The Impact of War and Rivalry on State-building in Uganda

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How has Uganda been affected by inter-state war in the DRC and its rivalries with its neighbors, Rwanda and Sudan?

Specifically, how has the Ugandan state been affected in its relation to society?

MORE specifically, has the state been strengthened?
Charles Tilly, following others, has made a compelling argument linking war to state-building. In this evocative phrase:

“States make war, and war makes the state.”

The is a realist formulation

It begins with early Modern Europe

It applies well to the subsequent eras, including the industrial revolution and even the 20th century
How does war-making build the state?

1. State control over society: reinforced by the strengthening of military forces.
2. Extraction: states want to extract resources from society, and war-making is a pretext.
3. Administration: states must build up bureaucratic capacity to make war or defend against predation.
4. Identity building: fighting for the mother-land makes Ugandans from peasants.
5. Infrastructure. States need roads and railways to make war and control society.
Evidence in European and US state development

- Europe, Louis the XIV made peasants into Frenchmen through war.
- Bismarck united Germany and defeated France with administration and railways.
- The US escaped dependence on UK through war
- The civil war concentrated power in the central federal govt.
- State extraction reached all time highs in WWII, when the entire society was mobilized.
Does the logic apply to the developing world in the 21st century?

- Cameron Thies argues powerfully that the same logic applies today.
- He shows has African states have been enfeebled by the lack of war (territorial change).
- He shows that Latin American states have benefitted from rivalry.
- Reno disagrees, pointing to collapsing states.
- Taylor and Botea say that it all depends, but logic may apply.
Application to Uganda: methods challenges

- How can we assess state strength? Consider five different elements:
  1. (Growth in) State revenues (domestic)
  2. National unity: did regionalism die down?
  3. Army: did it get stronger?
  4. Administration: did it get better?
  5. Legitimacy: did the personalist regime of M7 gain greater social acceptance?
1. **State revenues** continued to grow during period of war, but at a slower pace than before.

2. The country remained **disunited**, and did not rally to the regime in a war effort.

3. The **army** grew much larger, but became less disciplined, and was not very effective.

4. **Administration:** Kyarimpa study shows that reform efforts stalled in late 1990s.

Why did war not lead to state-building in Uganda (if I am right)?

- National wars versus regime wars: the national not mobilized, but the regime was.
- Neither the DRC intervention not the rivalries were inspired by IDEOLOGY. What was Uganda fighting for?
- Many Ugandans doubted official reasons for war (and Americans KNOW THE FEELING).
- Ugandans were more threatened by domestic terror (LRA) than by external rivals in 1997–2003.