Elements in a Theory of State-Building: An Inquiry into the Structural Preconditions for Successful State-Building in Europe

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This article tests the six hypotheses on successful state-building in Western Europe formulated by Charles Tilly (Tilly 1975a, 40). The key to state-building success in European history, with success defined as continuous survival as an autonomous polity throughout the period AD 1500–1900, is found to be the variable "success in war" *operationalized* as the successful creation of formally institutionalized administrative institutions for the transformation of economic resources into military power, regardless of whether these institutions evolved within the framework of a *representative state-building format* as in The Netherlands or a bureaucratic-absolutist format as in Prussia.

The subtitle of this essay may seem ethnocentric. And it is, deliberately, so. As valid theory, in the words of Charles Tilly, depends on "getting history right" (1984, 78), ethnocentrism is justified. The modern state, the State with a capital S, is a creature of indigenous European descent: the political counterpart to capitalist economic and individualist social relations.

Any theory about this peculiar form of political organization must therefore take cognizance of its European parentage, and its early development before it set out to conquer the world on coming of age in the 19th century. This means that any theory of the State and of contemporary political development must be tested against the European historical record – and can only be considered valid in so far as it is able to explain Europe.

All existing theory is based upon the European experience. And as high level theory both of the main currents, Marxism and functionalism, are equally valid. But their explanatory value ends at the universal level. Despite all attempts, operationalization of these two bodies of theory within their own frameworks has proved impossible.[1] The State as the *historical* "modern" form of political organization eludes them; the existence of this transcendentalized, formally rational and intensive bureaucratic organization upholding a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence cannot be explained

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by reduction to the requirements of social differentiation or the exigencies of the class struggle.

Macrohistorical explanations have fared somewhat better. Since the Enlightenment, the State has been considered to have emerged out of "feudal" Europe with the crystallization of monarchical polities during the Early Modern Era, developing into "nation-states" by the turn of the 18th century after a period of a state-building "absolute monarchy". All explanations of modern European history have emphasized the crucial role of the "states-system", the fact that the State developed simultaneously in a number of autonomous polities linked in a competitive system. This is the thesis proposed by Otto Hintze (e.g. 1902) and Max Weber (e.g. 1923, 288). It was popularized in Marxist circles by Immanuel Wallerstein (1974, 15–33), forms the conceptual basis of John A. Hall's (1985), Michael Mann's (1986) and E. L. Jones's (1988) treatment of the growth of modernity and is an important independent variable in Anthony Giddens's treatment of the processes leading to the modern state (1985, 3–5).

One master process in European state-building is the *concentration* of political power in one institution, a steady increase in the role, problem-solving capacity and power of government, leading to the crystallization of rational, bureaucratic government and of the notion of the state as a disembodied final source of authority. The best general formulation of this thesis is Norbert Elias's *Prozess der Zivilisation* (1969); an analysis of the evolution of social mores and norms regulating violent behaviour, the gradual "civilization" of behaviour, showing how this is inextricably interwoven with the emergence of the State in a Weberian sense.[2] This thesis is essentially an operationalization of the Weberian concept of rationalization.

As Charles Tilly pointed out in his seminal essay "Western State-Making and Theories of Political Transformation", the construction of valid, historically acceptable theory requires a very high degree of methodological stringency. A theory must (1) refer consistently to a particular and specific unit of analysis, (2) relate changes within the unit of analysis to shifts in its relationship with the rest of the world, (3) ensure that the features of change to be explained are explicit and limited, (4) proceed in an open-ended and prospective fashion, specifying the paths that are likely to lead away from a traditional form of political organization (1975b, 635).

The construction of such a theory of European state-building is a large undertaking, however. It means tracing the history of a select number of European polities *ab origine* and at the same time tracing the world-historical development of European civilization in order to relate the various different trajectories of change to each other and determine possible chains of causation – if any. Even if limiting the perspective to one feature of

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change, a prospective analysis is a plunge into depths of historical analysis that are somewhat frightening to a political scientist.

My perspective, probably the easiest, is *state-building success*, defined as continuous existence as an autonomous polity throughout modern European history from 1536 to 1914, and becoming the nucleus of a nation-state after 1918. The purpose of this comparative exercise is to determine which analytical variables were conducive to state-building success. My assumption is that whatever features observed in the successful contenders and lacking in the unsuccessful cases can be regarded as *necessary and sufficient* conditions for success, and, by extension, the factors which have created the state as we know it. This, I believe, meets Charles Tilly's theoretical demands.

In addition, the historical commonplace that the vast majority of European attempts at state-building failed is in itself of theoretical significance. It is an observation which ought to be the point of departure for the construction of all state-building theories, or theories of the state for that matter. My additional requirement on any state-building theory is the ability to *explain failure as well as success*. Failure is important, as the threat of failure, loss of political autonomy, governed the actions of all European polities from the Dark Ages to the mid-20th century. And it is highly likely that the characteristics associated with the nation-state were produced by this experience.

In "Reflections on the History of European State-Making", Charles Tilly proposes six hypotheses explaining successful state-building in the guise of six factors predicting success (1975a, 40–41):

(1) the availability of *extractable resources*;
(2) a relatively *protected position in time and space*;
(3) a continuous supply of *political entrepreneurs*;
(4) *success in war*;
(5) *homogeneity* (and homogenization) *of the subject population*;
(6) *strong coalitions* of the *central power* with major segments of the *landed elite*.

These six propositions can be tested on the history of any European state-building endeavour. In the present context four Continental cases: The Netherlands, Brandenburg–Prussia, Bavaria and Württemberg have been chosen, giving two successful and two unsuccessful cases.

The first proposition which must be tested is "success in war", if only because all authorities insist that the competitive states-system is a macrohistorical variable assigned major explanatory value in the literature. As Tilly puts it: "War made the state – and the state made war".

The significance of this table lies not so much in that it "verifies" the hypothesis, that is no surprise, but in that it *predicts* success at a later date.

Table 1. Size of Military and State-building Success: Size of Peacetime Armies in Relation to Population, c. 1740.

State-building result:		Army	Population	Soldiers per capita
Success	The Netherlands	70,000	1,900,000	1:27
	Prussia	80,000	2,200,000	1:28
Failure	Bavaria	15,000	1,000,000	1:66
	Württemberg	3,000	460,000	1:152

Sources: The Netherlands: Population: Kossmann (1978, 17); Army: Carter (1971, 10). Prussia: Corvisier (1976, 113). Bavaria: Population: Albrecht (1969, 560); Army: Hammermayer (1969, 1078). Württemberg: Population: Carsten (1957, 4). Army: Ibid., 130.

The foundations of successful late 19th-century nation-building were indeed laid in the early 18th century; incidentally, proving Treitschke right, and the truth of the *Primat der Aussenpolitik*.

The third, and really important insight provided by the table is that Prussia and The Netherlands have *identical army to population ratios* at the same point in world time. If Prussia is the archetypical case of the "militarized" absolute monarchy, then the *estates-republic* of the United Provinces *behaved* like an absolute monarchy at the same time!

Conventionally, a period of "absolutism" is considered a necessary developmental stage in state- and nation-building.[3] The large standing army is one of the hallmarks of absolutism. It is, again conventionally, considered to be the instrument through which the princes established their absolute rule in the face of recalcitrant feudal nobles and burghers and with which they fought their cabinet wars for dynastic glory. More analytically, it is the internal institutionalization of the requirements of the European states-system.

"Success in war" is emphatically *not* an independent variable, however. War and its preparation is an expensive business. Raising the money to pay for armaments requires *administrative competence*, conventionally operationalized as the emergence of a monocratic, bureaucratic administrative system. But success also requires *military competence*, which comes with experience; failing direct experience, with training. But to develop this competence, a permanent military establishment is needed: a standing army which drains scarce resources even in peacetime.

A large standing army without absolutism is almost a contradiction in terms. But this is precisely the case with The Netherlands.

The Dutch Revolution of 1576 produced a republican political system and despite the tension between the Estates-General and the hereditary *Stadhouders* of the House of Orange the republic survived until 1795. The Netherlands only experienced absolutism after the French Revolution.

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But the institutional focus and source of legitimacy of this new republic was the *Staaten-Generaal*, the common assembly of representatives from the Estates of its seven constituent provinces. These Estates-General of the Low Countries were created by the Burgundian Valois duke, Philip the Good in the 1420s, as one of several central institutions erected to govern his dynasty's disparate lands in the Low Countries.

A closer scrutiny of the Burgundian "state" of the 15th century reveals a typical traditional European "dualist polity", a *Ständestaat*.

This type of political organization is characterized by an *institutional division of final powers of decision* (sovereignty) within a territory between *two separate and independent bodies*, the prince and the Estates (a corporation embodying the territory, by definition its "people") *permanently based in the territory*.[4]

The *Ständestaat* was "constitutional" in the sense that the power relationship between the prince and the "people" was contractual; with the rights, duties, prerogatives and privileges of both being defined by law in a "Charter", *Herrschaftsvertrag*.[5] But the existential power or legitimacy of the two institutions did not depend on the contract. Both were part of a political order defined by Natural Law, with equally inherent and inalienable powers (Gierke 1900, 73ff). The political struggle concerned the *definition* of these powers; i.e. the extent of princely prerogatives as opposed to the powers and liberties of the Estates. In practice the dualism was embodied in a functional separation of administrative spheres of competence, with princely powers of administration being limited to his "private" domains with the Estates controlling the "public" administration of the territory through a system of local self-government.

The political struggle in such a polity concerned the control over the exercise of specific and defined powers: scale of taxation, appointments of administrative personnel, extent of legal privileges, etc. And the Dutch *Ständestaat* broke down on a dual conflict of this kind (Parker 1977). But by *usurping* the power to elect their own *Stadhouder*, the *Staaten-Generaal* transformed this routine conflict into a *revolutionary* break with the dualist polity. By claiming and enforcing this right, the Estates ventured beyond medieval theory and claimed the power to define the political system for themselves, i.e. for the "people" as Althusius pointed out.

And it was the *Staaten-Generaal* which ruled The Netherlands for the next two centuries – albeit in continuous fear of an Orangist *coup d'état*.

To put it briefly, the Dutch experience is an argument against making absolutism a necessary condition for successful state-building; i.e. turning it into a universal developmental stage of European political history. Dutch political history shows that the *territorial-corporative* institutions of the *Ständestaat* were capable of building a state given the right preconditions.

In the 16th and early 17th centuries the Electoral branch of the Hohenzollerns reigned as princes in several distinct *Ständestaaten*: Brandenburg, Prussia and Cleve-Mark. But they did not rule. In each of these territories the Estates were extremely powerful, with almost total control over princely policies in addition to control of the purse-strings (e.g. Hintze 1915; Carsten 1957).

This changed with the *coup d'états* of the Elector Frederick Wilhelm in Brandenburg in 1653, in Cleve-Mark in 1664 and in Prussia in 1663/64. With the monies voted by the Brandenburg *Landtag* in 1653 the Elector raised an army. With this army he continued to collect taxes in Brandenburg even after the original grant had expired and to dragoon the representative assemblies of his other territories into submission.

The fate of the Brandenburg Estates vividly illustrates the dangers of the standing army in the dualist polity, a danger which was not lost on contemporaries. But the Hohenzollerns proceeded to institutionalize their *coup d'état* with the creation of an entirely new administration directly controlled by the prince: a *monocratic bureaucracy*. Thus sale of offices, the standard *ancien régime* way of administrative recruitment, was not used in the princely administration (Möller 1980).[6] The only administrative bodies outside royal control were the Law Courts of the individual territories, but their competence was successively circumscribed by removing all cases concerning the interests of the state into the administrative jurisdiction of the bureaucracy (Hintze 1920, 99–110).

The decisive period of Prussian political development was the reign of the "Soldier-King" Frederick Wilhelm II (1713–40) who was obsessed with administrative control to the point of paranoia and with the army to the point of apparent lunacy.[7] But he did succeed in making *Preussen* a great power; achieving the stated policy aim of *Hammer zu werden, statt Ambuss zu sein*!

This brief comparison of Prussia and The Netherlands reveals that the history of European political development provides *two distinct state-building formats*: a *bureaucratic-absolutist* and a *participatory-representative* format proceeding from the same political structural point of departure: the *Ständestaat* or dualist polity.

The structural difference between the two state-building formats is found in their political-administrative institutions:

The latter format is based on *self-governing bodies composed of honoratiores* in charge of all aspects of administration; with final powers resting in an assembly representing these bodies, and power being wielded exclusively by members of this class. The central administration is recruited by purchase and *sinecure* and possesses none, or very weak, field services controlled by the central authorities and is independent of the system of local self-government.

The former is organized as a formal bureaucracy. In its early development it is characterized by collegial administration and a very high degree of direct interference by its "owner", the absolute ruler. Recruitment is dependent on formal competence and loyalty to the ruler, and a large degree of insulation from the honoratiores class of the society ruled. Thus the "bourgeois" flavour of late 16th/early 17th-century absolutism, as evidenced by the appointments to high office made by monarchs like Louis XIV or Frederick Wilhelm I, was motivated by the need for officials absolutely loyal to themselves, not by notions of social engineering or development.

Both formats, however, are *monocratic*, in the sense that the *final authority is vested in, and wielded by one formal institution*, parliament or monarch as the case may be and without any *pouvoirs intermediaires* standing in its way. In the latter case they are bypassed by the centre to the degree possible, in the former their representatives constitute the centre.

Returning to Tilly's hypotheses, it seems that proposition six, strong coalitions with segments of the landed elite, is oververified in the participatory-representative state-building format.[8] In this case the elite takes over the central power and uses it to further its own interests. Neither in *ancien régime* England (1688–1832) nor in the United Provinces does it make sense to analyse the relations between assembly and monarch in the terms of "alliance".

But at least since Hans Rosenberg published *Bureaucracy, Aristocracy and Autocracy* (1958) it has been generally accepted that Prussian absolutism was based on a coalition of the type Tilly proposes. It was on this basis that Barrington Moore built his analysis of the *Social Origins of Democracy and Dictatorship*. The problem of coalitions is also connected with the third proposition, that of "a continuous supply of political entrepreneurs". Who are the entrepreneurs, under what circumstances do they succeed? So it is necessary to further explore the role of absolutism in state-building.

Of the four cases, Prussia and Bavaria are both considered "absolute" monarchies. Bavarian absolutism dates from 1569, when Duke Albrecht V introduced the Counter-Reformation and broke the power of the nobility with the aid of the Jesuits. The last full *Landtag* was held in 1669. What is overlooked in the conventional treatment of Bavarian political history is that the administrative institutions of the *Ständestaat* continued to operate until 1796. The standing committee of the *Landtag* continued to levy and disburse taxes and vote supply to their prince – who, on the other hand, never subjected them to uncustomary demands (Albrecht 1969; Bosl 1974, 208ff.).[9]

The amount of supply voted by the Bavarian Estates to their princes at the end of the 16th century was approximately the same as the *Kontribution* conceded to the Great Elector by the Brandenburg Estates in 1653, or

Table 2. Taxation With and Without Representation. Per capita Tax Burden in Bavaria and Prussia, Late 18th Century.

	Tax revenue (#000 Fl)	Pop (#000)	Tax per capita
Bavaria	3700	1000	3.7
Prussia	77,000	5400	14.2

Sources: Bavaria: Government revenue: Hammermayer (1969, 1083); Population: Albrecht (1969, 560). Prussia: Government revenue: Hintze (1915, 425); Population: Corvisier (1976, 113).

800,000 Fl. The following table shows the level of taxation in the two countries after 120 years of "absolutism".

Whatever their ambitions and entrepreneurial talents, the Bavarian Electors seemed incapable of generating revenue from their lands on the scale of the Prussian kings. The retention of the fiscal institutions of the *Ständestaat* under Bavarian absolutism seems to have served as a check on the exercise of absolutism similar to that of its various French counterparts. Bavaria, as opposed to Prussia, seems to be a case of *bureaucratically incomplete absolutism*, to which the low level of taxation and the puny army testify.

Returning to the matter of elite-centre relationships, there are essentially four ways in which the two entities can interact. The elites may

- *capture* the central institutions, as in the case of the Dutch participatory-representative format;
- be *coopted*, as in the case of Prussian bureaucratically complete absolutism;
- exist locked in *conflict* with the central power, as in the case of Bavarian incomplete absolutism.

The fourth way is to *buy off* the elites through economic and social privileges, as the French kings did; but that was an expensive luxury affordable only in a very rich country.

Tilly's sixth hypothesis is therefore something of a tautology. The central power must have at least the tacit support of major segments of the elite in order to govern. It is only valid in that the centre needs the talent of the elite as well. But it was hardly a coalition in the sense that both parties were equal partners. The Prussian kings mobilized the sons of the nobility for military service just as ruthlessly as the mobilized the sons of their peasants. Again Bavaria provides the analytical counterpart to Prussia. The Prussian army was officered up to 90 percent by natives, in the Bavarian military establishment a mere 15 percent of the officers were natives (Hammermeyer 1969, 1079).

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By the late 18th century the Prussian elites did indeed capture the Prussian state, as Rosenberg points out. But it is nowhere proved, and in my view highly unlikely, that the *Junkers*, if left to their own devices in 1653, would have created the kind of political structure they took over after the death of Frederick II. As a "class" they already controlled the country in 1653. And even more important: in no other East Elbian territory did absolutism develop, despite the fact that they were identical to Brandenburg in all social-structural respects.[10]

Bavaria, like Brandenburg, had its share of political entrepreneurs. The most famous was the Elector Maximilian (1598–1653) who was the champion of Catholicism in the opening phases of the Thirty Years War. As founder–leader of the Catholic League he provided the army with which the Bohemian uprising of 1618 was crushed. More important in the present context are the Electors Max Emmanuel (1679–1726) and Karl Albrecht (1726–45). Both tried to increase the power and status of their dynasty. The former by attempting to secure a royal title and the southern Netherlands; the latter by attempting to win the throne of the Holy Roman Empire and the hereditary lands of the Austrian Habsburgs. But unlike the Hohenzollerns, the Wittelsbachs relied on diplomacy, on alliance with the Great Power offering the highest reward. In both the War of the Spanish Succession (1702–14) and that of the Austrian Succession (1742–48) they sided with the French. But the Bavarian army never numbered more than 20,000 and was financed by French subsidies. Karl Albrecht was elected Emperor in 1742, but on his death in 1745 the dignity reverted to the Habsburgs; "his" war was fought by the French and the Prussians, not by his own army. The only ruler to benefit from the war was Frederick II who conquered Silesia from the Habsburgs, thus increasing the resource basis of his military establishment by 50 percent.[11]

After 1777 Wittelsbach entrepreneurial talent was directed towards ensuring dignity and prosperity by trading Bavaria for the Austrian Netherlands, creating a consolidated territory under Wittelsbach rule from the Rhine westward. This was forestalled by Frederick II, who embarked on the last cabinet war of the 18th century to stop it; the "Potato War" of 1777.

This brief *excursus* into 18th century Bavarian history seems to suggest that successful *political entrepreneurship depends on specific institutional foundations*. The Wittelsbach projects were no less sound than any other early modern political ventures. But the Electors lacked the means of being even moderately successful; they were not even useful allies. Bavaria was a drain on French resources, not an addition to them. Bavarian state-building would have come to an end in 1714 if it had not been for domestic political change in England, over which at least the Wittelsbachs had no power: the electoral victory of the Tories in 1711.

Successful political entrepreneurship seems to rest on the same foundations as success in war: the creation of an administrative establishment capable of supporting a standing army. If "absolutism" is taken to mean the rule of a personally capable and strong-willed monarch able to pick talented assistants and rule the country over which he reigns, then "absolutism" in itself is not a sufficient condition for state-building success. Louis XIV is the incarnation of that kind of absolutism. To him can be added personalities like Louis XV, Frederick I of Brandenburg, Maximilian of Bavaria, or for that matter Duke Eberhard Ludwig of Württemberg (1677–1734).

Table 1 shows Württemberg at the bottom of the armaments scale. As Württemberg is the Continental "special case" with a continuous history of representative government going back to 1452, this is not surprising. Württemberg is the archetypical case of a *continuous dualist polity*. It was disarmed in 1740 because its Estates were dead set against the prince wasting their money and imperilling their liberties. A standing army was not raised until 1724, after a 30 years' struggle between Eberhard Ludwig and the *Landtag*. The conflict started in the 1690s when the duke attempted to raise an army of 6000 men and finance it without the consent of the Estates. As Württemberg at the time was at war with, and being pillaged by, the French, this may be regarded as a reasonable proposition. But the Estates equally refused both to administrate and to pay the extra tax needed to support it. The army raised in 1724 was hired out to The Netherlands and Venice (Carsten 1957, 97; Weller 1963, 167–170).[12]

The political history of early modern Württemberg is essentially one of conflict between the dukes and their Estates; with each new duke trying to extend his powers – even to the point of planning *coup d'états* and the Estates fighting, on the whole successfully, to retain their privileges. In 1770 the Estates even gained international safeguards for their privileges, when a new, perpetual, charter of liberties was guaranteed by both the Emperor and Frederick II of Prussia. But in 1806 the Duke, Frederick II, dissolved the Estates and proceeded to reshape the country after Napoleonic ideas. Württemberg got its standing army – 6000 men – who perished in Russia in 1812.

The Württemberg constitution of 1819 was a fitting sequel to this continuous dualism. It had the form of a negotiated settlement between the King and the *Landtag* and it was not a constitution imposed by royal fiat – *Oktroyierung* – as in the other German states (Cordes 1982, 123–129; Brandt 1987, 24–32).[13]

The continued existence of the Württemberg dualist polity into the late 18th century was probably due to outside interference and the accidents of dynastic succession. By 1770 it was a rather anachronistic body politic. But its history shows that absolutism was no easier to establish than the other

state-building format. For that matter it also shows that absolutism was irrelevant from a purely domestic point of view. The burghers of Württemberg seem to have preferred occasional pillage by an enemy army to continuous pillage by the tax-collector.

Both of the South German cases point to the staying power of the *Ständestaat*. Bavaria, in addition, illustrates the importance of having the monarchical *coup d'état* routinized in a bureaucratic administrative system. Absolutism otherwise becomes an empty form, a dignity devoid of political content – in which case bureaucratic state-building does not follow. And the ultimate demise of Bavaria and Württemberg in 1871 can be traced directly back to their political non-development in the early 18th century.

The other three propositions put forward by Charles Tilly seem to have less explanatory value.

Extractable resources are necessary for any kind of development. But Poland is a case in point of resources being secondary to the ability to organize them. Poland was a much richer country than Prussia – yet failed abysmally in its political development.

Geography, a *protected position* in time and space, is an untestable proposition in the present context. All four cases were subject to intense political pressure and devastation in the 17th century, while the South German states were caught up in the rivalry between France, Austria and Prussia in the 18th and 19th centuries. Prussia reacted to the 17th century Swedish pressure in almost Toynbeean fashion, while The Netherlands weathered the storms created by Louis XIV by allying itself with the rest of Europe.

Homogeneity of population in a national or ethnic sense is irrelevant to the matter of state-building success as such. But if it is redefined to mean social homogeneity, the dominance of one elite, it is probably the most important *structural determinant* for the state-building format. A successful *coup d'état* rested on exploiting the divisions and conflicts between the Estates of a single assembly. Albrecht V of Bavaria used the tension between Lutherans and Catholics and the support of the First Estate to domesticate the Second. Frederick Wilhelm utilized the conflict between the towns and the *Junkers* for the same purpose. Less internal tension among the Estates made the *coup d'état* more difficult, as in the case of the burgher-dominated Württemberg *Landtag*. And in extreme cases, such as in The Netherlands, a homogeneous assembly could carry a revolutionary upheaval through to a successful conclusion.

The major explanatory variable is the one documented at the beginning of this exercise: success in war.

But, to return finally to the heights of theory from the abysses of historical data, *success in war requires the adoption of one of two specific political institutional structures*, state-building formats. Neither political entrepre-

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neurship nor any of the other factors are sufficient to negate its importance. Successful state-building requires that the dualism is broken in order to prevent social energy and resources from being wasted in the conflict between the two institutions of the *Ständestaat*. It also seems to be necessary in order to mobilize talented personnel to staff the administrative systems created. Of the two formats, absolutism represents the most clear-cut break with the past – and is the most difficult format to implement. But it also seems by far to be the most efficient way of securing survival as an autonomous polity. The participatory-representative format is really nothing but a lineal descendant of the *Ständestaat*, with the conflict between its institutions ultimately resolved in favour of the Estates. It does not require the kind of "new" administration which is necessary to ensure the survival of the absolute monarchy. It can "muddle through" without implementing drastic administrative innovation. But this appearance belies the fundamental strength of the format: its ability to mobilize its social energies whenever an emergency occurs. It must be remembered that *ancien régime* Britain defeated revolutionary France, just as the Dutch Republic eventually defeated Louis XIV.[14]

Weber described European development as a process of *rationalization*. At its most specific, historical level, the process of "concentration" is nothing but a process of administrative rationalization of the exercise of political power. The dualist polity possessed two separate and different institutions capable of acting for and representing the whole, two focal points of power. And the key explanatory variable of European state-building is early and complete rationalization of political power, as embodied in the adoption of a state-building format. Of the present cases The Netherlands and Prussia experienced this; Bavaria and Württemberg failed. And therein lies the root to their ultimate successes and failures as *nuclei* of nation-states.

NOTES
1. The best representatives of the "functionalist" approach are Gabriel Almond and G. Bingham Powell's *Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach* (1966), and Parsons's *Societies* (1966) and *The System of Modern Societies* (1971). The classic

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"neo"-Marxist treatments are Perry Anderson's *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (1979) and Immanuel Wallerstein's two volumes on the *Modern World System* (1974, 1980).

2. According to Charles Tilly, this process of *concentration of coercion* must be supplemented by the process of *concentration of capital* (Tilly 1981, 1990). The problem with such a distinction is that concentration of coercion is a necessary precondition for any hierarchical type of political organization and concentration of capital is only possible under conditions of safety of property – concentrated capital presupposes concentrated coercion. Concentration as such is therefore a master process equal to differentiation or the class struggle.

3. All authorities, i.e. Eisenstadt (1963), Perry Anderson (1979), Barrington Moore (1966), Parsons (1971), *except* Immanuel Wallerstein (1980) agree that "absolutism" is a necessary stage in the state-building process. Wallerstein is, in my view, correct in his analysis of the Dutch Republic, which was a "strong state" despite its diffuse and apparently weak institutions. The *Staaten-General* may the closest historical approximation to Marx's "executive committee of the ruling class".

4. The "Tudor polity" of S. P. Huntington (1968, 93–96) is a *Ständestaat* as good as any, though Huntington errs in the conventional direction when defining a British pattern of modernization different in kind from the Continental one. The literature on the *Ständestaat* (or its institutions under any other name) is extensive. Brief introductions may be found in Näf (1967), Hintze (1931), Bosl (1974, 13–172) and in *Dominum regale or Dominum Politicum and Regale: Monarchies and Parliaments in Early Modern Europe* by H. G. Koenigsberger (1986, 1–26).

5. I deliberately use the German term because it makes analytical sense. It is also an example of the problems inherent in discussing European political development using English idiom. For obvious historical reasons, the extraordinary continuity of political institutional *forms*, the terminology of English-speaking legal historians (and by extension, political scientists) remains parochial and lacking in terms which can be used to describe general European phenomena. In the words of Sir Frederick Maitland: "The task of translating into English the work of a German lawyer can never be perfectly straightforward. To take the most obvious instance, his Recht is never quite our *Right* or quite our *Law*" (F. W. Maitland in von Gierke (1958: translator's introduction, p xliii).

6. Möller, in an attempt to qualify Otto Hintze's claim that the sale of offices was not used in the Prussian state is forced to admit that ". . . *die Ämterkäuflichkeit in Brandenburg-Preussen zu keiner Zeit die soziale und finanzpolitische Relevanz erlangt hat, die sie beispielsweise in Frankreich besass* (1980, 156). In fact, his analysis does not qualify Hintze's analysis at all. The *Regierungen*, courts of law, in the various provinces were venal, but outside Electoral control. The *Domänengueter* were *farmed* out to the highest bidder, not sold.

7. His obsession with tall soldiers for his Regiment of Lifeguard Grenadiers is perhaps his best known "eccentricity". His austere lifestyle and interests made him the laughing-stock of the European courts, but "if 'tis madness there's reason in it". His political testament contains the following passage: "Throughout my life I have been careful not to draw down the envy of the House of Austria on my head. This has forced me to pursue two passions which are really alien to me, namely unbounded avarice, and an exaggerated regard for tall soldiers. Only under the disguise of these spectacular eccentricities was I allowed to gather a large treasury and assemble a powerful army. Now this money and these troops lie at the disposal of my successor, who requires no such mask" (quoted in Duffy 1985, 4).

8. This hypothesis is based on the pioneering work done by Barrington Moore in *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (1966). The term "landed elite" used by Tilly is unfortunate simply because the elites of Early Modern Europe were landed, regardless of social origins. In a pre-industrial society, land provides the only safe investment opportunity and acquisition of land in political terms equalled achievement of "aristocratic" status. In structural terms, there is no difference between the English squire who functioned as a Justice of Peace and the Prussian *Junker*; both wielded jurisdiction on the strength of powers vested in the lands they held, not on the strength

of personal privileges. The *Junkers*, however, were definitely servants of the state. But, through its control of Parliament, the squirearchy "was" the State.

9. Controlling 45 percent of Bavarian revenue and, incidentally, being the foremost banker in the country (Weis 1984, 53).

10. "Serfdom" was introduced to the East Elbian lands in the period of extremely weak princely power in the 15th and 16th centuries. In Brandenburg, the Recess of 1653 confirmed the status quo in terms of *Junker* domination over their peasants – it did not extend noble privileges. And repression of the peasants, in terms of *corvée* labour and evictions, was markedly more intense in non-Hohenzollern and non-absolutist Ostalbingen, i.e. Mecklenburg, Swedish Pomerania and Poland, where the *Junkers* could do as they pleased (Schlesinger 1955, 592–612; Schilling 1989). Perry Anderson's interpretation of absolutism as *necessary* for the survival of the nobility (Anderson 1979, 54–55) is, in the East Elbian context, rather bizarre. It rests on the assumption that landowners *need* the "coercive apparatus" provided by the absolutist state in order to keep the peasants in their place, i e that they were not up to *maintaining* the repressive system they had *created for themselves*.

11. It is a measure of the "extreme" nature of Prussian military absolutism that Frederick II called for Silesia to support 40,000 troops on a permanent basis as opposed to the 4000 formerly required by the Habsburgs (Hintze 1915, 376).

12. Though, in "frivolous" 18th century fashion, the Dukes of Württemberg received military subsidies from France – and used the extra income to build their own Versailles: Ludwigsburg.

13. The *discontinuity* which Eberhard Weis emphasizes is real enough (Weis 1984). There is a world of difference between *any* medieval institution and its modern counterpart, but therein lies also the discontinuity of Württemberg's political institutions between 1797 and 1819. In terms of personnel as well as in political culture, there was linear continuity between the old and the new *Landtag* of Württemberg – old wine in new bottles, as it were (Brandt 1987, 25).

14. By the late 18th century the English and Dutch "estates-republics" were the most heavily taxed countries in Europe (Kossmann 1978, 17–20; Brewer 1989). The English fiscal bureaucracy was as professionalized and bureaucratized as its Prussian counterpart. According to Brewer, the English system of taxation was in fact the most equitable the country has ever had. As it was based on indirect taxation of luxury consumption, it taxed the very people who benefited most from the economic growth of the time.

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neurship nor any of the other factors are sufficient to negate its importance. Successful state-building requires that the dualism is broken in order to prevent social energy and resources from being wasted in the conflict between the two institutions of the *Ständestaat*. It also seems to be necessary in order to mobilize talented personnel to staff the administrative systems created. Of the two formats, absolutism represents the most clear-cut break with the past – and is the most difficult format to implement. But it also seems by far to be the most efficient way of securing survival as an autonomous polity. The participatory-representative format is really nothing but a lineal descendant of the *Ständestaat*, with the conflict between its institutions ultimately resolved in favour of the Estates. It does not require the kind of "new" administration which is necessary to ensure the survival of the absolute monarchy. It can "muddle through" without implementing drastic administrative innovation. But this appearance belies the fundamental strength of the format: its ability to mobilize its social energies whenever an emergency occurs. It must be remembered that *ancien régime* Britain defeated revolutionary France, just as the Dutch Republic eventually defeated Louis XIV.[14]

Weber described European development as a process of *rationalization*. At its most specific, historical level, the process of "concentration" is nothing but a process of administrative rationalization of the exercise of political power. The dualist polity possessed two separate and different institutions capable of acting for and representing the whole, two focal points of power. And the key explanatory variable of European state-building is early and complete rationalization of political power, as embodied in the adoption of a state-building format. Of the present cases The Netherlands and Prussia experienced this; Bavaria and Württemberg failed. And therein lies the root to their ultimate successes and failures as *nuclei* of nation-states.

NOTES
1.   The best representatives of the "functionalist" approach are Gabriel Almond and G. Bingham Powell's *Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach* (1966), and Parsons's *Societies* (1966) and *The System of Modern Societies* (1971). The classic