Role of the State

It is undeniable that the state influences many different aspects of our lives (Olsen and Marger 1993) through what Michael Mann (1988, 1993) identifies as infrastructural power, or the ability of the state to penetrate civil society.

> The state can assess and tax our income and wealth at source, without our consent . . . (which states before 1850 were *never* [emphasis Mann's] able to do); it stores and can recall immediately a massive amount of information about all of us; it can enforce its will within the day almost anywhere in its domains; its influence on the economy is enormous; it even directly provides the subsistence of most of us (in state employment, pensions, in family allowances, etc.). The state penetrates everyday life more than did any historical state. Its infrastructural power has increased immensely. (Mann 1993: 315)

Similarly, the state has the power to regulate (Skrentny 2006) the most intimate aspects of our lives including whom we can marry, which sex acts between consenting adults are permissible,[1] and how parents may discipline their children. A functioning state, regardless of type, has the ability to restrict anyone under its jurisdiction. The state is a political institution because it wields power and for that reason is a focus for political sociologists.

Historically, the state has not always been the primary political institution (Bottomore 1979; Tilly 1985) nor is it clear that it will continue to occupy such a central role. This is not to say that political institutions will disappear; to the contrary, the institution that manages political power may be transformed into something very different from the traditional state. Meanwhile, the state and the nation-state are still considered important concepts by political sociologists. The focus of this chapter is, what is the state and how does it differ from a nation; how is the state

different from government; what are various state forms; how do different sociological theories view the state; and what does the future hold?

WHAT IS THE MODERN NATION-STATE?

Defining the state is problematic because there are two conceptually different issues involved: What does the state look like and what does the state do or what are the institutional and functional dimensions (Mann 1988)? What we call "the state" is in reality a number of interacting institutions and organizations (Miliband 1993) comprising people occupying defined positions with specific responsibilities. The "modern nation-state" is a group sharing a common history, identity, and culture, with a monopoly on the legitimate use of force linked to a specific territory recognized as sovereign by other nation-states. The modern nation-state, with a centralized structure and elaborate bureaucracy, is a relatively recent human innovation (Bottomore 1979) having been in existence for only about 6,000 years (Berberoglu 1990).

Prior to the rise of the state, authority was determined by kinship relations or religious rituals with no specific group charged with decision-making responsibility (Bottomore 1979). For example, the decision to make war or peace with a neighboring tribe might be made by all the adult members or by only some members, although one person is the undisputed leader. Bureaucracy and rationalization, or the adoption of consistent practice and procedures rather than capricious decision making, are the hallmarks of the modern nation-state. While the concepts of nation and state are linked, there are important distinctions.

Defining the State

Max Weber contends that "a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* [emphasis Weber's] within a given territory (Gerth and Mills 1946: 78). The state, then, has the ability to make and enforce laws and is run by those occupying positions in the state bureaucracy (Nagengast 1994). In short, the state has power over the lives of its citizens as well as persons currently residing within its borders.

COMPULSORY   Weber views the state as "a compulsory association with a territorial basis" (Heydebrand 1994: 26). The compulsory nature of the state is clear in that short of revolution, we have no choice but to submit to state authority as long as we physically reside within its borders. For example, a U.S. citizen traveling in Russia cannot refuse to obey Russia's laws because he or she is under Russian jurisdiction.

MONOPOLY   The state has a monopoly on the use of legitimate force within its borders (Runciman 1978). This does not mean that the state *must* use force. State domination is evidenced by the ability to have commands followed without the need to resort to coercion (Skrentny 2006). Recall the earlier metaphor of parent for understanding the state. Parents do not always need to threaten children with a spanking for compliance. Children usually comply because they accept the right of parents to punish even if they do not agree with the punishment.

As described by Michael Mann (1988), there are two types of state power: despotic and infrastructural. *Despotic power* is the use of physical force or coercion administered by the military or police as agents of the state. *Infrastructural power* is a more modern power and refers to the ability of the state to influence and control major spheres of our lives without

using physical force. Consistent with a Weberian view of state (Gerth and Mills 1946), Robert Dahl (1963) argues that only the state decides who can use force, under what circumstances, and the type of force that is allowed. The state does not have to use force nor does a monopoly mean that *only* the state can use force, however, only the state decides when force is permissible.

LEGITIMACY   A driver obeys a police officer not only because a police officer carries a gun but also because citizens recognize the *right* of a police officer to make traffic stops on behalf of the state. For Weber, "If the state is to exist the dominated must obey the authority claimed by the powers that be" (Gerth and Mills 1946: 78). However, the force that is being used must be "permitted or prescribed by the regulations of the state" (Runciman 1978: 41). What is defined as permissible varies between nations and, within the United States, between jurisdictions. What is constant across all is that only the state determines legitimacy.

In Texas, one is allowed to use lethal or deadly force to protect one's life and, under some circumstances, property, including that of one's neighbors (Texas Penal Code: http://tlo2.tlc. state.tx.us/statutes/pe.toc.htm). In other jurisdictions, lethal force may be used only to protect one's life and the danger must be imminent. This means that within the United States, someone who kills an intruder may be treated differently depending upon local laws.[2] Weber observed that fathers sometimes physically discipline their children. Their ability to do so is limited by the state. Some modern nation-states severely restrict corporal punishment to prevent child abuse (e.g., Sweden). In the United States, parents cross the line between discipline and abuse when physical punishment leaves a mark such as a bruise or a handprint (Wallace 1999).

Citizens believing that the state has overstepped its boundaries may take action against the state through civil disobedience, protest, or even revolution. Ultimately, it is collective society that delegates legitimacy to the state and this means that it can also be taken away, as was the case with the American Revolution. Grievances must be extreme before groups will take on a more powerful state, yet, antistatist movements are on the rise and weaken not only a specifically targeted state but also all states (Wallerstein 2003).

Emergence of States

Consistent with Weber's view, Tilly defines the state as "relatively centralized, differentiated organizations the officials of which more or less successfully claim control over the chief concentrated means of violence within a population inhabiting a large, contiguous territory" (1985: 172). Where Tilly departs from Weber and others is in his view on state emergence. Rather than taking the Hobbesian view that equates the rise of the state with the need for a social contract, or trading submission to the state for protection, he argues that wars make states and that both war making and state making more closely resemble organized crime as those involved are "coercive and self-seeking entrepreneurs" (1985: 171). Tilly contends that just as a racketeer creates danger and then provides protection for a price, the state protects citizens against threats, both real and imagined, that are the consequences of the state's own activities. Citizens tolerate this because the benefits of other state services (e.g., fire and police protection and public schools) outweigh the costs.

In the past, professional soldiers and tax collectors held the right to use violence on behalf of kings. Kings eventually recognized the threat posed by private armies and roving bands of decommissioned soldiers and acted to consolidate power by disarming private armies and maintaining a standing one under monarch control. This approach was especially useful for keeping internal rivals in check.

Tilly contends that war making and capital accumulation created states because those controlling specific territories needed to extract resources from populations under their control to fund these efforts. Those in power warred to check or overcome their competitors. Capital accumulation through taxation provided a more permanent solution for financing wars than temporary measures such as selling off assets, coercing capitalists, or acquiring capital through conquest.

One of the advantages of Tilly's thesis is that he accounts for the variety in state forms and the different routes to state building (Goldstone 1991). Tilly (1990) identifies two settings in which states emerge: "capital intensive" and "coercive intensive." In the first setting, resources are in the form of money, are controlled by capitalists, and are often concentrated in cities. In the latter setting, resources are in the form of raw materials (e.g., grain and timber) and land. Because settings differ, the ways that states are organized and developed are a function of the setting. In capital-intensive settings, states are smaller, more commercialized, and city centered. Here, trade links are strong, resulting in a weaker state structure as capitalists collaborate with state building. In coercive-intensive settings, large empires tended to develop because with fewer cities, trade links are weaker, necessitating "high-level coercion structures" (Scott 2004: 5 of 10) as states developed without the cooperation of local capitalists.

For Tilly (1985), the activities of war making and other uses of state violence, such as *state making* or neutralizing rivals inside a power holder's base, and protection, or eliminating threats to citizens, are interrelated with and dependent upon extraction (i.e., taxing) or acquiring the resources to carry out the first three activities. Due to the interdependent nature of extraction, war making, and state making, these activities depend on a centralized organization and increasingly large bureaucracy. For example, efficient extraction of resources in the form of taxes necessitates a bureaucratic apparatus (e.g., Internal Revenue Service), which in turn increases state making. External pressure to create states increases as territories organize into states to defend against other global powers.

While Tilly's discussion concerns European states, he notes that decolonized, independent territories (e.g., 1947 partitioning of British India into India and Pakistan) acquired their military from outside. As a result, these states did not go through the process of negotiation between the rulers and the ruled, which expands civil or nonmilitary aspects of the state. Furthermore, these newer states are more dependent on others for arms and expertise. As a result, the military comprises a larger proportion of the newer state apparatus. The recognition of the sovereignty of these states by influential nations such as the United States or Russia provides an incentive for ambitious individuals to use the military to take over the state.

Pakistan has a history of the military subverting the democratic process. General Perez Musharraf's 1999 takeover was preceded by several previous military coups divided by periods of democratically elected governments. While Pakistan currently is a democracy, it remains to be seen whether another military leader will again wrest control and reinstall a more authoritarian state. For states where the military dominates the state apparatus, such as Pakistan, Tilly argues that the analogy between organized crime, state making, and war making is even more accurate.

Goldstone argues that although Tilly's analysis is groundbreaking, his "war-centered framework" (1991: 178) oversimplifies state formation by ignoring other factors that contribute to state making, including ideology and revolution. Goldstone points to the example of England and the role of the Reformation and religious conflict in shaping the state, or the role of nationalism in Italy.

Bruce Porter (1994) contends that the timing and type of war shaped the different paths of state development. The *Continental* path of state building created absolutionist states and resulted

first in civil war and then international war. A *Constitutional* path of state formation created constitutional monarchies with deliberating bodies but leaner administrative bureaucracies. This path was followed when a state was able to avoid international war but still had to contend with internal pressure and conflict. The *Coalitional* path is the result of states that were able to avoid civil war but were often involved in international conflicts. These states avoided pressure to centralize and tended to build more republican forms of government. Finally, states that experienced both internal and international conflicts, often simultaneously, tended to form *dictatorships*. Although an important contribution, Porter's work is criticized for overemphasizing military determinants of state formation at the expense of other variables (Kestnbaum 1995).

Differentiating Government from the State

The state is not a single entity but a network of organizations. Following the lead of Tilly and Skocpol, Ann Orloff describes the state as "*potentially* [emphasis Orloff's] autonomous sets of coercive, extractive, judicial, and administrative organizations controlling territories and the populations within them" (1993: 9). Because the state is made up of various units with various degrees of autonomy, Bottomore (1979) reminds us that the state is not a unified force. For example, the United States has an independent judiciary where judges make decisions that may conflict with the policies of the executive branch. In the 1930s, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled some of the New Deal programs designed by the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration to combat the Great Depression as unconstitutional. Ralph Miliband (1993) provides a detailed description of the types of organizations that comprise the state. He subdivides the state into the following categories: government, administration, military and police, judiciary, subcentral governments, and legislative or parliamentary bodies.

GOVERNMENT   The state is often confused with government because the latter speaks on behalf of the state (Miliband 1993). Government is "the specific regime in power at any one moment" (Alford and Friedland 1985: 1). In the United States, power switches back and forth between political parties with political appointees occupying important positions of power, yet government is less permanent because the state endures regardless of which party captures the presidency (Olsen and Marger 1993; Stepan 1988).

ADMINISTRATION OR BUREAUCRACY   Administration is the sphere that manages the day-to-day affairs of the state. Political appointees head U.S. departments such as State and Homeland Security, but civil servants remain regardless of which political party is in power. Richard Clarke, a former counterterrorism czar for both former U.S. presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, served seven different presidents in a variety of posts. In light of his claims that the George W. Bush administration did not take his concerns about Al Qaeda seriously (Clarke 2004), he may be an administrator who should have had more influence over U.S. counterterrorism policy. Generally though, administrators are not simply instruments of government, but they take an active role in formulating policy (Miliband 1993). Perhaps this recognition is why some government officials allow political considerations to influence which persons are selected for nonpolitical government appointments. In 2007, hearings over the firing of nine U.S. attorneys revealed that politics influenced hiring decisions at the U.S. Department of Justice, which is a violation of civil service laws. One job candidate was allegedly rejected for a prosecutor job because she was perceived as a lesbian while another received favorable reviews because he was conservative on the three big Gs: God, guns, and gays (Lichtblau 2008).

Miliband asserts that the administrative feature of the state extends far beyond the traditional state bureaucracy and includes public corporations, central banks, regulatory commissions and other bodies "enjoying a greater or lesser degree of autonomy . . . concerned with the management of the economic, social, and cultural and other activities in which the state is now directly or indirectly involved" (1993: 278). Miliband's definition is broader than state bureaucracy but the latter is necessary as a "material expression of the state" and is an outcome of public policy shaped by politics (Oszlak 2005: 483). Furthermore, the state bureaucracy uses a myriad of resources including human, financial, technological, and material to produce programs or services, regulations, and even national symbols (Oszlak 2005). One example is the programs associated with what political sociologists call the welfare state.

MILITARY AND POLICE   Kourvetaris (1997) contends that there is little consensus among political sociologists regarding whether the military and police are considered part of the state system or a separate institution. Given that both act at the behest of the state and are under the authority of a political leader who occupies a government position (e.g., mayor, governor, or president), it seems reasonable to consider both aspects of the state. Miliband agrees, calling police and military forces as the branch concerned with the "management of violence" (1993: 279). Skocpol's (1993) definition of the state also includes the police and military. Finally, Tilly (1975) argues that the repressive features of the state including taxation, policing, and the armed forces were historically essential for the making of a strong state. For an authoritarian or nondemocratic state, the military either controls the state or is in charge of its coercive capabilities (Stepan 1988).

For democracies, there is concern regarding the role of military and intelligence organizations. Nations need a strong defense, but when the military and state security apparatus is not accountable to civilian authorities or when "security organizations . . . attempt to act with secrecy and autonomy, democratic control of policy is severely challenged" (Stepan 1988: ix). While Stepan was writing in the aftermath of the Iran–Contra scandal,[3] the current "war on terror" waged by the United States and its allies against Al Qaeda renews these concerns because of the more controversial aspects of the USA PATRIOT (Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism) Act. In the United States, an independent judiciary is a check on other components of the state, but Stepan also advises the development of the capacity within civil society "to speak with knowledge and authority on complex matters of geopolitics, arms, security, and peace" (1988: x). Political sociology is ideally suited to prepare individuals who take seriously Stepan's call to action.

JUDICIARY   Skrentny (2006) argues that the United States is a legal state with political actors using the law and courts to meet political ends. Courts have a substantial impact through policy making regardless of whether jurists are conservative or liberal. Not only is the U.S. judiciary independent from politicians heading the government, but it also acts to protect persons under state control. A recent example is the two U.S. Supreme Court decisions regarding the fate of enemy combatants held at the U.S. Naval base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. The Court rejected the position (of the George W. Bush administration) that enemy combatants are beyond the jurisdiction of American courts and allowed detainees the right to challenge their captivity before a federal judge (Gearan 2004; Savage 2008). Sociologists need to pay more attention to the role of both law and the courts in state building and the making of public policy (Skrentny 2006).

TEXTBOX 2.1

Undemocratic Practices of American Democracy

George W. Bush has been criticized by civil libertarians for the detention of enemy combatants outside of the United States as well as for the PATRIOT Act, which allows for warrantless wiretaps and other civil rights infringements. He is hardly the first American president with the cooperation of the U.S. Congress to suspend or impede civil liberties in the name of safety and security. The internment of Japanese citizens ordered by Franklin D. Roosevelt on the advice of the War Department after the attack on Pearl Harbor was considered by the American Civil Liberties Union "the worst single wholesale violation of civil rights of American citizens in our history" (Goodwin 1994). Other examples are described in the following paragraphs.

John Adams: The Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 were passed during a time of fear of rebellion. The residency period for citizenship was increased from five to fourteen years. The president was granted the right to expel any foreigner deemed "dangerous" although Adams did not expel anyone. The Sedition Act "made any 'false scandalous, or malicious' writing against government, Congress, or the president, or any attempt 'to excite them . . . the hatred of the good people of the United States, or to stir up sedition,' crimes punishable by fine and imprisonment" (McCullough 2001: 505). Historian David McCullough notes that this was clearly a violation of the First Amendment of the Constitution. Several were fined and/or imprisoned including Congressman Matthew Lyon of Vermont.

Abraham Lincoln: Lincoln suspended the writ of habeas corpus, meaning that persons could be held indefinitely without trial. In the beginning, this was restricted to smaller geographical areas but later became nationwide and had a chilling effect on public dissent. Lincoln biographer David Donald writes "Editors feared that they might be locked up in Fort Lafayette or the Old Capital Prison if they voiced their criticisms too freely" (1995: 380). He also writes that Clement Vallandigham, an Ohio peace Democrat, was arrested and imprisoned for the duration of the civil war for giving a speech where he referred to the president as "King Lincoln." Previously, in a speech made in the House of Representatives, he had charged Lincoln with creating "one of the worst despotisms on Earth" (1995: 416).

Dwight D. Eisenhower: George W. Bush is criticized for circumventing the Geneva Convention protocols by classifying captured Taliban fighters and other insurgents from Iraq and Afghanistan as enemy combatants. He is not the first to circumvent the Geneva Convention. In the aftermath of World War II, Eisenhower served as the military governor of the U.S. Occupation Zone. He reclassified German Prisoners of War (POWs) as Disarmed Enemy Forces (DEFs), which allowed ignoring Geneva Convention protections. The advantage of this was the ability to lower the food rations to DEFs (History News Network 2003). In fairness, it should be noted that much of Europe was facing massive food shortages and starvation.

SUBCENTRAL   Miliband's fifth element is defined as "an extension of central government and administration, the latter's antennae or tentacles" (1993: 279). This component not only communicates and administers from the center to the periphery but also functions as the voice of the periphery to the center. Despite centralization, these units are also power centers in and of themselves as they "affect very markedly the lives of the population they have governed" (1993: 280). Miliband does not give specific examples but branch offices of federal agencies fit this category. The FBI, Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the Department of Justice all have regional offices that not only communicate and administer federal mandates from Washington but also communicate to the same local concerns and issues. These regional offices

are examples of "diffusion of control" or having a national presence that is diffused throughout the country (Oszlak 2005).

Subcentral units of government may manifest themselves differently in other democratic societies as a result of cultural differences. One example is a rural village located in central Chhattisgarh (a state of India) that is cut off from the mainstream due to inaccessible roads and the lack of electricity. Residents have little interaction with lower state officials,[4] and what does occur is mediated by the *Patel* (village chief) or the most powerful village elder who is associated with divine legitimacy or a belief that this individual is chosen by the gods (Froerer 2005). This may place the Patel above the law. For these villagers, their experience with the tentacles of central government is influenced by a figure that is endowed with traditional authority as well as divine legitimacy.

LEGISLATIVE OR PARLIAMENTARY   Miliband characterizes the relationship between the legislative body of a state and its administration or the chief executive as both cooperation and conflict. Similar to subcentral units of government, legislative bodies are independent power centers that are often in conflict with the chief executive. Like subcentral units, these bodies also serve a communication function by articulating to the state the needs and concerns of the populations they represent and in addition they communicate information from the center to the periphery.

Features of Stateness

Oszlak (2005) contends that features of "stateness" include diffusion of control, externalization of power, the institutionalization of authority, and the capacity to reinforce a national identity. Diffusion is subdivided into two processes: (1) the ability to extract necessary fiscal resources for performing state functions and reproducing the state bureaucracy and (2) the development of a professional group of civil servants that has the expertise necessary to carry out administrative functions. Externalization of power is the recognition of a nation-state by others. The institutionalization of authority refers again to Weber's ideas regarding the monopoly on coercion. Finally, the capacity to reinforce a national identity requires producing symbols that inspire loyalty to a nation-state as well as a sense of belonging and unity. This sense of shared culture, belonging, and unity is captured in the concept of nation.

Differentiating Nation and State

The concepts of nation and state are often confused or considered synonymous. These concepts are distinct as *nation* refers to a shared culture, identity, and a desire for political self-determination (Bottomore 1979), while the *state* is a legal entity. Nation and state may coincide as the United States is recognized as a nation-state, because there is both a shared sense of national unity and a distinct geographical area controlled by U.S. laws that other nation-states recognize. Political sociologists have contributed to this confusion by overemphasizing the organizational character of the state at the expense of the importance of nation (Vujačić 2002). Perhaps because of the rise of ethnic nationalism and conflict, only recently have sociologists recognized the political importance and value placed on the perception of nations by citizens (Greenfield and Eastwood 2005).

NATIONALISM   Nationalism is "a 'perspective or a style of thought,' an image of the world, 'at the core of which lies . . . the idea of the nation' which we understand to be the definition of a community as fundamentally equal and sovereign" (Greenfield and Eastwood 2005: 250) with sentiments such as "we the people" capturing the essence of nation. While nation and state are often linked, a sense of nation can independently exist where there is no state, such as in Gaza or

Palestine. In some cases, a region might prefer to secede and create a separate nation-state that coincides with nationalist views, such as the Kurdish portion of Iraq or the Basque region of Spain. In *The Kurds: A People in Search of Their Homeland,* Kevin McKiernan (2006) argues that the Kurds have achieved a homeland in Northern Iraq in all but name. While the process of separation is oftentimes bloody (e.g., Yugoslavia), it need not be, such as with the more or less peaceful breakup of the former Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia (Vujačić 2004).

Not all nationalist expression necessarily leads to separation, because a culturally distinct group might prefer to maintain its sense of national identity within a multinational state, such as French-speaking Québec, which is considered a nation within a state. State and nation can be mutually reinforcing but need to be distinguished as separate entities (Vujačić 2002). The state is a legal creation while the attachment to nation is emotional.

When nationalism coincides with a specific territory that is recognized as an autonomous political unit, it is termed a *nation-state.* Nationalist ideology that coincides with a state is advantageous because it provides "the state with a new source of legitimacy and dramatically increase[s] its mobilization potential in comparison to traditional state structures" (Vujačić 2002: 136).

An important question for political sociologists is whether nationalism is a cause or a consequence of the increased fragmentation of larger political units or the breaking of states into smaller units (e.g., Yugoslavia into Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia). Schwarzmantel (2001) argues that it is both, but this depends on the nature of the nationalist movement in question. For example, nationalism based on ethnicity is more fragmentary, as its appeal will be limited to members of that ethnic group. Nation-building in areas where a variety of ethnic groups coexist cannot rely on a nationalism that is primarily based on ethnic identity. Nationalism that comes at the expense of another ethnic, race, or religious group may result in political violence including genocide.

CIVIL RELIGION   Nationalism is often an expression of civil religion or "attaching sacred qualities to certain institutional arrangements and historical events" (Scott and Marshall 2005: 71), which celebrates state or civil society and serves the same function as religion, including social cohesion and value socialization. In *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life,* Emile Durkheim distinguishes between the sacred and the profane. "Sacred things are things protected and isolated by prohibitions; profane things are those things to which the prohibitions are applied and that must keep at a distance from what is sacred" (Durkheim 1995 [1912]: 38). The profane is ordinary and the sacred extraordinary. When the profane transitions to the sacred, the *totius substantiae* or total substance is transformed (Durkheim 1995 [1912]). Durkheim writes "at that moment, the young man is said to die, and the existence of the particular person he was, to cease—instantaneously to be replaced by another. He is born again in a new form" (1995 [1912]: 37). Both people and inanimate objects[5] can be transformed and when that happens:

> the powers thereby conferred on that object behave as if they were real. They determine man's conduct with the same necessity as physical force . . . If he has eaten the flesh of an animal that is prohibited, even though it is perfectly wholesome, he will feel ill from it and may die. The soldier who falls defending his flag certainly does not believe he has sacrificed himself to a piece of cloth. (Durkheim 1995 [1912]: 229)

There are many examples of civil religious symbols in the United States, with the flag being the most common. There are prohibitions concerning how the flag is displayed, handled, and disposed including "don't let the flag (sacred) touch the ground (profane)." One of the

Constantino Brumidi's fresco, "Apotheosis of George Washington," in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol building

Source: Architect of the Capitol

most dramatic U.S. examples is Constantino Brumidi's fresco "*The Apotheosis of George Washington*" depicting Washington ascending into the heavens and is painted on the interior ceiling of the capitol dome. In writing about Brumidi's *Apotheosis,* Dove and Guernsey (1995) claim "the religious connotation was clear: here was a man so virtuous and beloved that he surely had ascended to heaven, escorted honorably by classical personifications of freedom and liberty." The ascension is both a symbolic as well as the literal rebirth of Washington from ordinary man to extraordinary and is but one of many examples of the deification of Washington that occurred after his death. This association of Washington with virtue continues with a national myth involving an axe and a cherry tree.

Vujačić (2002: 137) argues that this "sacralization of the political sphere remain[s] a permanent feature of modern nationalism." Greenfield and Eastwood (2005) take issue with equating nationalism with civil religion arguing that, by definition, religion excludes the secular. Yet we believe that Durkheim's concepts of the sacred and profane are applicable to understanding the cultural meaning and significance of national symbols.

Emergence of Nations

Greenfield and Eastwood (2005) argue that nationalism is cultural and not a structural phenomenon, yet there are a variety of views on what leads to the emergence of nations and whether modernity is required. In their review, Greenfield and Eastwood note that the "modernists" have become popular since the 1980s, and scholars in this group believe that nation is a result of specific social and economic processes including capitalism, industrialization, and the rise of the bureaucratic state. For the modernists, a bureaucratic state is one of several conditions necessary for the emergence of nation, suggesting that the state must come first. As anthropologist Carole Nagengast writes in summarizing various views about nations, "nations do not produce states, but rather states produce nations . . . In short, the integrative needs of the modern state produced nationalist ideology, which created the

TEXTBOX 2.2

The Alamo: An Example of Texas Nationalism

Texas was for a short time an independent country and that sense of regional pride and identity are still felt today. Texans fly the state flag at the same height as the American flag and celebrate their history of independence. One example is the Alamo shrine located in San Antonio, Texas. Approximately 3 million persons annually visit the Alamo also known as the "cradle of Texas liberty." Since 1905, the site has been operated by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT) who according to Texas law "must preserve the historic site as a sacred memorial to the heroes who immolated themselves upon that hallowed ground" (visit http://www.thealamo.org). The mission was built in 1718 and originally housed Spanish missionaries. It is also the site where a few hundred men, including Davey Crockett, Jim Bowie, William B. Travis, and others, held out for thirteen days against the Centralist army of General Antonio López de Santa Anna. The Alamo fell on March 6, 1836. Approximately a month later, the Texan Army under Sam Houston shouted, "Remember the Alamo!" when the Texan Army defeated Santa Anna at the battle of San Jacinto on April 21, 1836. The Alamo complex contains several buildings, including the mission. Upon entering, there are several signs reminding visitors of the sacredness of the building. Besides referring to the Alamo as a shrine, a plaque placed by the DRT reads "Blood of heroes hath stained me; let the stones of the Alamo speak that their immolation be not forgotten." Another sign reads "Quiet. No Smoking. Gentlemen Remove Hats." A plaque on another wall reads "Be Silent Friend. Here Heroes Died to Blaze a Trail for Other Men." The message is unmistakable. This is sacred ground that was transformed by the blood of the men who died defending it. Inside the great hall are several tables with glass tops that display and protect artifacts. Lines of people snake around these tables to get a glimpse of a wooden peg from the Crockett cabin and a locket with a snippet of Crockett's hair. This is no ordinary piece of wood or hair. These have become sacred objects. Signs forbid the taking of pictures or talking in loud voices as this is hallowed ground.
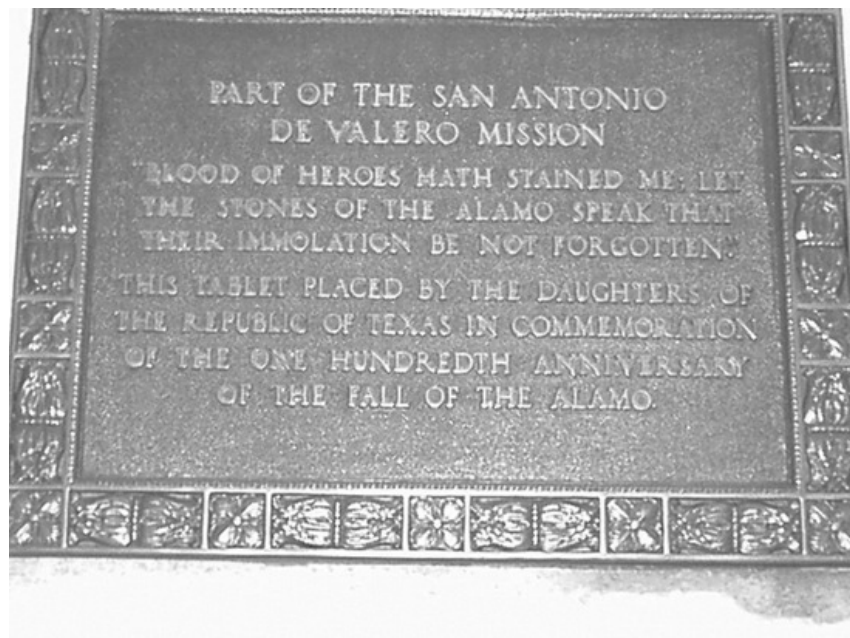
Plaque placed at the Alamo by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas

Source: Photo by Lisa K. Waldner

nation" (1994: 118). Therefore, the state comes first and the need to unify society necessitates the creation of nationalist symbols and other common cultural markers.

While there can be no doubt that nationalism serves the state by providing a unifying cultural force, the view that the state must precede the development of nation is disputed by the real sense of nation that exists independent of a state such as the Kurdish homeland in northern Iraq, and Palestine. If either the Kurds or the Palestinians achieve their dream of an independent state, it will be an example of a nation that existed prior to the legal creation of a state. Vujačić (2002) disagrees with the primacy of the state and challenges state-centered theories of nationalism. Perhaps there are multiple paths to the emergence of nation-states, and it is not necessary for state to precede nation.

Different Forms of the Nation-State

Political sociologists recognize several different nation-state forms. Tilly's analysis of western Europe suggests that when citizens contested war making and state making, leaders made concessions resulting in the expansion of civil liberties and other practices associated with democracy. In contrast, newer states created after World War II, where the military dominates the state apparatus, are more likely to fit an authoritarian model. The three basic models of the modern state include democracy, totalitarianism, and authoritarian. Before discussing distinctions amongst these types, it is important to understand that these taxonomic categories do not mean that regimes are static and unchanging. Furthermore, regimes may be a hybrid with a mix of democratic and undemocratic practices with concepts like democracy or authoritarianism referring to specific "phases or episodes through which politics evolve, allowing for a shift of our attention from essential characteristics and stable structures to differences, transitions, and change" (Brachet-Márquez 2005: 462).

Democracy

A democracy is a "political system in which the opportunity to participate in decisions is widely shared among all adult citizens" (Dahl 1963: 8). Markoff (2005) contends that there is a great deal of variation in "democratic" nations, with some having widespread violations of civil liberties despite holding free elections and others so inefficient at providing basic government services that they are termed *low quality* democracies. Three basic types of democracy—direct, representative, and liberal—are not mutually exclusive.

TYPES OF DEMOCRACY   Examples of *direct democracy,* where citizens participate in decision-making, include the ancient Greeks as well as New England town hall and rural township meetings. This type is best suited for small geographical areas and local politics where citizen input can be gathered efficiently and decisions do not have to be made quickly. A more common form is *representative democracy,* where citizens elect someone to vote and voice concerns on their behalf in a type of legislative body such as the U.S. Congress or the British Parliament.

The last type, *liberal democracy,* is characterized by freedoms including expression, assembly, political participation, and property ownership. Some term the last type "liberal capitalist" because of the freedoms associated with private property ownership and pursuit of profit (Babu 2006; Callinicos 2006; Spanakos 2007). Liberal democracies are usually representative democracies.

Using Dahl's definition, democracy exists on a continuum as the opportunity for citizen participation varies. The ancient Greeks did not allow women or slaves to participate, and historically, women and minorities have been disenfranchised. Only since the addition of the Twenty-Sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1971 have adults younger than twenty-one been

allowed the right to vote. Currently, some states prevent felons from voting after their release from prison. This disproportionately impacts African-Americans; some believe this has affected election outcomes since the 1970s (Manza and Uggen 2006).

Democracy is a process that can be undone and often involves serious conflicts between parties, including state social control agents such as the police (Markoff 2005). Markoff notes that sociologists such as Seymour Lipset and Barrington Moore see democracy not as a process but as a state of affairs associated with economic development (Lipset) and the accumulation of wealth (Moore). Markoff also suggests that there may be many different paths to democracy and diverse starting points, which are not well understood. Viewing democracy as a process and the potential "undoing" of democracy is a recognition that sometimes democracies engage in practices that violate democratic principles.

Democracy and Undemocratic Practices

Brachet-Márquez (2005) illustrates two categories of undemocratic practices:

> when democratic procedures are used as a legitimate cover in order to send out un-democratic messages [and] when democratic procedures are made to systematically misfunction for some groups (black, immigrants, women, the poor), thereby cover-ing up prejudice, exclusion, or downright aggression. In the first case, democracy lets in undemocracy by extending its legal mantle too far, whereas in the other, it fails to extend it far enough. (480)

Brachet-Márquez's systematic misfunction or the failure to extend the legal mantle is easy enough to understand. Examples include lack of equal protection before the law and the failure to provide services such as adequate police protection, sanitation, or education in low-income or impoverished areas. Brachet-Márquez challenges sociologists and others not to think of these examples as mere inefficiencies but rather as a lack of democracy. Using John Markoff's (2005) phrasing, systematic misfunction is allowing a "low-quality" democracy that affects only certain disadvan-taged groups while those with privilege experience all the rights and advantages such as safe neighborhoods and quality public schools. Sudhir Venkatesh's book *Gang Leader for a Day* (2008) describes the real and very personal implications of systematic misfunction affecting residents of Chicago's Robert Taylor Homes. He describes residents who do not bother calling the police or an ambulance because no one responds. As a result, residents are forced to create informal networks to meet basic needs including relying on crack-dealing gang members for security and bribes to the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) to take care of broken appliances or apartment repairs. Some of these informal arrangements involved exchanging sex for a needed service. Venkatesh explains:

> Then there were all the resources to be procured in exchange for sex: groceries from the bodega owner, rent forgiveness from the CHA, assistance from a welfare bureau-crat, preferential treatment from a police officer for a jailed relative. The women's explanation for using sex as currency was consistent and pragmatic: If your child was in danger of going hungry, then you did whatever it took to fix the problem. The women looked pained when they discussed using their bodies to obtain these necessities; it was clear that this wasn't their first—or even their hundredth—preference. (2008: 215)

Those of us who live middle- or upper-class lives cannot fathom and certainly would not tolerate such a complete lack of government service and protection. Charles Tilly suggests that

citizens accept the danger posed by the state in exchange for other services such as hospitals, libraries, and parks. The fact that "low-quality" democracy exists within "real" democracies, where some citizens actually receive something in return for being subjugated while others do not is something that needs more attention from sociologists.

Brachet-Márquez's first case, extending the legal mantle too far, occurs when a democratic state uses its authority to promote undemocratic practices such as holding elections to establish an undemocratic regime that does away with the rights of women or some other group, legally tolerating child pornography as "free speech" but failing to protect the rights of minors, and including undemocratic principles in democratic constitutions such as the right of the military to take over when the nation is deemed at risk (Brachet-Márquez 2005).

Historical examples applicable to the United States include the Kansas–Nebraska Act of 1854 that allowed settlers to vote to determine whether or not to permit slavery. The logic behind voting is popular sovereignty or will of the people. The problem with popular sovereignty is what Tocqueville (1945 [1835]) has termed the *tyranny of the majority* which trumps the rights of the minority. It is paradoxical that the democratic process of voting was used to decide something undemocratic—whether or not whites in a specific territory could own other human beings. This trampled on inalienable rights—or rights that exist by virtue of being human and thus are not conferred by a benevolent state. Some might argue that this practice continues today with some states holding constitutional referendums to decide whether to bar gay citizens from marriage.

Is voting on gay marriage an example of extending the legal mantle too far? Answering yes depends on three premises: (1) the United States is a democracy; (2) voting is a democratic practice; and (3) banning gays from marriage is undemocratic. Most would agree with the first two premises with the third being contentious. Undoubtedly, there are important differences between the fight to end slavery and the struggle regarding gay marriage. And while Brachet-Márquez does not use the gay marriage debate as an example, we believe her insights could be used to critically examine this issue and others, including some of the more controversial aspects of the "war on terror." At minimum, these ideas are a call to action for those living in democracies to be vigilant and not take civil rights for granted.

Finally, any examination of democracy should consider the concept of *polyarchy*. The term originates from Robert Dahl (1956), and as modified by Robinson refers to "a system in which a small group actually rules on behalf of (transnational) capital and mass participation in decision-making is limited to choosing among competing elites in a tightly controlled electoral process" (2004: 442). Robinson argues that this type of democracy is promoted by U.S. foreign policy because it circumvents more radical social change that might undermine capitalism. In other words, the pretense of democracy exists but it is not real democracy as the process is controlled by elites. Robinson's arguments are considered more fully in Chapter 10.

Undemocratic State Forms

Markoff and Brachet-Márquez's ideas underscore that, in practice, democracies are far from perfect. Significantly though, this type does allow for dissent and possible revision of state practices. The following text summarizes undemocratic state forms such as totalitarianism and authoritarianism that are characterized by an absence of civil liberties and protection from state violence. Like democracies, these undemocratic state forms are not static; these labels are best used to describe a regime at a specific point in time rather than a permanent, stable category.

TOTALITARIANISM   In contrast to democracy, totalitarian states allow for no meaningful citizen participation; political expression is severely limited. For example, the former Soviet Union

held elections but only members of the communist party were on the ballot. According to Brachet-Márquez, most scholars agree on three components of totalitarianism: (1) a comprehensive ideology detailing all aspects of social life with those opposed exterminated as enemies of the state; (2) a centrally controlled state bureaucracy that promotes this ideology via complete control of the communication and information infrastructure and a terror system for identifying and eliminating state enemies; and (3) a state-controlled political party that involves mass participation, whether willing or forced. Other scholars include components such as a sole political party with one leader and a focus on militarist expansion (Brachet-Márquez 2005).

The distinction between totalitarianism and other nondemocratic forms of government is not always completely objective but subject to political concerns and propaganda. During the height of the cold war, there was a tendency to label any fascism or communism as totalitarianism. Currently, the distinction is more nuanced,with some suggesting that the only true examples of totalitarianism were Nazi Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union (Brachet-Márquez 2005).

What is the distinction between fascism and totalitarianism? According to Brachet-Márquez, the difference is the degree of ruthlessness used in the pursuit of the ideological program and the degree of control exercised with fascist states having less of both. Brachet-Márquez uses Mussolini's Italy as an example of fascism as there was less control with the state needing some cooperation from preexisting institutions and elites.

AUTHORITARIANISM   This category reflects the degree of variation in political systems that are neither wholly totalitarian nor wholly democratic as authoritarianism occupies a mediating position. While authoritarian systems have less control over a society than a totalitarian system, this does not mean there is less death and violence inflicted on citizens. For Stepan (1988), the distinguishing feature is the presence or absence of civil society (voluntary civic and social organizations), which is nonexistent in totalitarian regimes. These organizations are present in an authoritarian state albeit restricted. Unfortunately, the repressed nature of civil society inhibits an authoritarian state from transitioning toward democracy (Brachet-Márquez 2005).

Another distinction is the lack of an overarching ideology guiding societal transformation. Markoff (2005) finds that authoritarian states are more pragmatic and pluralistic in their ideology. Similar to totalitarian regimes, authoritarian governments also rely on bureaucratic structures and technology for citizen repression (Brachet-Márquez 2005).

Saudi citizens do not elect their rulers and have limited civil liberties, with men having more rights than women. Despite ranking ninth overall in authoritarianism[6] (Kekic 2007), Saudi Arabia lacks some of the characteristics of a totalitarian regime such as a comprehensive state terror network. Pakistan is another example of nation-state with limited civil liberties and where the military at times dominates the state apparatus. In 2007, Pakistan President General Musharraf declared a state of emergency, imposed press restrictions ("Pakistan says more than 3000 freed" 2007), and had over 4,500 persons arrested, including his political opponents (Perlez 2007). Although Musharraf was victorious in the 2007 election, the election was boycotted by his political opponents. The Pakistani Supreme Court subsequently ruled this election invalid. Musharraf responded by dismissing the Supreme Court judges and filling judicial posts with his supporters who dismissed election challenges (Gall 2007). Then President George W. Bush called on Musharraf to "have elections soon, and you need to take off your uniform" (Rohde 2007), voicing disapproval for a military leader controlling the state apparatus. Musharraf's Pakistan better fits the category of an authoritarian state than totalitarianism regime despite military control and repression of civil rights and mass political arrests. Musharraf was ousted from the presidency of Pakistan in 2008 with the election of Asif Ali Zardari, the husband of former

prime minister and assassinated opposition party leader Benazir Bhutto (Perlez and Masood 2008). Since then, the Pakistani Supreme Court has ruled Musharraf's actions invalid, including the installation of judges supporting his emergency rule, laying the foundation for possible treason charges against the former head of state (Shahzad and Toosi 2009).

Does this mean that Pakistan is now a democracy? Using Latin American countries in the 1970s and 1980s as examples, Stepan (1988) describes an important distinction between democratization and liberalization, which can be applied to Pakistan. Under liberalization, media censorship may be lifted, political prisoners released, and perhaps some free speech tolerated. In contrast, democratization involves the right for open and free elections where any qualified adult can run for political office. Whether the current democratically elected regime will be allowed to govern without another military takeover remains an open question. At best, Pakistan is currently considered a hybrid or a cross between a weak democracy and an authoritarian regime (Economist Intelligence Unit 2008).

China is another example of a state that cannot be considered totalitarian. The Tiananmen Square massacre is a powerful reminder of extreme political repression with thousands killed including those protesting in several Chinese cities besides Beijing between April 15 and June 4, 1989. Yet, this massacre is usually considered an example of authoritarianism rather than totalitarianism because it occurred after the death of Chairman Mao when the Chinese government made some economic and political changes including offering minority factions a token presence in government in exchange for unconditional regime support (Brachet-Márquez 2005). More recently, the Chinese government has enacted some economic reforms but it has been slower to bring about political reform that would allow an entity other than the Communist Party control of the government. Perhaps because of some lessening of societal control, China is a hybrid state that is not purely totalitarian (Orum 2001).

Complicating the ability to differentiate between democracies and authoritarian regimes is the tendency for some Western democracies to accept authoritarian regimes as democracies merely because elections are held. Human Rights Watch (HRW) (http://www.hrw.org), an independent, nongovernmental organization, has charged Western democracies with failing to hold regimes such as Pakistan, Kenya, and Russia accountable ("U.S. Is Too Quick to Accept Nations as True Democracies, Rights Group Says" 2008). According to the HRW, false democracies hold elections but fail on other measures including the right of assembly, a free press, and a strong civil society. Kenneth Roth, the executive director of HRW, argues that the willingness of Western democracies to ignore authoritarian practices is related to how strategically or commercially important an authoritarian regime is rather than the actual abuse of political and civil rights. This is related to Robinson's (2004) charge that the United States supports polyarchy rather than democracy because it benefits the transnational elite, or those from across the globe who are wealthy and powerful. Whether or not elites dominate the political process is only one of the issues debated by dueling theoretical perspectives on the state.

THEORETICAL VIEWS ON THE STATE

Sociological theories of the state have attempted to answer four basic questions: "(1) in whose interests does the state act?; (2) who influences and controls the state?; (3) to what extent do the masses hold political elites accountable?; and (4) how do states change?" (Olsen and Marger 1993: 252). Alford and Friedland (1985) recognized three basic models of power summarizing state–societal relations including pluralist, elite (managerial), and class or Marxist views of the state. Rather than championing one specific theoretical model, these political sociologists argue

that all three theories are useful depending on the level of analysis, with pluralism for the individual, elite for examining the state as a set of networked organizations, and the class model for society. Additionally, there are newer perspectives such as institutionalism, rational choice, and postmodernism.

Pluralism

Alford and Friedland (1985) contend that pluralists do not really refer to *the state* per se. Instead pluralists substitute phrases such as *political system, the polity,* or *the pluralist system.* Nonetheless, pluralists have a view of the state with important distinctions when compared to other theorists, including worldview, the nature of political institutions, and the relations between them. Some of these distinctions will be discussed later but it is important to remember that there are important nuances between different theorists operating under the same theoretical umbrella, which cannot possibly be captured in a brief overview.

Pluralism is associated with sociologists Talcott Parsons and Seymour Lipset as well as political scientists Robert Dahl and Ted Gurr. According to Marvin Olsen (1993), one of the basic premises of pluralism can be traced back to Tocqueville who argued for the creation of voluntary associations to combat the potential for "tyranny of the majority." Tocqueville believed that the latter was an outcome of mass equality occurring in the absence of a hierarchical power structure that typifies feudal societies. The growth in voluntary associations leads to the development of a strong civil society that functions independent of the state. By virtue of this independence, voluntary associations have their own power base. Olsen (1993) mentions several characteristics these organizations share, including voluntary membership based on shared interests and concerns, limited sphere in the lives of members, being private or not connected to government, an ability to connect grassroots activism to the national level, and sufficient resources to influence political leaders.

Olsen acknowledges that some of these organizations are political, such as political parties and nonpartisan political action groups. However, these groups may also be nonpolitical in nature, such as professional associations or religious or civic groups termed "parapolitical actors" (1993: 147) that become involved only when their direct interests are at stake. Pluralism, then, involves an arena of competing organizational actors that attempt to influence the state. The state favors no particular set of actors. Although individuals independently do not have a great deal of power and influence, their concerns are heard through their membership in these voluntary associations.

According to pluralists, the core function of the state is to "achieve consensus and thus social order through continuous exchanges of demands and responses by social groups and government" (Alford 1993: 260). In contrast to elite and class perspectives, the pluralist model rejects that the state represents one dominant group at the expense of others or that the state is controlled by elites. For pluralists, the state is "an impartial arbitrator among competing pressure groups" (Alford and Friedland 1985; Olsen and Marger 1993: 255). Pluralists recognize the state as an institution that deals with power but oppose the idea that the state has any interests of its own (Olsen and Marger 1993). If the process works as intended, the state and society's interests are one and the same (Alford and Friedland 1985). This is in direct opposition to state-centrics who view the state as having its own interests. Pluralists also oppose Marxists regarding the importance of social class. For pluralists, social class is only one of many competing interest groups (Alford 1993).

Olsen is quite right when he remarks that pluralism is "the unofficial political philosophy of the United States" (1993: 150) as pluralism sounds very similar to what grade school children are taught about democracy. In fact, democratic is one of the many terms writers have used when

writing about pluralism (Alford and Friedland 1985). Class theorists take this a step further and argue that pluralism is a deliberate falsehood taught to hide the real source of power in any capitalist democracy: big business. In comparing the pluralist perspective to others, Alford and Friedland write "In both managerial [elite] and class perspectives, popular identifications with the state or with local political party organizations are products of elite manipulation or false consciousness deriving from the illusory universality of the capitalist state" (1985: 24).

Regardless of which theory is correct on this latter point, the pluralist paradigm suffers from some important weaknesses. Expanding on more general criticisms summarized in Chapter 1, six weaknesses of this model are viability, harmony of interest, difficulty of new organizations to enter the political process, iron law of oligarchy, lack of sufficient power resources, and the lack of viable political channels (Olsen 1993). Viability refers to the question of whether individuals really are connected to and involved with voluntary organizations. While one might be a card-carrying member, this does not equal participation. This is an important criticism because one of the premises of pluralism is that voluntary associations provide an opportunity to develop the skills necessary to become more politically effective. Furthermore, without active member participation, organizations will not be effective conduits between society and government. With Robert Putnam's book *Bowling Alone* (2000) concluding that involvement in voluntary associations is declining, there is little evidence of viability.

Harmony of interests assumes that despite competing interests there is a basic consensus on core values. Olsen (1993) contends that when this is not the case, pluralism may result in societal paralysis and even destruction. In Chapter 1, we found that those with less power resources typically lose in the political process (Piven and Cloward 1988). Resource procurement is difficult for newer organizations undercutting the ability to participate in the society–state mediation process (Olsen 1993). At worse, these groups become simply mouthpieces for government as they lack resources needed to maintain autonomy. Further, even with resources, if there is no mechanism for influencing the state, effectiveness is limited. In other words, pluralism "specifies the role that intermediate organizations should enact in political affairs, but says nothing about how this role should be carried out" (Olsen 1993: 151). Olsen's final criticism concerns Robert Michels' "iron law of oligarchy" or the tendency for all organizations to become centralized and controlled by only a few (Zeitlin 1981). If this is the case, it would seem that civic organizations and other voluntary associations are not really a training ground for future leaders as folks do not join, and of those who do, most will not have the opportunity to assume a leadership role.

Elite Views of the State

Alford and Friedland prefer *managerial* to *elite* or *bureaucratic* to describe this perspective as they emphasize the "organizational base of elites and their control of the state" (1985: 161). We use the term *elite* because this is the more common label. Prewitt and Stone (1993) contend that elite theory is based on two principles: (1) society can be divided into two groups, the masses and the smaller number that rule them; and (2) the nature and direction of any society can be understood by understanding the composition, structure, and conflicts of those who rule.

The core function of the state is maintaining the dominance of existing elites (Alford 1993). Like class theorists, elite theorists believe that power is concentrated but disagree that it is based on class position. For elite theorists, managerial control is more important than property ownership (Alford and Friedland 1985) as power is the result of holding positions of authority in bureaucracies that control resources, and these complex organizations manage every important sphere of social life. Important bureaucracies may be political or governmental institutions but can also be banks, corporations, religious organizations, or the media, to name only a few (Alford 1993).

Unlike pluralists who believe that ordinary citizens can be influential through voluntary associations, elite theorists view those controlling the state bureaucracy "as relatively insular and rarely influenced by other members of society" (Olsen and Marger 1993: 255). What makes elites inaccessible also explains why elite control is so successful. "The combination of expertise, hierarchical control, and the capacity to allocate human, technological, and material resources gives the elites of bureaucratic organizations power not easily restrained by the mechanisms of pluralistic competition and debate" (Alford 1993: 259).

While elite theorists argue that real power rests with those who occupy positions within dominant organizations, this does not mean that elites are unified. Quite the contrary, elites compete with other elites for control and influence and use their positions to manipulate information and frame public opinion. In short, they manipulate the masses. There are a variety of different "flavors" of elite theory but key types include classical elite, power elite, and class domination views.

CLASSICAL ELITE THEORY   Theorists including Robert Michels, Vilfredo Pareto, and Gaetano Mosca are often lumped together under one rubric when ignoring important distinctions in their social theorizing. Yet, as discussed in Chapter 1, there are some important commonalties including the view that elite rule is necessary. Michels takes a less negative view of the masses by leaning more toward the ideas of Max Weber, including Weber's view of bureaucratic structure by noting the inevitability of such organizations as well as potential negative outcomes. Marger (1987) argues that compared to his contemporaries, Michels is the most sociological, and for this reason, we focus on his ideas.

Michels believed that the real power struggle was not between the elites and the masses, but between old elites and newer ones challenging the former for leadership positions. Michels' "iron law of oligarchy" was based on his analysis of the German Social Democratic (GSD) party. The GSD was deliberately chosen to illustrate that iron law, or rule by only a few, occurs even when an organization is governed by democratic principles (Marger 1987).

POWER ELITE   Unlike some classical elite views, C. Wright Mills was critical of elite control and bureaucracy, believing that they undermined democracy. Like Michels, he believed that society was controlled by elites, specifically, "the power elite" comprising three interlocking groups: corporate, political, and military. Elites can use their position in one domain to become dominant in another. An example is the number of past U.S. presidents who were military generals (e.g., Washington, Grant, Jackson, and Eisenhower) or wealthy Americans who translate wealth into political power (e.g., Kennedy, Rockefeller, and Bush). Unlike classical theorists, Mills also conceptualized a mediating level between "the power elite" and the masses termed *middle levels of power* or organized special interest groups. The third level is the unorganized masses (Mills 1956).

Mills believed that three factors explained the cohesive and unified nature of the power elite: common socialization as a result of similar career paths and educational experiences; the maintenance of continued personal and business ties (e.g., marriage and business arrangements); and the interdependent nature of the triangle of power (Olsen and Marger 1993).

CLASS DOMINATION THEORY   G. William Domhoff is an intellectual heir of C. Wright Mills and also credits E. Digby Baltzell, Paul M. Sweeney, and Robert A. Dahl as important influences (Domhoff 1993). While some describe Domhoff as an "empirical Marxist" (Lo 2002), he explicitly rejects this label (Domhoff 1993) and criticizes elite theory and prefers what he calls "class domination theory" (Domhoff 2006). We include him under the elite rubric because he shares

with other elite theorists a belief that there is a dominant group in society with elite membership based on both having wealth and holding a position of power. He is best known for his analysis of four intertwining power structure networks: policy planning, candidate selection, special interests, and opinion shaping (Domhoff 2006).

Domhoff argues that the power elite are a "corporation-based upper class" comprised of both owners and top-level corporate executives. The power elite control enough money and wealth, occupy enough positions of power, and win enough of the time to conclude that the federal government is dominated—though not necessarily totally controlled, by the power elite.

While Mills emphasizes similar socialization experiences and current interpersonal ties through business and family connections, Domhoff emphasizes the similarity of social backgrounds by investigating social club membership, private school membership, and attendance at prestigious universities (Domhoff 2006). For example, though Bill Clinton was not born wealthy, he shares with other elites his membership in prestigious organizations, social clubs, and educational experiences (e.g., Yale Law School, Georgetown University, and Oxford).

Critics of elite theory question whether elites are truly cohesive enough to rule, whether the masses are really dominated by elites, and whether elite models are too simplistic. Domhoff criticizes other elite theorists for not acknowledging the ability of the corporate elite to dominate political elites such as elected officials. Furthermore, he argues that others fail to see the class bias built into the policy-planning network, rendering the leaders of nonprofits vulnerable to the corporate community. Finally, the failure to acknowledge class bias misrepresents the relationship between the corporate community and union leaders with the union usually defeated (Domhoff 2006). Although Domhoff encourages us to consider the importance of class domination, he does not hold to other tenets of Marxism such as the primacy of class struggle and the means of production (Domhoff 1993).

Class-Based Views of the State

While class-based theories are more a theory of society than a specific theory of state (Alford and Friedland 1985), Olsen and Marger (1993) contend that the ideas of class theorists represent "one of the most comprehensive explanations of the state and its power" (252). As previously discussed, there are a variety of neo-Marxian perspectives on the state, but these perspectives share some core concepts and assumptions.

For Marxists, economics determines the actual nature of the state and the role played in influencing other aspects of social life. All institutions are shaped by the mode of economic production. For this reason, class theorists use the term *capitalist state* rather than only *state* to underscore the role of capitalism. Under capitalism, "the state is controlled by and acts in the interests of the productive property-owning class" (Olsen and Marger 1993: 252).

The core function of the state is to maintain and reproduce the existing class relationships using both formal (law and the courts) and informal (socialization of children in schools and families) means (Alford 1993). Skocpol argues that "the crucial difference of opinion is over which means the political arena distinctly embodies: fundamentally consensually based legitimate authority, or fundamentally coercive domination" (1993: 307). Class-based theorists believe the latter and that the state emerged as a mechanism for controlling the masses. Class conflict is managed by both force and control of ideology (Nagengast 1994).

Viewing the state as shaped by economic forces and dominated by the capitalist class challenges the pluralist view of an institution that arbitrates between competing interest groups and an autonomous state that acts on behalf of greater society. However, neo-Marxists disagree on the exact nature of the relationship between the dominant capitalist class and the

form and functioning of the state. According to Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975), there are three Marxist theories of capitalist states—instrumental, structural, and Hegelian–Marxist—that seek to answer two basic questions: "Why does the state serve the interests of the capitalist class?" and "How does the state function to maintain and expand the capitalist system?" (Gold, Lo, and Wright 1993: 269).

INSTRUMENTAL   Ralph Miliband is perhaps the most well-known proponent of this view that gives primacy to understanding the ties between the ruling class and the state (Gold et al. 1993). Quite simply, the state serves the interests of the capitalist class because the state is an instrument or tool used by this class to dominate society. This does not mean that dominant-class members directly rule by holding office; rather, they rule indirectly by exerting control over state officials (Olsen and Marger 1993).

This perspective has driven a research agenda that has examined the direct ties between members of the capitalist class and the state as well as other related institutions such as political parties and how the capitalist class shapes government policy to fit their interests (Gold et al. 1993). This shaping can be direct through the development of state policy or indirect through pressure and influence. Gold and colleagues argue that this view has been important for the development of the sociology of the capitalist class. Research from this perspective documents both the existence of a dominant class and the connections between members and the state apparatus. Nonetheless, there are criticisms of instrumentalism, including a failure to consider state autonomy, historical exceptions, and causation.

The failure to include autonomy includes two types: that of the state and other related institutions. As Gold and colleagues argue "There are also state policies which cannot easily be explained by direct corporate initiatives but which may come from within the state itself" (1993: 271). For example, to preserve the capitalist state, the state may need to enact policies such as social security payroll taxes or import restrictions that are opposed by capitalists (Block 1993). This would not be possible without an autonomous state. Furthermore, culture and ideology are promoted by the state and not simply manipulated by the capitalist class (Gold et al. 1993). As Block argues, this view "neglects the ideological role of the state. The state plays a critical role in maintaining the legitimacy of the social order, and this requires that the state appear to be neutral in the class struggle" (1993: 296). Even if the instrumentalists are correct, the fact that the state must appear neutral calls for a more nuanced and complicated framework for analyzing state policy (Block 1993).

Related to the argument of state autonomy is the criticism of historical exception. This argument suggests that not all policies enacted by a capitalist state are interests of the dominant class. Gold et al. (1993) note that business leaders were opposed to Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs. In fact, these leaders considered Roosevelt, a member of the upper class, a "class traitor." Gold et al. (1993) also note that even if some of the reforms implemented by the state on behalf of the working class ultimately co-opt the working class, to assume that all reforms are a co-optation denies the possibility of class struggle over reform.

Finally, the issue of causation challenges the assumption that state policy can be explained by the voluntary acts of powerful persons rather than an acknowledgement that the actions of the ruling class can be limited by structural factors. Gold et al. (1993) contend that this view of causation is the result of an instrumentalist view that rose to challenge a pluralist view of the state. Both views contend that social causes are due to actions of dominant actors that act on behalf of their own interests. The difference is that instrumentalists see one dominant actor, the ruling class, whereas pluralists believe there are many groups attempting to control the state. This view

of a dominant class that acts in a manner consistent with its own interests assumes that the ruling class is cohesive and unified (Block 1993). In Fred Block's "The Ruling Class Does Not Rule", he argues that a "viable Marxist theory of the state depends on the rejection of the idea of a conscious, politically directive, ruling class" (1993: 305). This alternative view is a structural theory of the state.

STRUCTURAL   Just as Miliband is associated with an instrumental view of the state, Nicos Poulantzas is a main proponent of the structural view. The historical Miliband–Poulantzas debate was the dueling neo-Marxists' perspectives of instrumentalism and structuralism. While agreeing that the state acts to maintain capitalism, Poulantzas rejects instrumentalism, arguing that state functioning is a direct consequence of both structure and the contradictions of capitalism.

Because society is dependent on a functioning economy, state officials must protect the economy and, in doing so, serve the interests of the dominant class (Olsen and Marger 1993) According to Gold et al., structuralists are interested in "how the state attempts to neutralize or displace these various contradictions" (1993: 271) in order to maintain the capitalist system. In Poulantzas' (1975) influential book, *Political Power and Social Classes,* he argues that there is a contradiction between the social character of production and the private appropriation of surplus product, threatening the current system through working-class unity and capitalist-class disunity.

Capitalist-class disunity is fostered by competition. Far from being unified, capitalists compete with each other for surplus, and therefore do not always share economic and political interests. The only way to protect the long-term interests of the capital class, as opposed to short-term individualized interests of specific capitalists, is to have a state that maintains some autonomy, even if the state, from time to time, enacts working-class concessions such as minimum-wage laws. The long-term survival of capitalism is dependent upon providing these concessions in an attempt to prevent working-class unity. Without such concessions, workers might band together and overthrow the capitalist state.

In summarizing the structuralist view, Gold et al. (1993) note that the degree of state autonomy varies depending on the degree of conflict between classes, the intensity of divisiveness within classes, and which factions constitute a dominant-class power bloc. Gold et al. argue that the lack of any discussion that might explain how these functional relationships are regulated weakens this approach to understanding the capitalist state.

HEGELIAN–MARXIST   This final neo-Marxist perspective begins with the question, "what is the state?" The answer is a mystification or an institution that serves the interests of the dominant class though it appears to serve the interests of society as a whole. This shows that the state is an illusion, with most writers exploring how this mystification process occurs. Most writers emphasize the role of ideology, consciousness, and legitimacy. Although these ideas have advanced the understanding of politics, they are not a coherent theory of the state much less of the relation between the state and society (Gold et al. 1993). Thinkers associated with this perspective (e.g., Herbert Marcuse, Jürgen Habermas, and Georg Lukacs) include what is called the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory. The *Frankfurt School* refers to the first generation of critical theorists who were located in Frankfurt, Germany, and relocated to the United States after the Nazis rose to power.

Updated Marxist Theories of the State

In reviewing Marxist theories of the state, twenty-five years after the classic description of Gold et al. (1975), one of the original authors, Clarence Lo, argues there are four "currents" of Marxist

theories of state that he labels empirical Marxism, socialist democracy, postcolonial Marxist political theory, and critical theory of the capitalist state. This section is based predominantly on this summary (Lo 2002).

EMPIRICAL MARXISM   Scholars working in this area have transcended the famous Miliband–Poulantzas debate by incorporating both perspectives. Lo argues that Domhoff's research on the American power structure fits under this rubric because class domination and class conflict are the foci of Domhoff's analysis of power. Work that "analyzes class power in its situational, institutional, and systemic forms" is also classified under this label (2002: 198), including examinations that theorize the role of class power both on the formation of the welfare state and its impact on social classes. Lo believes that empirical Marxism has made several contributions to Marxist thought by demonstrating why state policies benefit capitalism and by the precise measurement of concepts and causal models developed by the analytical Marxist, Erik Olin Wright.

SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY   Lo describes this current as that which criticizes the structural approach of Poulantzas and others. This Marxist model theorizes a socialist democracy where political practice and protest are motivated toward creating a society characterized by democratic practices, egalitarianism, meeting of basic needs, and a production cycle free from the need for profit maximization. Those working within this tradition reject the notion of a working class organized around only economic issues and see individuals with multiple identities such as gender, race, and ethnicity. Because the classic Marxian idea about the inevitability of class struggle is rejected, Lo contends that a major problem for both theorists and practitioners is specifying under what conditions individuals could be unified and organized, given their shifting conflicts and multiple identities.

POSTCOLONIAL MARXIST POLITICAL THEORY   This strand is the heir of the early Hegelian–Marxist model as it relies on some of the earlier writings of Karl Marx and also sees the state as a false universal. Marx's earlier writings are combined with postcolonial theories of literature that critically examine the colonizer's view and interpretation of third-world culture and the construction of race and ethnic identities. One of the more influential works to come out of this theoretical thread is Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *Empire.*

Specifically, *empire* is a political organization of global flow and exchanges that has no geographical boundaries (Hardt and Negri 2001). Sovereignty is exercised through transnational institutions (e.g., NATO, the World Trade Organization [WTO], and the G8[7]), the dominant military power of the United States and its allies, and international control of monetary funds by elites through other transnational organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Although Hardt and Negri rely on a variety of theoretical traditions, Lo argues that *empire* is framed within a Marxist tradition for several reasons, including the belief that "the sovereignty of Empire is interrelated with the processes of capital accumulation . . . that global sovereignty is a false universal, . . . that the cultural prerequisites for labor activate the facilitative power of persons that will undermine empire" (Lo 2002: 313).

CRITICAL THEORY OF THE CAPITALIST STATE   While drawing on the writings of those associated with the Frankfurt School of critical theory, Lo associates this strand with Claus Offe (1996), whose work demonstrates that pressure outside of the capitalistic system intensifies internal conflict, which poses three challenges to the state: political sovereignty, popular legitimacy, and economic effectiveness. Offe argues that the economic inefficiency of the state is

due to weakening state sovereignty and political legitimacy. Lessening state sovereignty is evidenced by the inability of the state to intervene in either the economy or other aspects of social life. The state capacity for regulation has been weakened by globalization as well as lack of legitimacy. As Lo explains, "people simply do not trust the state to act to reflect the general will; rather they see the state as pursuing particularistic aims of interest groups, experts, bureaucrats, or clients" (2002: 219). Like many questions posed by political sociologists, this view of the state is hotly contested. One of the alternatives to a class-based approach is a state-centric view that became popular because of inadequacies with all three basic perspectives (Amenta 2005).

State-Centric

Theda Skocpol's influential introduction to the edited volume *Bringing the State Back In* summarizes this approach (Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol 1985) in which the state and other large political institutions are situated at the center of political sociology (Amenta 2005). Her work is influenced by Max Weber and conceptualizes the state as a "set of organizations with unique functions and mission" with "state structures and actors having central influence over politics and states" (Amenta 2005: 96–97). In the words of Skocpol, this "organizational" or "realist" view of the state "refuses to treat states as if they were mere analytic aspects of abstractly conceived modes of production, or even political aspects of concrete class relations and struggles. Rather it insists that states are actual organizations controlling (or attempting to control) people and territories" (1993: 311–312).

This is a departure from Marxist, elite, and pluralist views of state that respectively give primacy to class domination, ruling elite, and interest groups. Quite simply, this more Weberian approach advocates that the state is an independent actor not beholden to class interests or merely an arena for political mediation (Skocpol 1985). This does not mean that class or dominant groups are unimportant. To the contrary, "linkages to class forces" and "politically mobilized groups" along with the structure of state organizations and their location within the state apparatus are deemed important especially for those attempting to explain state stability as well as revolution or change (Skocpol 1993).

While Skocpol acknowledges the diversity of neo-Marxian views on the "role of the capitalist state," she argues that this perspective also suffers from a society-centered view that cannot account for the role of a state as an independent actor. She writes:

> virtually all neo-Marxist writers on the state have retained deeply embedded society-centered assumptions, not allowing themselves to doubt that, at base, states are inherently shaped by classes or class struggles and function to preserve and expand modes of production. Many possible forms of autonomous state action are thus ruled out by definitional fiat. (1985: 5)

According to Skocpol, even the neo-Marxist structuralist perspective that considers the "relative autonomy of the state" falls short of considering true autonomy necessitated by a need to maintain order, the international orientation of states, and an organization that creates a capacity for state officials to develop and implement their own policies. She further criticizes neo-Marxists for ignoring variations in state structures that lessens the utility of these approaches in comparative research (Skocpol 1985, 1993). For example, Skocpol asserts that neo-Marxist models are better at comparing states "*across* [emphasis Skocpol's] modes of production, rather than across nations within capitalism" (1985: 33). In other

words, neo-Marxist models have less utility for understanding contrasts between advanced capitalistic states with concentrated technologies (e.g., Japan, United States, and Germany) and other capitalistic states whose economies may be more based on agriculture and resources extraction (e.g. mining and logging).

Skocpol (1985) contends that even the United States can be shown to have state autonomy despite its fragmented system of dispersing authority throughout the federal system, division of sovereignty among the various branches, and lack of a centralized bureaucratic structure. Most important, the degree of state autonomy is not a fixed feature but varies as a result of structural transformations due to both internal and external factors including crises necessitating a response from elites and administrators. Autonomous state action is most likely when career bureaucrats occupying positions within the state bureaucracy are insulated from external pressure.

A state-centric approach considers both state autonomy and state capacity, which are not synonymous. As Orloff explains "state capacities are based on financial and administrative resources; stable access to plentiful finances and a loyal and skilled body of officials facilitates state initiatives" (1993: 9–10). Pedriana and Stryker (1997) suggest that state capacity is also linked to statute interpretation with a more liberal interpretation linked to a greater capacity for state action.

While *capacity* refers to resources available to state managers, *state autonomy* refers to independence or the ability of state actors to act freely from interference from outside forces. In writing about state autonomy, Skocpol contends that "states conceived as organizations claiming control over territories and people may formulate and pursue goals that are not simply reflective of the demands or interests of social groups, classes, or society" (1985: 9). The implication of this view is to see the state as a "structure with a logic and interests of its own not necessarily equivalent to, or fused with, the interests of the dominant class of society or the full set of member groups in the polity" (Skocpol 1993: 308).

While Skocpol and associates brought "the state back in" to deal with an overly Marxist view that equated state control with class domination, this has not gone unchallenged. In theorizing about the rise of a global capitalist class brought about as a result of globalization, Robinson argues that "the case for 'bringing the state back in' has been overemphasized, tending to equate states with the institutional form they have taken in the nation-state. In contrast, a new transnational studies requires that analysts 'take out' the crippling nation-state framework into which states, social classes, political systems and so have been pigeonholed" (1998: 565).

Political Institutional or Institutionalist

State-centered scholars created the way for a political institutional theory. This perspective emphasizes both the state as well as other political institutions, including the social, economic, and ideological factors precipitating policy formation (Orloff 1993). While *state-centric* was the initial phrase, *institutionalist* is the preferred terminology (Amenta 2005) as it is less likely to convey the idea that factors external to the state are unimportant (Orloff 1993). In his review of the institutional approach, Amenta describes several varieties of political institutional theory. We limit our discussion here to whom he terms the *new institutionalists* (2005: 103) or those who view states as organizations and thus apply organizational theory.

The scope is not limited to the state as other major political organizations are also considered, including electoral systems and political parties. A political institutional approach places more emphasis than the state-centric approach on "the impact of political contexts on politics more so than the role of bureaucratic state actors" (Amenta 2005: 104). For example, in the United States, issues that appeal to a wide variety of constituents from all over the country are more likely to be dealt with in a system that elects congressional representatives based

on geographical distribution. A related political context, fragmentation, includes the lack of integrated vertical or horizontal political authority. As explained by Amenta:

> The United States has a presidential and non-parliamentary system that allows intramural conflict. Members of Congress from the same party can defect from the President's legislative program without risking loss of office and can initiate competing programs . . . Any laws that make it through this [legislative] maze can be declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court. (2005: 108)

Fragmentation, then, is an example of a political contextual factor that affects the formation of state policy, including what sociologists call "the welfare state." The political institutional approach considers this as well as other contextual factors. See Figure 2.1 for a comparison of the four main theories of the state (pluralist, elite, Marxist, and state-centric/institutional).

	Pluralist	Elite	Class	State-Centric/ Institutionalist
Whose interests does the state serve?	The state is an impartial arbitrator. The interests of state and society are the same	Those holding elite positions	The ruling class	The state bureaucracy
What is the source of power?	Voluntary organizations autonomous from the state	Occupying an elite position in an organization that controls resources	Owning capital	Occupying a position in the state bureaucracy associated with power
What comprises the state?	A multiplicity of overlapping jurisdictions	Cluster of large organizations based on separate institutional sectors	Capitalist state is not specified by its structure and function. It is influenced by capitalism	Organizations claiming control over territories
What are core state functions?	A neutral arbitrator that mediates between competing social actors	Maintaining dominance of elites	Maintaining the capitalist state	Maintaining the state bureaucracy
Who are the major political players?	Voluntary associations or interest groups and voters	Elites	The ruling class	State officials

FIGURE 2.1 Differences between Major Models of the State

OTHER EMERGING VIEWS OF THE STATE

Rational Choice

Rational Choice Theory (RCT) views all political entities as rational actors. Lobbying, foreign policy, or the relations between other nation-states, as well as domestic policy, are seen in terms of a game where various players vie for scarce resources, including power. Kiser and Bauldry (2005) argue that RCT has only recently become influential in political sociology and that this is due to the development of a *sociological* version that bypasses earlier criticisms by incorporating the influence of history, culture, and institutions. Because RCT has only recently emerged as a viable perspective for political sociologists, there is not a fully developed theory of the state. Yet, researchers have applied this theory to actions of political actors, including the state. Examples of substantive areas of research guided by RCT include nationalism, congressional policy making, and the existence of red tape in bureaucracies (Kiser and Bauldry 2005). RCT has also been applied to social movement participation (Chapter 8) and the state response to terrorism (Chapter 9). Despite the promise of RCT, it still needs to synthesize several different approaches to develop a more general theory and is not useful in situations where there is a high degree of uncertainty about the benefits and costs of actions or when both costs and benefits are low (Kiser and Bauldry 2005).

Postmodern

Some postmodernists may claim that politics is dead, or rather "politics is secret, veiled, or now even subpolitical" (Agger and Luke 2002: 162), with the study of politics moving from traditional power centers such as parliament or congress to the capitalist economy and culture. Agger and Luke embrace the postmodern turn in political sociology, believing that it challenges all political theorists to "rethink politics" (2002: 160), which will result in a broadening research agenda.

Postmodernism is heavily influenced not only by Marx and critical theory thinkers but also by philosophers and other humanities scholars. This broad perspective is not bound to a single discipline or to a narrowly focused question such as, "what is the state?" Postmodernists seem more interested in describing the consequences of the state or declaring the state obsolete, rather than defining the state itself. While Lo (2002) characterizes Hardt and Negri's work as an example of what he terms a *postcolonial* Marxist perspective, their work shares with a postmodern view a look at the political beyond the state to *empire* as well as power in a global context.

Many of the themes examined in subsequent chapters are influenced by a postmodern perspective. Chapter 9 reviews some of the implications of the "surveillance state" related to the implementation of the PATRIOT Act and the creation of what Giorgio Agamben (2005) calls the "state of exception." Chapter 10 considers the causes and consequences of globalization, including predictions for the future of the nation-state. Although there may not be a postmodern theory of the state per se, the ideas of many key philosophers connected to this perspective, such as Foucault's, are currently being used to address key concerns of both political sociology and political science (Torfing 2005). Both rational choice and postmodern theories will continue to influence political sociology but will most likely be combined with "rather than [used] as a replacement for, the neopluralist, conflict, and state-centric" approaches (Hicks, Janoski, and Schwartz 2005: 17).

We began with a closer look at what the state is and various sociological theories of the state. The rest of this discussion is more concerned with the question "what does the state do?"

Part of this answer involves examining the "welfare state." Many different theoretical perspectives have been used to explain the welfare state (Hicks and Esping-Andersen 2005), but this has been an especially important topic for those using a state-centric or institutional approach. Future chapters will also examine what the state does by reviewing issues such as immigration, education, business, and the "politics of everyday life."

THE WELFARE STATE

The *welfare state* refers to the social and economic managerial role of a nation-state (Melling 1991). In "state corporatism," social and economic organizations are controlled by the state. This dictatorial rule is a feature of state–society relations under totalitarianism. In contrast, "liberal corporatism" involves the state sharing space with other groups that are organized voluntarily and are recognized as representing various sectors of society such as gun owners, business, labor, or specific occupational groups that are recognized as a channel of political representation. These groups work with the state to negotiate competing interests. Not all democracies are corporatist states, but in states that are both corporatist and democratic, corporatist groups are recognized in exchange for submitting to the primacy of the state (Streeck and Kenworthy 2005).

In their review of public policy and the welfare state, Hicks and Esping-Andersen (2005) describe three types of welfare states—liberal, social democratic, and conservative—differentiated by population coverage, role of the private market, target population, decommodification, defamilialization, recommodification, and poverty reduction through redistribution of income. It is important to note that these concepts are ideal types with specific nations perhaps illustrating hybrids of two or more types.

Types of Welfare States

All welfare states vary in terms of the types of social programs that are enacted as a function of state capacity. States with a higher degree of capacity will initiate social welfare programs earlier than those with a more limited capacity (Orloff 1993). The types of welfare states or "welfare regimes" differ by the degree of state capacity as well as cultural values that define who is considered worthy of receiving state support and the role that family is supposed to play in supporting its members.

LIBERAL   The United States has avoided corporatism and has opted for a liberal-market state where there is little state control over the economy and where there are many competing interest groups. Liberal states initiate programs in reaction to market and family failures and also initiate their programs later than social democratic or conservative welfare states (Orloff 1993). The welfare state is much more restricted and conceived more as a safety net targeted toward the needy through the use of means tests. Private market solutions are preferred over broad policies that might extend universal health care coverage or family benefits such as paid maternity or paternity leave. Calls to privatize social security are an example of a proposed private market solution.

Liberal welfare states tend not to "defamilialize" or to encourage the shift from the family to paid providers of responsibilities such as child care or elder care. This means that the

state does not subsidize the cost of day care for young children or the elderly, with the exception of welfare mothers participating in job training or other required employment programs as a condition of receiving benefits. Liberal welfare states also do not support women-friendly employment policies such as paid maternity leave or efforts to recommodify individuals with job training or other programs designed to ensure full employment for adults. Compared to the other two types of welfare regimes, liberal market states have a lower capacity for proactive public policy as these states initiate their welfare policies much later than other welfare states (Orloff 1993).

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC   The social democratic welfare state as illustrated by some Scandinavian countries is an example of a democratic corporatist state. These nations have a more extensive welfare state that is more inclusive and not only includes the poor or some other narrowly defined groups but also universal programs that attempt to provide "cradle-to-grave" security such as health care, subsidized day care for children and elders, as well as minimum-income guarantees. Private market solutions are rejected in favor of government-run programs covering all citizens. There is a strong commitment to gender equality through defamilialization or providing external resources for traditional family obligations such as day care. High tax rates mean that income is redistributed to fund social welfare programs with a high commitment to poverty reduction including recommodification, which maximizes the market power of the individual in the labor market through income guarantees and opportunities for job training and retraining. These states have also tried to buffer workers from volatile markets through decommodification. All of the benefits provided by this type of welfare state means that a worker need not accept just any job.

Korpi (2003) notes that structural changes in the economy such as postindustrialization or the shift to a more service sector base have led to a retrenchment or scaling back of the welfare state in western Europe. In addition to economic factors, Orloff (1993) adds demographic changes and international economic competition as other reasons for cutting back on services and eligibility. Whether globalization causes welfare state retrenchment is hotly contested and will be examined more fully in Chapter 10.

CONSERVATIVE   This type of welfare state practices corporatism based on occupational groups, such as unionized coal miners or dock workers, which target male breadwinners for social welfare programs. These programs are based on the primacy of the male breadwinners and the need for families to look after their members, both young and old. Like social democratic welfare states, the private market is not embraced as a solution for meeting typical welfare needs such as pensions or health care. Similar to liberal states, there is low commitment to poverty reduction, income redistribution, and defamilialization. Examples of nations classified as having this type of state include Germany, France, Italy, and Spain (Hicks and Esping-Andersen 2005).

Role of Race and Gender

The U.S. welfare state provides some respite from poverty by redistributing income, but at the same time, it also acts to reinforce a stratification system (Esping-Andersen 1990) that reflects class, race, and gender bias as minorities and poor women are overrepresented in the public assistance sphere (e.g., foods stamps and public housing) while white men are more often found

in the more generous social insurance sphere with private pension and health insurance (Misra 2002). Misra calls on sociologists to explore how welfare policy has been shaped by bias. For example, in the United States, some programs using a means test such as income eligibility have often excluded African-Americans entirely or paid out smaller benefits in order to ensure an adequate supply of low-paid agricultural workers (Quadagno 1988). Gender stereotypes are also reinforced through welfare policy as a conservative welfare state targets only male bread-winners and defamilialization is rejected as families should take care of their own. This reinforces more traditional gender roles of the female homemaker and male breadwinner.

FUTURE OF THE STATE

In recognizing the era of government deregulation and the increasing privatization of traditional state functions, Oszlak (2005) asks, "Does this mean that the state is no longer necessary?" Oszlak cites Ohmae (1995) who argues that the nation-state will be replaced by a supranational state because it has lost its capacity to generate real economic activity in an era of increasing globalization. The rise of transnational corporations and international nongovernmental organizations is a globalization outcome, which may further weaken the nation-state (Haque 2003; Lauderdale and Oliverio 2005). Robinson (1998, 2001) argues that nation-states are being replaced by national states that are part of a transnational state apparatus. The authors of *Empire,* Hardt and Negri (2001), also contend that a supranational entity will succeed the state, with the process well under way.

There have been several criticisms of the *Empire* thesis, including the failure to provide empirical data (Arrighi 2003; Tilly 2003), not distinguishing politics and the state from the economy (Steinmetz 2002), and not being historically grounded. Despite Oszlak's empathy for the weak-state thesis, he himself argues that the state plays a role that cannot be delegated and that the size of the state, as measured by the number of agencies, its budget, and the percentage of the labor force employed by the state, means that the state will not be disappearing anytime soon.

Yet many scholars debate the impact of globalization on the state. Important state functions such as waging war are believed to be shifting from nation-states to larger sociocultural entities (Huntington 1996) such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union. The state's role in formulating social policy is largely influenced by economic forces that are less and less under the control of a nation-state (Falkner and Talos 1994).

As discussed earlier, Tilly (1985) views security as one of the main functions of the state. Globalization is linked to declining state legitimacy, which impacts security by delegitimizing the state further. Wallerstein (2003: 65) explains, "The more they do so the more there is chaotic violence, and the more there is chaotic violence, the more the states find themselves unable to handle the situation, and therefore the more people disinvest the state, which further weakens the ability of states to limit the spiral." In areas where the state is already weak, the elite may hire and pay their own security forces, threatening the state's monopoly on the legitimate use of force.

For Wallerstein, the loss of state legitimacy is caused by changes in the world capitalist system (1998, 2003). He challenges the view that states are autonomous entities with unlimited power but rather are institutions of a larger world system. While Wallerstein is adamant that the world is transitioning from the current capitalist order to something else, and that this period of transition will be difficult, he does not argue that the state will necessarily disappear. What he does argue is, (1) it is impossible to know definitively what the future will look like; and (2) those with privilege will do what they can to ensure that the new world order will perpetuate their advantage by "replicate[ing] the worst features of the existing one—its hierarchy, privilege, and inequalities" (Wallerstein 2003: 270).

CONCLUSION

It is clear that political sociologists have a long list of potential hypotheses that need empirical testing before deciding whether the state survives or is on the decline. Just as Tilly (1985) and Bottomore (1979) contend that the state has not always been the main regulator of power with a monopoly on the legitimate use of force, we see no reason to assume it will always be.

While many of the ideas on the future of the state are theoretical and need empirical verification, what cannot be denied is the importance of political institutions and the ways in which these entities impact every facet of social life. Whether future political sociologists will study the effects and interactions of the nation-state, the transitional state apparatus, or *Empire*, we expect that there will continue to be rich diversity in both theoretical perspectives and empirical approaches. That diversity will be a direct result of the past and current debates taking place among pluralist, elite, Marxist, and political institutionalists who continue to refine their arguments to overcome weaknesses identified by competing perspectives. Rational choice and postmodern views will also continue to be influential. Future chapters will take a closer look at the impact of the state on our everyday lives, theoretical contributions for understanding other political processes such as voting and other forms of political participation, and the many globalization debates.

Endnotes

1. The federal government and most of the fifty states do not currently recognize gay marriage. Historically, there have been statutes that prohibit sex acts between consenting adults such as premarital sex, extramarital sex, same-sex sexual behavior, and even certain sex acts between spouses such as oral sex. While many of these statutes are not currently enforced, the exception has been gay sex acts. Both U.S. Supreme Court cases *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003) and *Bowers v. Hardwick* (1986) began when law enforcement arrested persons engaging in consensual same-sex sexual acts in the privacy of their homes. Until *Lawrence,* which overturned *Bowers v. Hardwick*, states could prohibit same-sex sexual behavior while considering similar behavior in heterosexual couples as legal (e.g., oral sex). *Lawrence* is based on the right of sexual privacy or that sex acts between consenting adults are off limits to state regulation. Note though that the state, through the judiciary, is in the position of deciding what does and does not come under state regulation.

2. On November 14, 2007, after calling 911, sixty-two-year-old John Horn, a resident of Pasadena, Texas (a Houston suburb), killed two men he suspected were burglarizing a next-door neighbor. While the 911 operator pleaded with Horn to stay inside and wait for the police, he replied "I am going to kill them." He redialed 911 and said "They came in the front yard with me, man. I had no choice. Get somebody over here quick." A Texas grand jury refused to indict Horn (Lozano 2008). In

contrast, Kyle Huggett, a 32-year-old Danbury, Wisconsin, resident was initially bound over for trial for the January 2009 killing of John Peach, who broke through the front door of Huggett's residence to confront him. The two had been exchanging harassing text messages. Peach was the ex-boyfriend of Huggett's girlfriend who was pregnant with Huggett's child. Huggett testified that he was afraid of Peach and what he might do to his girlfriend and their unborn child. Burnett County District Attorney, Kenneth Kutz, denied that the accused was facing imminent danger arguing "I think Mr. Huggett panicked and shot John Peach when he came into the house—a reasonable person wouldn't have reacted that way" (Beckmann 2008: 6A). Homicide charges were eventually dismissed by a Wisconsin judge who ruled that Burnett County officials denied the defendant due process by failing to listen to or transcribe voice mail messages left by John Peach (Xiong 2009). The Burnett County district attorney appealed the ruling (Rathbun 2009). The Wisconsin Supreme Court refused to hear the appeal, meaning that Huggett will not have to stand trial (Beckmann 2010).

3. The Iran–Contra affair was a political scandal during the Reagan administration in which weapons were sold illegally to Iran and were used in Iran's war with Iraq while the latter was a U.S. ally. Weapon sale proceeds were used to fund the Contras' (anti-communist) fight against the Nicaraguan Sandinista government. The Sandinistas or the Sandinista National

Liberation Front is a Nicaraguan political party based on Marxist ideology.

4. The national government of India controls the harvest of *tendu* leaves that are used to make Indian cigarettes. The tendu committee is a local group that oversees the harvest on behalf of the forest department. The harvest is a major source of cash income for locals with an opportunity to earn five to ten times the average daily wage. The committee appoints a *munshi* who is responsible for organizing the leaf collection, keeping harvest and payment records, and distributing cash payments to the villagers. In the situation described by anthropologist Peggy Froerer (2005), the munshi for a specific village was also the *Patel* or traditional leader who had been cheating the villagers out of their entitled share of the proceeds for several years. The villagers were hesitant to approach the tendu committee and request a new munshi. Her description of how the villagers were eventually able to override the Patel and have a new munshi appointed illustrates how those holding traditional authority in order to maintain their power use the state and also how those villagers were able to use that external state power to remove someone who abused his authority.

5. In his classic work, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, Durkheim notes that no object is inherently incapable of being transformed and in a footnote he refers to scholarship on the religious quality of excrement.

6. The *Economist*'s index of democracy uses five criteria including electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, the functioning of government, political participation, and political culture. Nations are divided into four categories including full democracies, flawed democracies, hybrids, and authoritarian. The index ranges from 10 to 1 with Sweden the top-rated democracy with a score of 9.88 and North Korea the least democratic nation with a score of 1.03. Out of twenty-seven nations categorized as full democracies, the United States ranks 17 with a score of 8.22. For more information on methodology, see http://www.economist.com/media/pdf/DEMOCRACY_INDEX_2007_v3.pdf (Kekic 2007).

7. The G8 is an international forum represented by the governments of Canada, France, Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the United States.

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