

“STATE MAKES WAR AND WAR MAKES STATE”-

EFFECT OF WAR ON STATE FORMATION

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Introduction- What is State

“World Community” is something of a poet’s term. It raises visions of a neighborhood that reaches to the ends of the earth, of all people united in peace and goodwill, of a brotherhood of man. However, in the historic reality, the world community is made of all people everywhere-most of who live in ‘sovereign states’ that must co-exist on the same planet. Throughout most of ‘modern’ history, the nation-states have been and still are the major actors on the international scene. The state system, simply defined is the pattern of political life in which people are separately organized into sovereign states that interact with one another in varying degrees and in varying ways.¹

For an entity to be considered a state, four fundamental conditions must be met. First, a state must have a territorial base, geographically defined boundaries. Second, within its borders, a stable population must reside. Third, there should be a government to which this population owes allegiance. Finally, a state has to be recognized diplomatically by other states. However, these legal criteria are not absolute. The legal condition for statehood provides a yardstick, but that measuring stick is not absolute.²

The modern state is more than a legal entity. There are numerous competing conceptualizations of the state, many of which emphasize ideas absent from the legalistic approach. Other concepts of the state include: the state is a normative order, a symbol for a particular society and the beliefs that bind the people living within its borders. It is also the entity that has a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence within a society. Thus, the state is a functional unit that takes on a number of important responsibilities, centralizing and unifying them.³

¹ Palmer & Perkins., International Relations 3rd Ed

² Karen A. Mingst et al., Essential Of International Relations 5th Ed

³ Supra Note 3

The Concept of War

Merriam-Webster Dictionary describes war as “a state of usually open and declared armed hostile conflict between states or nations.” Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy states, “War should be understood as an *actual, intentional* and *widespread* armed conflict between political communities.” On the first page of *On War*, Carl von Clausewitz defines war as “an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will.” Most would agree that these are understandable and accurate definitions in the general context of what the average person thinks when they hear the word war. However, from the strategic perspective, these definitions are arguably too simplistic to convey the complexity of war and the many facets which contribute to national success in the international arena. War is no longer limited to “conflict between states or nations,” nor is it fought solely between political communities as the Global War on Terrorism has proven. As Joseph Nye illustrated, “in today’s global information age...more things are happening outside the control of even the most powerful states.”⁴ There are various causes of war. To an ordinary person, these reasons may seem irrational; however through a broad definition of rationality, even these may be interpreted to be rational causes of war.

a) Religion

One of the first reasons for waging war is religion. A war between two theocracies, or two states led by people of different religion has been seen as a rational reason to wage war. Wars of religion are never absolved through a rational discussion or by using the argument of common sense or presence of mind. One of the reasons for this is that motivations to war of religion are not a choice of the individual or the leader, but instead are claimed to be the directions of a higher power or being. Thus, the leaders in such settings do not necessarily view themselves as "optimizing" or "choosing" between paths but instead as following ordained directions. One such example is the 30 year war, where religious motivation was used by some of the leaders to justify actions and to mobilize people. This was possible only because there was an eruption of religious divisions within Europe emanating from multiple protestant reforms and movements.⁵

The long standing conflict between Israel and Palestine could be viewed as another instance of a religious conflict.

⁴ <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jml/art/what-is-war-a-new-point-of-view>

⁵ Matthew O. Jackson and Massimo Morelli- *The Reasons for War- An Updated Survey*

b) Revenge

Another reason for war is revenge; which though uncommon includes the famous examples like motivation of the Achaeans' in the Trojan War, at least according to the description in the Iliad. Repeated references are made to revenge for the stealing of Helen as well as the defense of honor and anger as the primary impetus for various actions of Agamemnon, Menelaus, and Achilles at different points in the war.⁶

Another large showing of revenge was after the attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. This led to a common practice of killing Japanese soldiers as they tried to surrender. Also mutilating the dead, happened often in response to the Japanese horrible treat of POW's they had captured. On September 11, 2001, the United States of America was attacked by a terrorist organization known as al-Qaeda, an organization being sheltered by the Taliban. In response, the United States launched the War on Terrorism, invaded Afghanistan, invaded Iraq, and enacted the USA PATRIOT ACT, causing the death of tens of thousands more civilian and military deaths in the ensuing wars, which have now gone on for over eight years and been the heart of American foreign policy for the better part of the last decade

The idea of revenge has caused many, many deaths both contemporary and in the past. Many atrocities have been committed by those seeking revenge, as shown earlier by the Soviet war crimes committed during and after the Second World War. Revenge has killed millions of people. The Second World War and the holocaust were revenge, which accounts for the deaths of over 70 million people.⁷

c) Ethnic Cleansing and other ideological mass killings

One could in principle rationalize the incentives to eliminate another ethnic group or minority ideological group by a desire to obtain a larger share of the social cake, in the present and/or in the future. Such ideologies are generally uncompromising and not justified by reasoned choice but by appealing to other principles.⁸The Serbs in Kosovo were probably the first to use the term "ethnic cleansing" in its contemporary meaning during the 1980s. They alleged that the Kosovar Albanians sought to drive them from

⁶ Supra 5

⁷ <https://sites.google.com/site/globalsim08/costs-of-war/war-and-revenge>

⁸ Supra 5

their ancient homeland in a campaign of violence and terror. As an internationally accepted concept, “ethnic cleansing” came into the common lexicon of terms for social violence during the war in Bosnia in the spring and summer of 1992. The idea of ethnic cleansing was to drive the Muslims out of targeted Bosnian territory claimed by the Serbs. Eventually, the term was also applied to similar attacks by Croats against Bosnian Muslims. Retroactively, it was used to describe the attacks of Serbs and Croats against each other during the war of the summer and fall of 1991.⁹

War as the Instrument in State Formation: Link between Warfare and Statehood

History suggests that the experience of warfare has played an intrinsic role in the formation of states and nations around the world.

A series of wars were fought about religion, and someone invented science, an Italian in the employ of Spain found the New World, and before long the modern world was born with the industrial revolution. At this point most people can add more detail; two world wars were fought, one was caused by the folly of generals and empires, the other was a ‘good’ war to end tyranny. Then there was a Cold War, Vietnam, and now, the War on Terror. Wars are an interesting example of this trend. The Hundred Years War was a series of three separate wars between France and England between 1337 and 1453. In the late 16th- and early 17th-centuries the Dutch and the Portuguese went to war all over the world, fighting for the colonies they had been busy building in the Americas, Africa, and Asia. This was also part of a larger war between the Spanish Empire and the Dutch Republic, known as the 80 Years War.

The modern European state was born in war. As Geoffrey Parker notes “hardly a decade can be found before 1815 in which at least one battle did not take place” (Parker, 1999: 1). The early modern period was particularly violent. In the sixteenth century there were only six years of peace; in the seventeenth, only four. In the wake of the Thirty Years War, the social and political foundations of the dynastic empires collapsed. By the end of the seventeenth century, dynastic empires had given way to sovereign territorial states. It is not surprising then that war occupies a central place in theories of state formation. According to these theories conflict forced sovereigns to exert control across defined territorial boundaries: in the face of continuous

⁹ Norman Naimark, Ethnic Cleansing, Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence, [online], published on 4 November 2007, accessed 31 January 2013, URL : <http://www.massviolence.org/Ethnic-Cleansing>, ISSN 1961-9898

warfare, sovereigns coerced and cajoled resources from their subjects and in the process constructed strong, centralized states. At the same time, war provided sovereigns with increased capacity to define and defend their boundaries. In particular, from 1400 to 1700 a military technical revolution gave sovereigns new technologies—artillery and fortifications foremost among them that they would use to build the modern state.¹⁰

It is the states, by and large, that make war, and in the six decades since the founding of the United Nations, states have been responsible for more violent deaths than insurgents, separatists and terrorists combined. For many communities, the history of state formation and the process of state building are marked by violent suppression of ethnic or religious identity, forced compliance with national laws and norms set by distant and unrepresentative élites, and enforced taxation with a minimum of services delivered in return. Although states have often been a source of insecurity, their weakness, collapse or absence can give way to violent disorder and collapse of basic services, causing direct and indirect harm to livelihoods. Unquestionably, warfare is a correlate of state formation, and unquestionably particular reactions and conditions of non-states in such conflicts produce statehood, as compared to other conditions and reactions among non-states that do not produce statehood. Greater the competition for scarce resources, greater the potential for and the probability of disputes; the greater the number of disputes, the higher the likelihood of warfare in any particular region. Most writers concentrate arguments about this generalization on material life-sustaining resources, flora, fauna, land, labor, geographical location, or mineral resources. Pressure on any of these above mentioned reasons lead to disputes. Thus Deborah Mack notes that as late as 1980, the greatest single reason for disputes between Beni Amer groups of the Sudan was the illegitimate use of land, animals, or trees by non owners. Like all other living things, humans expand their numbers as they reproduce themselves, and as my Kanuri informants explained when rationalizing many crimes against property, "hunger pushes them" to take what they need – sometimes by force.¹¹ In order to illustrate the point further that war is an instrument in state formation; the subsequent section recounts the result of war i.e. formation of Bangladesh.

¹⁰ Stacie E. Goddard- *War Reimagines the State*

¹¹ Ronald Cohen ; *Warfare and State Formation: Wars Make States and States Make Wars*; <http://72.52.202.216/~fenderse/war.htm>

Bangladesh: An Outcome of War

West Pakistan and East Pakistan were never meant to be together as one country. They only had one thing in common and that is their religion. First, they were a thousand miles apart with a huge country in between. Next, the people of Pakistan were ethnically different as well. They did not even speak the same language: West Pakistanis spoke Urdu but East Pakistanis spoke Bengali. Nevertheless, they were lumped together as one country after Partition. As Lord Mountbatten prophesized, that within twenty-five years, these two regions would wage war against each other and finally split. All of the central power lay in West Pakistan. As West Pakistan grew richer, East Pakistan grew poorer. All the foreign aid that Pakistan received from the United States after Partition for allying with them went to West Pakistan as did all of the profits that East Pakistan accumulated because of its natural resources. East Pakistan is a delta country which means that rice and jute grows very easily in this area. Yet, the raw resources that East Pakistan provided were usurped by West Pakistan. Clearly, West Pakistan was exploiting East Pakistan and East Pakistanis were treated as second class citizens by the government of West Pakistan.¹²

When East Pakistan seceded from Pakistan in 1971 to become Bangladesh, there were no changes to its territorial shape. In other words, the geographical unit that we now know as Bangladesh was fashioned in 1947, well before anybody could imagine an independent Bangladesh.¹³

The Liberation War of 1971 was the delta's third big shock of the twentieth century. After the devastating famine of 1943/4 and the Partition of 1947, it was now armed conflict that engulfed the delta.

The twenty-fifth of March 1971 was a fateful day for the delta. As Pakistan's dictator furtively took his last place out of Dhaka, he left instructions for a full-blown army attack on East Pakistani citizens. It was a punitive operation to eliminate Bengali nationalism and reassert West Pakistan's dominance over East Pakistan. The armed assault, codenamed Operation

¹² Road to Bangladesh: Analysis of the major event that led up to the formation of Bangladesh. Interpreter of the Maladies by Jhumpa Lahiri.. (2006, February 24). In WriteWork.com. Retrieved 12:32, February 05, 2013, from <http://www.writework.com/essay/road-bangladesh-analysis-major-event-led-up-formation-bang>

¹³ William Van Schendel, *A History of Bangladesh*, Cambridge University Press, 2009((Pg 96)

Searchlight, was led by General Tikka Khan, soon to be known as the Butcher of Bengal. It was a brutal onslaught on what the military rulers thought of as the main centres of Bengali opposition. Tanks, armoured personnel carriers and troops fanned out to crush the two Bengali organisations in Dhaka that could offer serious armed resistance: the police and the paramilitary East Pakistan rifles. These were overwhelmed after fierce fighting. Next, the army homed in on slums; flame throwers set them ablaze and the army gunned down fleeing inhabitants.¹⁴

Despite the suddenness and fierceness of the army attack, there was popular resistance all over the Bengal delta. In some places it was rapidly crushed, but in others- for instance Kushtia, Jessore, Sylhet and the northern districts- it continued for weeks. It was not till the end of May that the Pakistan army felt confident that it controlled most towns.

In the wake of the military action, an exodus of panic-stricken refugees took place. Many thousands fled the cities and towns, where the army was most active, to weather the storm with relatives in villages. But the army attacked villages as well. Others felt so insecure that they crossed the border into India¹⁵

By May, the first phase of the war was over. The army had established a semblance of control over most of the terrified delta, although resistance had not died down. With the support of India, the Awami League leadership formally proclaimed Bangladesh to be an independent state on April 17, 1971. After this declaration, the resistance to the army assault became more organised and coordinated. All over the delta, young men and women were quietly slipping away to join what became known as the Freedom Fighters. This group received immense support from India, right from the beginning and most of their camps were just across the border in India. Groups of freedom fighters operated in eleven geographically defined 'sectors', however it soon became clear that the freedom fighters were unable to defeat the Pakistani military in open confrontation. As they operated all over the delta, however, they 'represented a ubiquitous menace, constantly harassing their opponents with ambushes, raids, sabotage and propaganda. Their activities exhausted the Pakistani troops while creating an enervating sense of constant uncertainty and danger'¹⁶

¹⁴ Supra 12 (pg 162)

¹⁵ William Van Schendel, *A History of Bangladesh*, Cambridge University Press, 2009(Pg 163)

¹⁶ Supra 14 (Pg 167)

Pakistan's rulers had planned a swift crushing of Bengali political ambition in East Pakistan, followed by an equally swift return to normality. Throughout 1971, the muzzled press persisted in this myth of a minor domestic malfunction soon mended. In reality, however, this was not the situation. Pakistan got bogged down in a guerrilla war that drew international attention and were utterly unable to convince the world that this was merely a domestic matter.¹⁷

The Bangladesh war broke out in the middle of the Cold War, and this meant that the world's superpowers became involved. Soviet Union backed India and supported the Bangladesh liberation movement, while the United States and China allied themselves with the Pakistan cause. Pakistan also received support from many Muslim-majority states. This division meant that the conflict could be resolved by diplomatic means- discussions in the United Nations stalled, and bilateral consultations effected no change of position.¹⁸ By October, 1971 it became obvious that the Pakistani army was unable to regain control of the delta, but that the freedom fighters could not win a military victory either. India now began to inch towards full-scale military invasion. In November, India expanded its military operations inside East Pakistan/Bangladesh, but fearful of geopolitical consequence, desisted from declaring war. However, the India-Pakistan war ensued when Pakistan air force carried out raids from West Pakistan, bombing a number of airfields in north-western India.¹⁹ The Indian armed forces along with the freedom fighters, took full advantages of all the resources at hand- control of the air and the sea and the support of the local population. The final days of the war also saw a last assault on leading Bengali intellectuals. A couple of days later, on December 16, the Pakistani administration crumbled, and the army was forced to surrender. The war was over, and an independent state called Bangladesh had come into being.²⁰ This was a moment of supreme emotion. The day of Pakistan's capitulation became Bangladesh's Victory Day. As liberation and independent statehood became realities, a mood of exuberance took hold of the delta. Independence brought cultural autonomy to the delta and a new project of nation-building. Now its inhabitants were invited to imagine themselves as Bangladeshis. The main pillars were language, a regional style and a search for modernity.²¹

¹⁷ http://www.virtualbangladesh.com/history/overview_akram.html

¹⁸ Supra 14(Pg 169)

¹⁹ http://www.virtualbangladesh.com/history/overview_akram.html

²⁰ William Van Schendel, *A History of Bangladesh*, Cambridge University Press, 2009(Pg 170)

²¹ William Van Schendel, *A History of Bangladesh*, Cambridge University Press, 2009(pg.189)

Conclusion

War is the act of force against another, to force one's will or ideology. This paper analyzed the definition of war and the reasons behind waging war against another country; which includes reasons like religion, ideology etc.

The paper also explores the formation of Bangladesh. Bangladesh was part of the then East Pakistan; the two states were thousand miles apart, spoke different languages and were ethnically distinct from each other. Yet the partition of 1947 saw it fit to put these two non-related states together. It was unpreventable what was to be followed; the outbreak of war of independence by present day Bangladesh.

In conclusion, the author can say that war is an instrument in the creation of a state; it may not be chief or sole approach to the formation of a state, however, for Bangladesh, for one, it was the only mode and method to attain independence. This shows that it is one of the lines of attack to creation of a state.