capital. The expulsion of tribute takers was relatively unimportant in the Nordic countries, the extent of cities and capital greater in the Iberian peninsula and Sicily than in eastern and northern Europe. But everywhere the combination encouraged a strategy of conquest in which territorial lords simultaneously leagued together against common enemies and fought each other for priority within their own territory, with the leading lord ceding control over land and labor to his fellows in exchange for military assistance. On the whole, that strategy left little space for an autonomous bourgeoisie, hence for accumulation and concentration of capital outside the state.

There the differences began. In some areas (Poland and Hungary are the obvious examples) warrior nobles retained great power, including the ability to install and depose kings. In others (Sweden and Russia are cases in point) a single power managed to establish priority by constructing a state bureaucracy that gave nobles and clergy great privileges with respect to the commoner population, but committed them to service of the state. In still others (Sicily and Castile come to mind), a nobility whose richer and more powerful members resided in the capital on incomes drawn from distant estates and state revenues coexisted with state officials who reached far into the provinces and relied on priests and local nobles for assistance in working the royal will. The big division, then, separated the first variant from the other two - marked off states in which rival armed landlords long held the upper hand from those in which one of them early established supremacy over all the others. In all of them, states grew up starved for capital, bartered state-guaranteed privileges for national armed force, and relied heavily on coercion to assure compliance with royal demands.

#### CAPITALIST TRAJECTORIES

What a contrast with the states of Flanders or northern Italy! Consider the upper Adriatic, the arc of coastline from Ravenna to Trieste. For centuries, Venice dominated the region both economically and politically. But to the south rival powers struggled for control of the coastal area. Ravenna, for example, having been the residence of Roman and Goth emperors, passed the Millennium as a republic, only came under Venetian control during the

fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and from then until the Risorgimento belonged to the pope's domains. To the west, a region of multiple city-states yielded to Venice's fourteenth-century conquests, giving the Venetian city-empire a common frontier with a Lombardy that was first an independent state, then a possession successively of Spain, Austria, and unified Italy. To the north, the Holy Roman Empire and its successor states always loomed large, and sometimes held the coast. To the east, empire after empire surged and pushed toward the Adriatic. In the year 990, the Byzantine Empire exercised nominal control in Dalmatia and the Venetian region, while a shadowy "Roman" empire based in central Europe claimed sovereignty in the adjacent sections of Italy.

To simplify a very complicated story, let us concentrate on Venice, and simply note the city's interactions with all those competing powers. We shall look for: the interaction between substantial, increasing concentrations of capital and weak, fragmented concentrations of coercion; the profound influence of capitalists over any attempt to create autonomous coercive power; the emergence of a sleek, efficient, rapacious, protection-oriented seafaring state; the eventual hemming-in of that state by larger land-based powers; in short, the quintessence of capital-intensive state formation.

The Lombard invasion of Italy (AD 568) had transformed a scattering of boatmen and saltmakers into a set of refugee settlements with strong ties to mainland Italy. Venice remained a nominal part of the Byzantine Empire while Lombards and then Franks seized much of the nearby territory. Up to AD 990, as the Byzantine Empire reached its high point, Venice served chiefly as a transfer station for goods dispatched to northern Italy by traders within the Byzantine system; the city sent its own merchants to Pavia and other inland markets, exchanging salt, fish, and precious goods from the East for grain and other necessities. As they turned seaward, however, Venetian merchants added slaves and lumber to their wares. They also extended the city's commercial and political influence to much of the Adriatic.

In the Mediterranean of that time, the limits of shipbuilding and navigation meant that ships hugged shores, followed a relatively small number of routes defined by winds, currents, and shoals, put in frequently for water and other supplies, evaded corsairs with difficulty once they encountered them, and when they traveled long distances could only afford to carry valuable goods (Pryor 1988). No state became a great maritime power without having extensive privileges in many ports away from its home territory. States that did control many ports gained from them a triple return: access to long trade routes, trade in those ports, and use of the ports as bases for corsairs to prey on the commerce of other powers. For a time, Venice met these conditions and became the Mediterranean's greatest seapower. It contributed mightily to the Christian states' capture of major sea lanes from Muslim control, which began in the tenth century and did not recede until the Turkish advances of the fourteenth. Only the consolidation of Ottoman power during the fifteenth and

sixteenth centuries seriously compromised Western domination of Mediterranean sea-lanes (Pryor 1988: 172-8).

During the eleventh century, Venice's fleet began both to carry its trade into the Mediterranean and to fight off rivals for control of the Adriatic - Dalmatians, Hungarians, Saracens, and Normans. Venetian forces annexed Dalmatia in the year 990, but lost it to an expanding Hungarian state around 1100; for five centuries thereafter, they dominated Dalmatia's commercial activity, but waxed and waned in its political control as a function of expansion and contraction of territorial states to the east. For their collaboration with the Byzantine emperor in wars against his enemies, they received exceptional trading privileges in the empire, including their own quarter in Constantinople (1082). Like Hanse merchants in Scandinavia and North Germany, Venetian traders came to manage much of Byzantium's long-distance commerce. During the twelfth century, they expanded their scope to the whole eastern Mediterranean, profitably mixing trade, piracy, conquest, and participation in crusades. Since crusading itself combined trade, piracy, and conquest, the activities complemented each other. By 1102, Venice had its own merchant quarter in Sidon; by 1123 it had established a base in Tyre as well.

In 1203 and 1204 Venice received the payoff on its combined strategy, as a crafty doge diverted a crusade to Constantinople and delivered a death blow to the Byzantine Empire. The bronze horses of San Marco, seized in Constantinople, still stand as monuments to that *tour de force*. Venice ended up in control of large pieces (legally, three eighths) of the late empire. The city then granted fiefs in the Greek islands to members of its great families, on condition that they keep the trade routes open.

Through all the conquest, Venetian commercial interests reigned supreme. The city's leading families were merchants and bankers, the city's governing council represented the leading families, the doge came from that same patriciate, the city's military forces drew on its own population, and its military and diplomatic policies promoted the establishment of commercial monopolies, and protection for its merchants, and channeling of trade through Venice rather than the creation of a territorial empire. Once they consolidated their superior position, Venetian authorities became reluctant to tolerate piracy and license privateers, since both would menace their investment in peaceful commerce.

The city's maritime dominance, in its turn, opened new opportunities for profit in transporting goods and people safely. Venetian shippers grew rich by carrying crusaders, and then pilgrims, to the Holy Land. Freight charges on the transport of crusaders to Constantinople in 1203, "came to about twice the annual income of the king of England" (Scammell 1981: 108). For all their service of crusaders and pilgrims, furthermore, Venetian rulers did not hesitate to deal with the enemies of Christendom. After Tripoli (1289) and Acre (1291) fell to the Ottoman Turks, for example, Venice immediately negotiated a treaty with the Ottomans for retention of their old trading rights.

Within the Adriatic, rival cities were unable to hold their own against Venice without the aid of territorial powers. Trieste and Ragusa, for example, were likewise trading cities that enjoyed a certain independence, but they could not check Venice without outside help. Venice conquered Trieste in 1203, and held the port in uneasy thrall for more than a century. During Trieste's unsuccessful rebellion of 1368, Duke Leopold of Austria, an old enemy of Venice who coveted an opening onto the Adriatic, sent a relieving force. In 1382, Trieste succeeded in placing itself under Leopold's overlordship; Trieste then remained Austrian (indeed, remained Austria's principal port) until the twentieth century.

Ragusa/Dubrovnik followed a broadly similar strategy. Ragusa lived under nominal Venetian overlordship until 1358, but maintained relative independence before then by cultivating good relations with the neighboring kingdoms of Serbia and Bosnia, in whose trade its merchants played a dominant role. An expanding Hungary expelled Venice from Dalmatia in the 1350s, and granted Ragusa a nearly independent position at the periphery of its empire. As Ottoman Turks won the Balkans in the 1400s, the merchant-patricians of Ragusa managed to negotiate similar arrangements with the new Muslim rulers. Shielded from Italian conquest by its successive protectors and guaranteed great autonomy within Slavic and Ottoman empires by its commercial position, Ragusa operated as an essentially independent city-state until the Napoleonic invasion of 1808.

Although the Italian cities whose supply lines Venice dominated and the Dalmatian cities over whom Venice exercised direct control struggled continually to check Venetian hegemony, Venice competed for seapower most directly with Genoa, a similar ocean-going city-state. During the later thirteenth century, Genoa expanded through the western Mediterranean and out past Gibraltar along the Atlantic coast in the same way that Venice penetrated the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea; but Genoa reached more effectively east than Venice reached west; the two powers clashed especially at the meeting points of their maritime zones. Genoese control of the Black Sea during the later thirteenth century blocked Venetian access to the lucrative trade with that which passed from Trebizond to China through Mongol-held territory. Once Venetian forces blockaded and captured the Genoese fleet in Chioggia's lagoon (1380), however, Venice held priority in the east.

After the Millennium, as Venice's place in the trade of the Adriatic and eastern Mediterranean grew ever larger, the city's population bounded to one of Europe's greatest: 80,000 or more in 1200, 120,000 or so in 1300. Although the Black Death (introduced into Italy by Genoese galleys returning from Caffa) killed over half the city's population in 1347, 1348, and 1349, the number of inhabitants swung around 120,000 for centuries thereafter, in fact until now. From the thirteenth century onward, manufacturing and commerce

displaced seafaring as the city's dominant activities. But Venice remained a critical link in maritime trade, and a great power in maritime politics. Its empire extended, for example, to Cyprus until 1573 and to Crete until 1669. The city's forces warred to maintain access to commercial opportunities, and warred to hold off such rivals as Genoa. More than anything else, its rulers gained reputations from the ability to wage canny and successful sea wars at relatively low cost to the city's merchants, bankers, and manufacturers.

The nature of Venetian trade facilitated creation of an exceptionally supple and predatory state. Unlike the Dutch, who gained their riches transporting bulky products such as grain, salt, and wine, Venetians concentrated on high-priced luxuries: spices, silks, slaves. What is more, they frequently carried great quantities of bullion. Efficiency, monopoly, and military protection from marauders therefore became crucial to their success. "[T]hough other imperial powers might devote much of their energies and resources to the defence of some particular monopoly," remarks G. V. Scammell, "with none, except Venice, did its running and protection become in effect the whole purpose of their being, with the state providing the ships for its operation and a navy and empire for its safeguard" (Scammell 1981: 116). Such a state made as little war as possible, but made that war ruthlessly.

Doges, especially, bore responsibility for warfare. The first doges had been servitors of the Byzantine Empire. As Venice established its independence from the empire, doges had acted increasingly like elected but thenceforth sovereign princes, acting without formal consultation of the community and designating their successors from within their own dynasties. With the city's growth after AD 990, however, Venice moved increasingly to formal oligarchy. A general assembly in which the great families played a preponderant role elected the doge. He had to consult a council that, in theory, represented the Commune formed by all the settlements of the lagoons and, in practice, spoke for the great families in the central settlement. As is so often the case, a formal council took shape when a would-be sovereign faced a group of well-defined and disparate interests without whose support he could not govern. Over time, the great council became more and more exclusive; in 1297, membership became essentially hereditary. In 1300 and 1310, the council fought off popular rebellions against the exclusion of non-patricians from its deliberations. From that point on, members of the oligarchy struggled for preeminence within the city, but never relinquished collective control over its destiny.

Rather than a single governing council, indeed, successive struggles over power produced a shifting hierarchy of councils, from the doge's own advisors to the general assembly of all inhabitants, the latter now reduced to ratifying the decisions of their betters. On the other hand, Venice secreted no bureaucracy; elected committees and officials' personal retainers did the bulk of governmental work. By 1200, the doge had become rather the oligarchy's executive officer than an autocrat chosen by popular acclamation. As a result, the interests of

merchant capitalists dominated the policy – domestic and foreign – of the Venetian state.

If commercial interests guided Venice, the state in turn regulated its citizens' commercial activity. "The Venetian travelling to the Levant on business," remarks Daniel Waley,

was likely to go in a state-built galley, commanded by a captain chosen by the state, within a convoy organised by the state, and when he reached Alexandria or Acre he might well be ordered to join other Venetians in a joint, state-organised purchase of cotton or pepper. The advantage of the last system was that prices would be kept lower if Venetians were not competing against each other. The convoy system for longer voyages goes back at least to the twelfth century. By the thirteenth the routine arrangements allowed for two convoys of galleys a year to the eastern Mediterranean and by the beginning of the fourteenth there were also annual sailings to England and Flanders, to north Africa ("Barbary") and to Aigues-Mortes (near the mouth of the Rhone). The arsenal, the state shipbuilding yard, dates back to the early thirteenth century and the materials used there were usually purchased directly by the Venetian republic.

(Waley 1969: 96)

The state, executive committee of the bourgeoisie, took its responsibilities seriously.

Yet the Venetian state was never bulky. The fiscal system lent itself to slim government. In 1184, for example, Venice established a monopoly over the production and sale of salt from Chioggia's lagoon; although such a monopoly encouraged petty smuggling and fraud, it also produced substantial revenues without extensive manpower. From the thirteenth century onward, the commune established a funded debt. The Monte Vecchio and the other Monti succeeding it, the securities representing that debt, came to be a favorite investment in Venice and elsewhere. The city borrowed to finance wars, then relied on customs and excise to pay for them. The great ritual and charitable confraternities, the Scuole Grandi, loaned substantial sums to the state (Pullan 1971: 138). Since it could borrow from its own merchants and tax the flows through an extensively commercialized economy, the state created little new organization for its finances.

The fourteenth century involved Venice more emphatically in land warfare, and built up the state structure correspondingly. As the city-states of northern Italy began to expand their territories, they threatened both Venice's sources of industrial supplies on the mainland and its merchants' access to vital trade routes across the Alps. Venetians began two fateful games: conquest on the mainland, and shifting alliances with other north Italian powers. By the end of the century, as transalpine powers started serious incursions into northern Italy, Venice was organizing coalitions against France, and joining with such powers as the king of Castile and the German emperor. A set of permanent ambassadors fanned out to the major courts of Europe. The advance of the

Turks around the eastern Mediterranean, and even into Italy, simultaneously drew the city into increased naval warfare.

The expanded scale of warfare caused changes in the city's organization for war. For the first time, Venice entrusted warfare to outsiders, *condottieri*, who employed mercenaries in large numbers. The government balanced *condottiere* influence by sending out patrician commissioners, *provveditori*, who had widespread power over supplies, pay, and sometimes military strategy itself (Hale 1979). Not long after, the city resorted to conscription in its subject territories and in Venice itself, where the guilds of artisans and shopkeepers received quotas of oarsmen for war galleys. During the fifteenth century, Venice began to force convicts and captives to man its galleys; in the process, the galleys shifted from the trireme, which required three skilled rowers, each with his own oar, on every bench, to the ship with one large oar per bench, on which even unskilled, reluctant, and shackled prisoners could lean their weight. The day of an all-volunteer force had long since passed.

The swelling of warfare and the shift away from citizen-soldiers placed new financial burdens on the city. By the later fourteenth century, Venice was levying forced loans, income taxes, and direct property taxes to pay its war-induced debts. Nevertheless, these exceptional efforts did not build up a bulky or permanent bureaucracy; in a highly commercialized economy, elected officials and a small professional corps of clerks and secretaries administered the city's accounts without a large staff. The state parceled out many responsibilities to the citizenry, as when they required the Scuole Grandi to raise portions of a war fleet on their own (Pullan 1971: 147–56; Lane 1973b: 163). Nor did financial obligations overwhelm the city's fiscal apparatus. At the start of the seventeenth century, while other European states were painfully accumulating war debts, Venice actually managed temporarily to liquidate its entire long-term indebtedness (Lane 1973a: 326).

Well before 1600, the city passed its apogee of commercial power. From the fifteenth century onward, a concatenation of changes reduced Venice to a second-rank actor on the international scene: Turkey's exclusion of Venice from Black Sea and eastern Mediterranean ports, the near-surrounding of Venetian territory by Habsburg, Bourbon, and Turkish empires, Venice's declining access to timber, its consequently dwindling shipbuilding industry, its diminishing ability to control Dalmatia, and Mediterranean competition-cum-piracy of Atlantic maritime powers such as Holland and England. By circumnavigating Africa and penetrating the Indian Ocean's trade routes, Portuguese merchants broke the Venetian stranglehold on the spice trade. At the end of the sixteenth century, Portuguese vessels were carrying from a quarter to a half of all the spices and drugs that Europeans brought from the Far East (Steensgard 1981: 131). Portuguese dominance did not last long, however; within a century the efficiently-organized Dutch and British East India Companies had displaced their Iberian rivals (Steensgard 1974).

The arrival of the large, armed sailing ship on the Mediterranean scene cracked the long hegemony of the Venetian galley. Thereafter Venice remained bustling and independent, increasingly engaged in manufacturing and in administration of its mainland territory, but no longer the Mediterranean's leading force. Even within the Adriatic, once practically the city's private lake, sixteenth-century Venetian vessels were unable to contain the rival merchants of Ragusa or to check the depredations of pirates. In the eighteenth century, they gave up trying to exclude foreign warships from their gulf. By then, not only Ragusa but also Trieste and Ancona competed actively for Adriatic trade.

Venice settled for a general policy of military and diplomatic neutrality, an important commercial niche, an increasing reliance on mainland territories as an economic base, and a republican public life dominated by the old oligarchy. "In the hard choice between political independence and commercial success," concludes Alberto Tenenti about the seventeenth century, "in her uncertainty about her own fate, the proud determination of Venice still shone forth above all her mistaken and her shabby actions. Instead of choosing, like her neighbor Ragusa, a life with no risks and no history, the old city-state refused to give way to the predominance of any power, be it Turkish or Papal, Spanish or Habsburg" (Tenenti 1967: xvii-xviii).

Yet that choice finally failed: in 1797, Napoleon's invasion brought the eighteenth-century settlement to an end. Venice and its mainland territories became properties first of Austria, then of a Napoleonic kingdom of Italy, then again of Austria. In 1848, a group of insurgents led by Daniele Manin briefly held power, but Austria soon brought its revolutionary subjects into line. Finally, in 1866, Prussia's defeat of Austria freed Venice to join the new Italian national state.

Venice followed a unique historical trajectory. Yet the city's history had something in common with Genoa, Ragusa, Milan, Florence, and even Holland, Catalonia, or the Hanse. During the fourteenth century, after all, Barcelona sent traders up and down the Mediterranean, and ruled Thebes, Athens, and Piraeus. The Dutch Republic, a frequently turbulent federation of trading centers, remained one of Europe's dominant states for more than a century. City-states, city-empires, and urban federations all held their own for centuries as commercial and political powers, gave high priority to commercial objectives, created effective state structures without large bureaucracies, invented relatively efficient ways of paying for war and other state expenditures, and built institutions representing their commercial oligarchies into the very organization of their states.

Capital-intensive state formation differed from coercion-intensive and capitalized-coercion paths of change in three fundamental regards. (1) The influence of commercial oligarchies promoted the development of states organized around the protection and expansion of commercial enterprise — especially, in European experience, maritime enterprise. (2) The institutions

created by the bourgeoisie for the defense of their own interests actually became sometime instruments of state administration; Venice, Genoa, and the Dutch Republic achieved a remarkable fusion of municipal and national government. (3) The availability of capital and capitalists permitted these states to borrow, tax, purchase, and wage war effectively without creating bulky, durable national administrations. Until the sheer scale of war with nationally recruited armies and navies overwhelmed their efficient but compact military power, capital-intensive states prospered in a warlike world. Not long after the Medici, with the aid of papal armies, returned to rule his native Florence, Niccolò Machiavelli wrote that

if any one should wish to establish a republic in a country where there are many gentlemen, he will not succeed until he has destroyed them all; and whoever desires to establish a kingdom or principality where liberty and equality prevail, will equally fail, unless he withdraws from that general equality a number of the boldest and most ambitious spirits, and makes gentlemen of them, not merely in name but in fact, by giving to them castles and possessions, as well as money and subjects; so that surrounded by these he may be able to maintain his power, and that by his support they may satisfy their ambition, and the others may be constrained to submit to that yoke to which force alone has been able to subject them.

(*Discourses*, I, 55; I owe this apt reference to Richard Frank)

More than anything else, gentlemen — that is, aristocratic landlords — shouldered coercion-intensive states, while capitalists — that is, merchants, bankers, and manufacturers — dominated their capital-intensive rivals. The differences in their experiences depended on when they formed, how much territory they attempted to control, the extent to which agriculture and manufacturing became significant parts of their economic bases, and in what kinds of commodities they specialized.

These factors depended, in their turn, on the geographic and geopolitical locations of the core cities in each state. The presence of large agricultural hinterlands, when it occurred, promoted the formation of larger territorial states. Port cities serving primarily as markets for long-distance trade more frequently created city-states or city-empires on the basis of small home territories. Adjacency to substantial empires and national states favored either absorption into those states or entry into the same struggle for control of territory. These variations, nevertheless, operated within limits set by the powerful presence of capital and capitalists.

#### TRAJECTORIES OF CAPITALIZED COERCION

Not all of the upper Adriatic, obviously, illustrates the capitalist path through state formation equally well. Austria eventually managed to claim a significant section of the shore, including Trieste, and to subordinate it to a state that had

strong coercive interests elsewhere. Byzantine, Serbian, Hungarian, and Ottoman empires all struggled with Venice for control of Dalmatia, and the Ottomans won – at least for several centuries. Nevertheless, the upper Adriatic's history contrasts sharply with that of European Russia. In the Adriatic, abundant capital facilitated the building of armed force, especially maritime force, but provided an incentive and a means for capitalists' resistance to the creation of large states that could subordinate their interests to those of a dynasty. In Russia, the rarity of concentrated capital (especially after the fourteenth-century contraction of trade connections with Asia and the Byzantine Empire) and the presence of warrior-landlords predisposed all the states that formed toward coercive means. There the big question was whether magnates would continue to hold fragmented sovereignty in their many hands, or a single ruler would somehow establish firm priority over all the rest. Once the Russian state opted for the centralized construction of armed force, its efforts brought into being a ponderous state in which landlords retained great discretion within their own territories, but lost it *vis-à-vis* the tsar.

The fate of peasants – the bulk of the population almost everywhere in Europe before the eighteenth century – differed dramatically between coercion-intensive and capital-intensive regions. In most areas of coercion-intensive state formation, rulers created states in close collaboration with large landlords who retained extensive military and civilian powers. Russia, Poland, Hungary, and Brandenburg-Prussia exemplify the process, which had some parallels in Sicily and Castile. In such states, the expansion of trade in the sixteenth century encouraged and enabled landlords, backed by state power, to enserv peasants from whom they had previously drawn ample rents; most commonly, they required poorly-remunerated labor service on the landlord's demesne from cultivator households who drew their own subsistence from small farms to which they were attached by law. In other coercion-intensive regions (especially Scandinavia) where landlords never acquired the economic and political power of their eastern European counterparts, rulers of the sixteenth century and later instituted direct controls over the peasantry with the help of clergy and other bureaucrats, thus guaranteeing the long survival of subsistence-oriented peasants.

In capital-intensive areas, such as the Netherlands and some of Switzerland, the peasantry underwent bifurcation. In the presence of urban markets and aggressive capitalists, agriculture commercialized early and frequently combined with rural industry. As a result, a minority of peasants grew rich on cash crops and the labor of their neighbors. The majority became poor wage-laborers, many of whom doubled in domestic manufacturing or peddling when demand was on the upswing. In the company of omnipresent merchants, the minority and the majority produced a rural economy that supplied its cities easily, lent itself to efficient taxation, and fell under the control of cities that were regional centers of trade. Contrasting peasant experiences were both cause and effect of

the very different trajectories of state formation in capital-intensive and coercion-intensive regions.

In between the capitalist and coercive extremes lay the paths of capitalized coercion, those instances where the concentrations of coercion and of capital occurred in greater equality and tighter connection with each other. The British Isles – Ireland, Scotland, England, and Wales – illustrate the path. They also show how much the placement of any experience within the coercion-capital diagram depends on the temporal and geographic limits we place on the experience. Seen from Denmark in the year 990, the British Isles look like a peripheral zone of conquest and tribute within a substantial empire centered on Scandinavia. Seen from Ireland over the period since then, state formation in the British Isles has a much more coercive cast than when seen from southeastern England. Seen from Scotland over the years 1500 to 1700, state formation looks like the competition and interaction of three rather separate states having different economic bases – English, Irish, and Scottish. Let it be clear, then, that we are examining the whole region during the thousand years following AD 900. Over the whole millennium the central drama was the expansion of an English state initially formed in conquest but soon counter-balanced by a great port and a commercialized economy.

In the year 990, Ireland was locked in struggle among multiple Celtic kingdoms and the coastal dominions of Norsemen. Although multiple Nordic conquerors divided the islands of the North Sea, mainland Scotland and Wales were more or less unified under the leadership of warrior-kings. A Dane, Canute, was in the process of wresting a weakly-connected England from Anglo-Saxon King Ethelred, who had already paid tribute to the Danes for a decade. Not only paid tribute, but suffered continual depredation. In its entry for 997, the *Laud Chronicle* reports that:

In this year the [Danish] host went around Devonshire into the mouth of the Severn, and there harried, both in Cornwall, Wales, and Devon, and landed at Watchet; they wrought great havoc by burning and killing people and went back round Land's End to the south side, and entered the estuary of the Tamar, and so up it until they came to Lydford. There they burned and slew everything they met, and burnt to the ground Ordwul's abbey church at Tavistock, carrying off an indescribable amount of plunder with them to the ships.

(*Garmonsway* 1953: 131)

As other Scandinavians sailed out to Iceland, Greenland, and America, Canute and his raiders brought England temporarily into a tribute-taking empire that stretched to Denmark and Norway. The new domains were valuable: at that point, Dublin had perhaps 4,000 inhabitants, York 10,000, Norwich 4,000, and London 25,000, far larger than any Scandinavian town. York served as an important link to Scandinavia, and London to the rest of the world. While not exactly criss-crossed with urban networks, the islands connected well with the cities of continental Europe.

Only sixty years later, Normans (descendants of earlier Viking warriors who had settled in Gaul) organized one more invasion of Britain. Their conquest of England followed the characteristic pattern of distributing land in fief to soldiers become regional agents (and potential rivals) of the crown. It slowed Scandinavian incursions and started the process by which the rulers of England expanded their domains both within and beyond Britain. Over the next two centuries, Norman-English and Scottish arms practically eliminated Danes and Norwegians from control of territory in the British Isles.

As the play of alliance and inheritance increased "English" holdings in what was to become France, the rulers of England began warring with their Norman cousins. During the twelfth century, they also attempted to extend their rule to Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. With his marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine in 1152, Henry II had strong claims to rule England, Normandy, Maine, Brittany, Anjou, Aquitaine, and much of Wales; during the following years, he extended those claims to Scotland and portions of Ireland. As he ran that empire, he built up a relatively effective royal judicial structure. Yet from 1173 onward his sons began to contest his power in alliance with many barons and, at times, the queen.

In the process of making war and intervening in dynastic rivalries, the barons on whom English kings relied for their wars acquired enough power to fight the king as well as each other, exacting chartered concessions — most dramatically in Magna Carta — from the monarch. The Great Charter of 1215 committed the king to cease squeezing feudal obligations for the wherewithal to conduct wars, to stop hiring mercenaries when barons would not fight, and to impose the major taxes only with the consent of the great council, representative of the magnates. The council started to wield durable power, reinforced especially by its place in the approval of new taxation. Later kings confirmed the charter repeatedly. Nevertheless, the continuing efforts of English monarchs to create armed force produced a durable central structure: royal treasury, courts, and domain.

Edward I (1272–1307), for example, extended compulsory knighthood to all holders of lands worth twenty pounds a year, required all knights to serve in royal militias, established taxation for the payment of foot soldiers, imposed the first regular customs dues on wool and hides, built up a permanent central staff who took over some of the activities previously performed by barons and the king's personal retainers, and regularized the separate assemblies of barons, knights of the shire, burgesses, and clergy that granted him money. (In 1294, preparing for another campaign in France, Edward went so far as to sextuple the export duty on wool and demand half the clergy's income in taxes: Miller 1975: 11–12.) The creation of central state structure continued during the fourteenth century: not only did royal courts extend their jurisdiction throughout the land, but justices of the peace began to wield local power as commissioned agents of the crown.

Not that stability prevailed at the center. After all, Edward II died, murdered, in prison (1327). Edward III expired practically powerless (1377), and a deposed Richard II died — perhaps murdered as well — in prison (1400). The houses of Lancaster and York fought thirty years of civil war (the Wars of the Roses, 1455–85) over the right to the crown; the wars ended with Richard III slain by the forces of Henry Tudor, who thereupon became Henry VII. Armed struggles over royal power and royal succession continued for three centuries, until the Glorious Revolution of 1688 set the House of Orange on the throne.

At the same time, English kings tried repeatedly to capture territory in Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and France. Edward I reduced Wales to subjugation as well as nominally subordinating Ireland and Scotland to the English crown. Welshmen only mounted one more serious rising, that of Owen Glendower (1400–9). Both Irish and Scots, however, resisted English rule tenaciously, and often found support from French kings who were happy to see their English rivals distracted by military activity within the British Isles. In the course of resistance both created parliaments having some parallels to their English counterpart. Both also experienced bloody internal struggles over royal succession and over the relative powers of kings and barons. While Ireland remained a fractious colony, Scotland became an independent European power in its own right. Not until the seventeenth century did Ireland and Scotland succumb to relatively stable English control.

The long, and ultimately losing, effort of English kings to hold their French possessions kept the state at war through most of the years from 1337 to 1453. The financial demands of that effort (later called the Hundred Years' War) consolidated the position of Parliament, and regularized the division between its two houses. For well over a century thereafter, wars against Scotland and France (and sometimes both together) involved Parliament in royal fund-raising, and established its right to consent to taxation.

The lower house, eventually to be called the Commons, assembled representatives of the boroughs and the counties, who were largely merchants on the one hand and landlords on the other. A long, if uneasy, alliance between merchants and landlords began in the thirteenth century, as British wool first fed continental textile manufactures and then became the basis for spinning and weaving in Britain. Britain began the slow but fateful shift from exporting wool to manufacturing and exporting woollens. From that point on, English merchants established themselves in Flanders, and began to spread out through the rest of Europe. During the fifteenth century, the English likewise proved themselves formidable men of the sea; east coast sailors, for example, reopened the continent's trade with Iceland around 1412 (Scammell 1981: 460). The Intercursus Magnus, a commercial treaty of 1496, established England as a recognized partner in Flemish international trade. Although foreign merchants and vessels dominated England's trade for another half-century, by 1600 the

English were competing with Spaniards, Portuguese, and Dutchmen throughout the world.

In the same period, British seafarers such as the Bristol men who sailed with John Cabot (himself, as it happens, a Venetian) began joining Dutchmen, Italians, Spaniards, and Portuguese in exploring distant parts of the world, and in laying the bases for a world-wide trading empire. By 1577 Sir Francis Drake was circumnavigating the globe. The crown participated in these adventures to the extent that they promised additions to governmental revenues or military power (Andrews 1984: 14-15). British landlords, aided by legally sanctioned enclosures of open fields and common lands, involved themselves heavily in the marketing of wool and grain; the House of Commons came increasingly to represent a tight alliance of merchants and cash-cropping landowners. The country's growing commercial strength facilitated a growth in state power; it enabled Henry VII (1484-1509) and the later Tudors to check the Scots and challenge the French, expand the state's war-making powers, extend taxation, and reduce the great lords' private armies.

Henry VIII's secession from Rome, seizure of church revenues, and appropriation of monasteries (1534-9) enhanced royal revenues and aligned the cooperating clergy with royal interests. Tudor aggrandizement also incited repeated regional rebellions, including the great Pilgrimage of Grace (1536). Nevertheless the Tudors eventually curbed the great aristocrats, with their private armies and claims to autonomous power (Stone 1965: 199-270). The country's nearly ceaseless commercialization, proletarianization, and economic expansion provided an economic base for state activity, and the state's reliance on customs and excise made extraction of resources from that base more efficient - but only when magnates, crown, and Parliament could bargain out an agreement to cooperate.

During the sixteenth century, Scotland drew ever closer to France; when the young Mary Queen of Scots became queen of France as well (1559), the two kingdoms approached merger. But a Protestant rebellion then contained Mary's power in Scotland, where she ruled unsteadily for six years before inciting another insurrection and fleeing to protective detention by Elizabeth in England; her beheading in 1586 ended the threat of a French Scotland and of a Catholic queen of England. At Elizabeth's death, however, Mary's son James, who had been James VI of Scotland since 1567, succeeded to the crown of England as James I. The French connection had almost dissolved.

Under James I (1603-25) and the later Stuarts, struggles within England over royal revenues for continental wars precipitated great constitutional divisions, attempts of kings to rule (and, especially, to tax) without Parliament, and eventually a civil war entailing execution of Charles I. In a sign of the times, Charles alienated the last block of crown lands to the City of London in 1627, receiving for it a cancellation of past debts and a further loan; from that point onward his credit failed, and his demands for loans and taxes only sharpened

conflict with Parliament and its financiers. By 1640 he was seizing the gold and silver left in the Tower of London for safekeeping, and bargaining with the goldsmiths and merchants who owned it for a loan secured by customs revenues (Kindleberger 1984: 51). Charles' attempt to raise and control an army to put down rebellion in Ireland and resistance in Scotland did him in. During the Commonwealth and Protectorate (1649-60), varying fragments of the army and of Parliament ruled the country while trying to bring Ireland and Scotland back under state control and to battle against Spain and Holland as well. The Restoration, initiated by an army-inspired Parliamentary invitation to Charles II, confirmed the power of Parliament within the British state, especially when it came to revenues and expenditures. The tight interdependence of royal affairs and continental wars continued with the Stuart restoration, as England continued to fight Holland on the seas. The 1688 revolution brought a dramatic reversal of alliances; it carried Dutch Protestant William of Orange and his wife Mary, daughter of the duke of York, to the throne, as France's Louis XIV supported the exiled Stuarts. At that point Britain reverted to its historic rivalry with France, and borrowed Dutch institutions in the process. The state founded the Bank of England in 1694 as a vehicle for financing the war with France that had begun in 1688 (Kindleberger 1984: 52-3). With the end of the revolution and the renewal of British military involvement on the Continent, a new era began. Britain started to form a substantial standing army, an effective central bureaucracy took shape, and the tax-granting House of Commons gained power *vis-à-vis* the king and his ministers (Brewer 1989).

Once again repeated rebellions in Scotland and Ireland - often involving rival claimants to the English crown, not to mention the fine hand of France - strained the state's war-making powers. Wars and dynastic struggles combined to produce great transformations of the state, including a stable union of England with Scotland (1707), the definitive seating of the German house of Hanover (later renamed Windsor) on the throne (1714-15), and the establishment of a *modus vivendi* between the monarchy and a powerful Parliament representing the country's landed and commercial interests. A rebellion on behalf of the Stuart claimant to the throne (1715) failed utterly, as did a second rebellion in 1745, which marked the last serious threat to royal succession in Great Britain. British military power kept on growing: "By 1714, the British Navy was the largest in Europe, and it employed more workers than any other industry in the country" (Plumb 1967: 119).

As compared with its continental neighbors, the British state governed by means of a relatively small central apparatus, supplemented by a vast system of patronage and local powerholding in which Lords Lieutenant, sheriffs, mayors, constables and justices of the peace did the crown's work without serving as its full-time employees; before the Napoleonic Wars, only customs and excise had substantial numbers of regularly appointed officials. Until then, Britain did not maintain a standing army, and relied especially on wartime mobilization of



naval power for its armed force. Except in Ireland, the army played a relatively small part, and militias a relatively large part, in control of Britain's domestic population. In Ireland, the British government continued to deploy armed force and experiment with new means of policing throughout its time of hegemony; indeed, Britain generally used Ireland as a proving ground for techniques of policing the state later introduced in England, Wales, and Scotland (Palmer 1988).

Great Britain kept on making war in Europe and striving for empire in the rest of the world; the end of the Seven Years' War against France (1763) left Britain the world's greatest colonial power. The loss of American colonies (1776-83) did not threaten state power in the way that previous defeats had. Repeated mobilizations for war with France, especially between 1793 and 1815, greatly expanded taxation, national debt, and state intervention in the economy, while causing a subtle but definitive shift in influence from the king and his ministers to Parliament. During those wars (1801), Great Britain incorporated Ireland (not definitively, but for more than a century) into a United Kingdom. By the early nineteenth century that United Kingdom had become the very model of a parliamentary monarchy dominated by landlords, financiers, and merchants.

Imperial expansion continued through the rapid industrialization and urbanization of the nineteenth century. Within Britain the state made a decisive shift toward direct intervention in local affairs: while in previous centuries king and parliament had frequently enacted legislation to govern the sale of food, the control of collective action, the treatment of the poor, or the rights and obligations of workers, they had almost always relied on local authorities for initiative and enforcement. While Britain maintained local authorities to a larger degree than many of its continental neighbors, during the nineteenth century national officials involved themselves as never before in policing, education, factory inspection, industrial conflict, housing, public health, and a wide range of other affairs. Incrementally but decisively, the British state moved toward direct rule.

Despite occasional mobilization of national sentiment, Wales and Scotland had long since ceased threatening the breakup of the British state. But Britain never succeeded in integrating, or even cowing, most of Ireland. Irish resistance and rebellion peaked in the aftermath of World War I; through several steps all but the more heavily Protestant and anglicized northeast corner (Ulster) became an independent state, first within the British Commonwealth, then finally outside it. The struggle in and over Ulster has not ended.

Although in retrospect Great Britain often serves as a model of political stability, a close look at state formation in the British Isles shows how continuously powerful parties battled for control of the state, and how often the transition from one regime to the next occurred in violence. Ireland's experience demonstrates the capacity of the region to create a relatively weak

state along a coercion-intensive path. Nevertheless the British state came to dominate much of the world during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and remains a world power today. The history of that state is not simply a compromise (or even a synthesis) between the histories of Venice and Russia, of coercion-intensive and capital-intensive countries.

The English, then British, state built on a conjunction of capital and coercion that from very early on gave any monarch access to immense means of war-making, but only at the price of large concessions to the country's merchants and bankers. The uneasy alliance between landlords and merchants constrained royal autonomy, but fortified state power. Commercialized agriculture, far-ranging trade, imperial conquest, and war against rival European powers complemented each other, promoting an investment in naval power and a readiness to mobilize land forces for action overseas. The commercialization of both urban and rural economies meant that taxation and borrowing for war went more easily, and with less state apparatus, than in many other European countries. Adam Smith put it in terms of a simple comparison between England and France. "In England," he remarked, "the seat of government being in the greatest mercantile city in the world, the merchants are generally the people who advance money to government . . . In France, the seat of government not being in a great mercantile city, merchants do not make so great a proportion of the people who advance money to government" (Smith 1910 [1778]: II, 401). At that point England stood closer to the capital-intensive path of state formation than did France. England wrought a remarkable combination of easy access to capital and heavy reliance on landlords for day-to-day government of the realm. Although pre-revolutionary France relied similarly on nobles and priests for much of its local government, the effort to wring the means of war from a less capitalized and commercialized economy built up a significantly bulkier central state apparatus than in England.

Yet if we consider Venice or Moscow we immediately see great resemblances between capital-coercion relations in Britain and France. We are accustomed to contrasting the trajectories of Britain, France, Prussia, and Spain as the chief alternative types of state formation. Within the whole European range, however, the four have common properties that distinguish them clearly from the capital-intensive and coercion-intensive paths. In all four cases ambitious monarchs tried, with varying success, to crush or circumvent representative assemblies such as provincial Estates during the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century buildup of military power; in France and Prussia, the Estates succumbed, in Spain the Cortes staggered on, and in Britain Parliament survived as the bulwark of ruling-class power. In all four cases the coincidence of coercive centers with centers of capital facilitated—at least for a while—the creation of massive military force in a time when large, expensive, well-armed armies and navies gave those national states that were able to create them the overwhelming advantage in the search for hegemony and empire.

Why didn't Venice or Russia become England? The question is not absurd; it follows from the recognition that European states in general moved toward greater concentrations of capital and coercion, converging on the national state. Part of the answer is: they did. The Russian and Italian states that entered World War I had far more of the traits of national states than had their predecessors of a century or two before. But the more profound answer is that their previous histories haunted them. Venice created a state that bent to the interests of a mercantile patriciate, and that patriciate found its advantage in seeking out the interstices of the European commercial system rather than by collaborating in any effort to build up massive, durable military power. Russia created a state led by a supposed autocrat, but totally dependent on the cooperation of landlords whose own interests dictated a withholding of peasant labor and its products from the state's ends, and on a bureaucracy that could easily consume any surplus the state generated. Different kinds of revolution – a Risorgimento and a Bolshevik seizure of power – drew Venetians and Muscovites into new states that came increasingly to resemble the great national states of western Europe. But even the successor states bore marks of their previous identities.

G. William Skinner's schematic portrait of China, set into motion, thus provides keen insight into European experience. It helps us recognize how the construction of armed force and its organizational consequences varied from one section of Europe to another as a function of the relative weight of capital and coercion, of the "bottom-up" and "top-down" systems of exploitation and domination, of cities and states. Although all states devoted major efforts to war and preparation for war, beyond that commonality their predominant activities varied according to their positions in the networks of capital and coercion and their prior histories. Even similar activities, furthermore, laid down different organizational residues depending on where and when they occurred. Increasingly, however, relations to other states determined the structure and activity of any particular state. Because of their advantages in translating national resources into success in international war, large national states superseded tribute-taking empires, federations, city-states, and all their other competitors as the predominant European political entities, and as the models for state formation. Those states finally defined the character of the European state system and spearheaded its extension to the entire world.

## 6

# The European State System

### THE CONNECTEDNESS OF EUROPEAN STATES

Ottoman naval might drove Venice from the eastern Mediterranean, and hastened the city-empire's descent as a major military power. When warlike Turks started moving into Europe from the Asian steppe they were landbound nomads like many of their bellicose neighbors. But once they reached the Black Sea and the Mediterranean they quickly learned to build ships and to sail. What is more, during the fifteenth century they started using gunpowder on a scale Europeans had not previously seen. They struck terror into European hearts because they won both hard-fought victories at sea and brutal conquests on land. No one, it seemed, would be safe from these fierce marauders. By the fifteenth century, their advances into the Mediterranean and the Balkans menaced Italy and Austria as well.

The Ottoman seizure of Constantinople (1453) clearly threatened Venetian interests, but Venice bought time by making a commercial treaty with the Turks. The time purchased was short: Turkey and Venice soon went to war, with dire results for Venice. The loss of Negroponte, chief Venetian base in the northern Aegean (1470) initiated the city's exit from the Ottoman zone. From that time, Venice conducted intermittent defensive warfare against the Ottoman Empire, while the Turks carried on raids into the Italian mainland, for fifty years.

The Venetian-Turkish war of 1499-1503 forced Venice down one more step of the international ladder. Although sometime enemy Hungary joined Venice against the Ottoman Empire in 1500, the city's mariners failed to defeat the Turks. Instead, a Turkish navy led by Kemal Re'is gave a drubbing to the largest fleet Venice had ever assembled, in the "deplorable battle of Zonchio" (Lane 1973a: 242). Venice lost Modon, Koron, and Lepanto, important