

Editorial Foreword

State Making. Few topics have been more studied than the state, no states more deeply pondered than those of Greece. W. G. Runciman's achievement in suggesting a fresh, more useful understanding while posing old questions of well-known examples is therefore all the more notable. To be sure we know more about archaic Greece nowadays, and that greater erudition is central to this essay. Contemporary experience and the current revival of interest in state making provide an altered set of questions to be asked and of categories to be used (quite another but related set were used by Deutsch and Weilenmann in *CSSH*, 7:4), and such interests are reflected in this essay. Anthropological theories, except in the broadest philosophic sense, have not been so systematically applied to ancient materials as one might expect, given the Western tradition of asking our profoundest questions of the ancient Greeks. New evidence, questions, and theories do not, however, guarantee success; and neither does comparison. But Runciman provides a valuable example of how to think in comparative terms, as he builds his distinction between semistates and protostates, taking evidence from as early as Homer and Hesiod and as late as Tacitus, and examples from the middle ages and modern Africa. The comparisons are cumulative because each is taken in context and used to refine an argument, to build toward general statements rather than to superimpose a prefabricated matrix that truncates the evidence in order to see if it fits. Although we lack a clear vocabulary for describing the different bases of comparison—for distinguishing mechanical, extrinsic comparison from that which evolves internally and intrinsically no matter how wide the range of comparisons employed—we can learn from examples well conducted and from the special skills and standards of classical scholarship (whether applied to the origin of the state as in this issue, or to the relationship of city and countryside, as by Finley in 19:3, or to incest and marriage, as by Hopkins in 22:3).

The making of a Brazilian state, a case of secondary state making in contrast to Runciman's concern, has become a classic question in its own right. Here the comparison with Spanish America starkly poses the problem, and the work of many scholars (including Eul-Soo Pang and Seckinger, 14:2; Russell-Wood, 16:2; and Lewin, 21:2) has pointed to the importance of administrative elites in the history of Brazil. José Murilo de Carvalho thus uses comparison in another way, not so much to explore a descriptive theory as to test and sharpen answers. His lucid, carefully argued essay becomes a model of this different function of comparison; and his argument for the importance of a cohesive Brazilian elite and his explanation of how it was formed becomes a contribution to Latin American history valuable in turn for anyone who needs to consider the interdependence of states,

elites, and education. Even established states are constantly in the making; and for Richard Tardanico, revolutionary Mexico is best understood in terms of the constraints imposed from the outside by world markets and American capitalism and from the inside by the populist mobilization central to the revolution itself. This is comparison of a third kind, the use of a theoretical framework (close to that of Wallerstein, 16:4; and Skocpol, 18:2) that invites comparison to other political systems (see Gourevitch on peripheral nationalism, 21:3; Wolf and Hansen on caudillo politics, 9:2) and to other studies of agrarian politics in Latin America (especially Baretta and Markoff, 20:4; and Waterbury, 17:4). But as such comparison should, it leads back to the original subject and to a revised and more understanding view of the limits of revolution in Mexico, 1924–28.

The Historical Mind. Admiration for the *Annales* school is so high, especially among those committed to historical comparison, that there is a special value in having André Burguière, as an active member of that school and student of it (in a double sense), dissect the hesitance and division between its founders over the meaning of *mentalités* as a subject of (comparative) study. Those issues, which were so much a part of the 'twenties (similar concerns led Mannheim to quite different answers, see Ashcraft, 23:1), in fact remain unresolved (witness the essays on comparison by Hammel, Bonnell, Skocpol and Somers, and Cohn, 22:2). But the way other people view their own history is a central measure of *mentalité*. And Jonathan Wylie's sensitive reconstruction of two very different ways of employing the past stands in the great tradition of Western interest in the strangeness of other cultures (see Ryan, Clifford, and Pletsch, 23:4). Wylie's sympathy, however, lies with the creative response of the isolated people of Dominica and the Faroes, who use a history they can control to maintain some autonomy in the face of intrusion (compare Clendinnen, 22:3; and Taussig, 19:2; and the essays on missionaries by Beidelman, Rigby, Shapiro, and Schieffelin, 23:1). *Mentalités*, culture, and history—as modes of thought and objects of study—remain mirrors reflecting each other.

Genocide. There is a bitter link between the state and violence; and, as citizens know, the state can be the agent for violence as well as the means of controlling it or its primary target (see Price on terrorism, 19:1). Frequently, the state's troubled encounters with minorities are the locus of violence (note Arnold, Smooha, and Klieman, 22:2), but Robert Melson turns to the more frightening question of what permits violence against a minority to become a policy, and Fred Katz explores what it is about the psychology of bureaucracy that makes such a policy feasible. When thinking about the origin of the state, we naturally turn to ancient history; concerned with its bureaucratization (Markoff, 17:4), we turn to early modern Europe and the state in the nineteenth century. But genocide, even when the example studied is from the Ottoman Empire nearly a century ago, is a topic for our times.