

intriguing deontological customs such as the physician's contractual agreement to undertake treatment of a hopeless case as "practically dead", which ensured that the physician be absolved of responsibility for an unsuccessful outcome. At the same time, a synthesis, if one is possible, would need to incorporate other kinds of sources such as Jewish healers' own writings about their practices and careers and literature on Jews and diseases, notably the Black Death. The notions of medical professionals, and especially medicalization, need to be qualified to avoid anachronism. In the case of Jewish practitioners, as with the vast majority of their Christian counterparts, "professional" status graded imperceptibly into other kinds of less official healers who need to be considered. On the other hand, as Shatzmiller notes in a final section on "other economic activities", very few, even at the upper end of the medical hierarchy, could earn a living exclusively through that occupation.

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Charles Tilly and Wim P. Blockmans, eds. — *Cities and the Rise of States in Europe, A.D. 1000 to 1800*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1994. Pp. 290.

This collection of papers, edited by sociologist Charles Tilly and medieval historian Wim Blockmans, takes on a very large topic. It aims to examine the influence of cities and city-systems on the formation (or transformation, as the editors prefer) of European states over a period of some 800 years. Although it is not as clear, there is a sub-theme: the authors and editors are also concerned with the effect on cities of the consolidation and growing power of nation-states. For Tilly, who seems very much the driving force behind the book, this brings together two major issues that have featured prominently in his prolific writings. Much of his recent work has been in the field of comparative history, and the present project draws heavily on issues raised in his 1990 book, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, A.D. 990–1990*. He has also maintained a concern with cities and urbanization, however. One of the first books he ever published, in fact, was entitled *An Urban World*.

In his sweeping introduction, Tilly sets out a challenging agenda for the contributors: to examine all aspects of relations between cities and the emerging states that sought and eventually managed to exert control over them. Although the agenda is long and complex, Tilly has a fairly clear idea of what issues are of particular importance. The story of state development revolves largely around the problem of acquiring a monopoly over the means of coercion. To become a strong state was to achieve this goal. However, this required amassing the means to subdue rivals, inside or outside a state's territory. As the technology of warfare became more sophisticated and more expensive, rulers of states were forced to seek out fresh sources of capital. Cities then became tempting targets, as urban merchants and capitalists sat on significant pools of wealth. This did not always lead to violent conflict between rulers and cities. Much of the book, in fact, focuses on the great diversity of relationships that grew up between monarchs and princes and the urban

elites. The main goal of the book is to explore how these relations shaped the transformation of states and of the cities that financed their adventures.

In between the wide-ranging and comparative essays by the two editors that form the introduction and conclusion are nine densely written pieces by specialists in various regions of Europe. It is not possible to summarize the wealth of information they provide, nor even their conclusions regarding their own countries and regions. Several more general comments might be helpful, however. First, the selection of cases appears odd, though there is a logic behind it. The reader will find no discussion of cities and state-building in England or France, or even Prussia for that matter. These cases have already received a great deal of attention, according to the editors, and have distorted analysis of the central problem posed in this book. The editors wish us to see the diversity of routes that state formation can follow, and an emphasis on the "classic" cases has the effect of setting them up as the norm, while states that followed other paths come to appear deviant. Thus the essays focus on less-studied cases such as Poland, the Balkans, Scandinavia, and Iberia. Secondly, the essays vary in the extent to which they follow the lead Tilly sets out in his introduction. Readers without a burning interest in some of the case studies may be tempted to rely on the summaries of findings provided by the editors.

How successful, then, is the overall enterprise? Certainly, the editors offer a number of provocative conclusions, though it is perhaps better to view them as hypotheses for future research. Cities did indeed play a critical role in the transformation of states, they conclude. Just how the process worked and what consequences resulted are almost as varied as the cases examined. Still, a few general points are established. Where wealthy cities provided significant capital, either through tribute or loans, states were more likely to succeed in their expansionist crusades. Major trading centres were, of course, also in a better position to resist the demands of rulers. Where states were forced to bargain with powerful urban-based groups, concessions had to be made. This usually entailed granting greater participation to urban elites in structures of governance, and in general also allowed the cities themselves to prosper. Although not mentioned in the title of the book, the rural landlord was another important player in this drama. The role played by cities often turned on whether the ruler had other options available in the pursuit of capital and manpower for the state's armies.

Sociologists, political scientists, and comparative historians with an interest in the emergence of the modern system of states in Europe or elsewhere will find much of interest in this volume. It struggles with the usual problems of the comparative historical approach — historians will object to some of Tilly's generalizations; social scientists will be frustrated by the tendency of some contributors to find ever greater diversity within the countries they study. Nonetheless, it poses some very important questions about the role of cities, a topic that has not received the attention it merits in discussions of state formation.

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