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NAMIBIA. *See* Southern Africa.

NAPLES. Naples traditionally has benefited from its strategic position as a gateway between an unusually fertile agricultural hinterland and the central and western Mediterranean. Founded as a "new town" serving as a feeder to the city of Cuma in the sixth century BCE, Naples became the seat of an independent duchy in the eighth century CE. Falling increasingly into the orbit of Rome, it appears to have been economically and politically less dynamic than the neighboring cities of Amalfi, Gaeta, Capua, and Salerno. The creation in the twelfth century CE of a unified Norman kingdom in southern Italy marked a turning point in Neapolitan fortunes. In 1224, Frederick II (1198–1250) founded a university there (including law and medical schools, as well as a faculty of theology, established in 1231, where Thomas Aquinas studied), in competition with the University of Bologna. By 1266, the new Angevin regime had moved the main seat of government from Palermo to Naples; when Sicily broke away from the mainland in 1282, Naples became the capital of the mainland south. Under Robert Anjou (1309–1343), Naples became the hub of Florentine merchant banking, based on an exchange of credit to the Crown for export rights to wheat.

However, Naples felt the benefits of capital status most strongly from the mid-fifteenth century on, when the pace of political centralization rose sharply. Naples rose from about 50,000 inhabitants in 1450 to 150,000 around 1500, and doubled in size again by the early 1600s. The city stagnated during the seventeenth-century depression, but growth resumed in the 1730s; by the 1790s, Naples was the third largest European city with nearly 500,000 inhabitants. The second largest southern Italian city in the same period was Lecce, which reached 30,000 inhabitants. The two phases of strongest demographic growth also marked peaks of economic and cultural achievement: first during the mid-fifteenth century when Alfonso I of Aragon (king of Naples 1442–1458) took up residence in Naples at the head of a Mediterranean empire that included Castile, Aragon, Catalonia, Sicily, Sardinia, and Naples; and then in the eighteenth century under the Bourbons, when the city became a leader of the European Enlightenment. Both phases ended with French-inspired wars: the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII (r. 1483–1498) in 1494–1495 and the short-lived anti-Bourbon revolution of 1799.

NAPLES. Panoramic view of the city and its harbor, engraving, eighteenth century. (Alinari/Art Resource, NY)

The causes of Naples's demographic dominance were twofold. First, southern Italian rulers granted Naples a vast portfolio of commercial and tax privileges—including full exemption from tariffs on grain supplies and from direct taxes—that significantly lowered the city's relative cost of living and led to the wholesale immigration of the provincial feudal elite and their retinues and hangers-on. This influx generated a huge, self-reinforcing source of concentrated demand funded by rural incomes and turned Naples into the main source of investment and commercial capital in the kingdom. Modern Italian historians—influenced by the French Physiocrats and by Naples's relative economic and cultural decline since Italian unification (1860), when it lost its traditional privileges—consequently have analyzed premodern Naples as a parasitical consumer of rural wealth and as the source of many of the lasting imbalances in southern Italy's economy and society. This view must be mitigated by the second factor at play, namely, a lack of urban competitors elsewhere in the kingdom, which was due as much to the persistence of high feudal barriers to trade and market fragmentation as to Neapolitan privilege, and which explains why centralized demand from metropolitan Naples did not have more positive consequences for market integration and growth.

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S. R. EPSTEIN

NATIONAL DEFENSE. The financing of the military and its weaponry has proved the crucial problem of governance for most cultures. Among the early civilizations, such as the river valley empires, financial administration and government were inseparable. Governments were organized on hierarchical bases, with the rulers possessing control over military decisions. Taxes in these agricultural economies were paid in kind, which made it more difficult to utilize the revenue for military campaigns over great distances. Supporting a large standing army was the most expensive item. The optimal size of an empire was determined by the efficiency of its taxation, resource extraction, and transportation systems, whereas the supply of weaponry was seldom a crucial variable. Some changes were brought on by the diffusion of cheap iron weaponry after about 1200 BCE.

Other civilizations, nonetheless, paled in comparison with the military efficiency and economy of the Roman Empire. Military spending was the largest item in the public budget throughout Roman history. During the first two centuries of the Empire, the Roman standing army consisted of about 160,000 men, with another 150,000 troops available to it. For example, in republican and imperial Rome more than half the revenue went to military pay.

In the early Middle Ages, a diverse system of European feudalism emerged in which feudal lords provided protection for a price to smaller communities. Prior to 1000 CE, the command system was still preeminent, on a contingency basis, in the mobilization of military resources. This system of patrimonialism, as Charles Tilly (*Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1990*, Cambridge, 1990) defines it, began its slow decline with the twelfth century Crusades. The feudal kings were forced to supplement the ordinary revenues to finance their armies. Because of the political ambitions and the expansionary drives of the medieval rulers, however, they usually had to rely on short-term deficits in military financing.

Innovations in warfare and military technology, driven by the gunpowder revolution of the fifteenth century, permitted armies to attack and defend larger territories. Warfare then became commercialized in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as volunteer feudal armies had to give way to professional mercenary forces. Accordingly, medieval states needed still more revenue, relying increasingly on indirect taxes, to support the growing costs of warfare. The commercialization of warfare was accompanied by the rising importance of sea power as the European states began to build their overseas empires. States like Portugal, the Netherlands, and England became the "systemic leaders" due to their extensive fleets and commercial expansion.

The early winners in the fight for world leadership were usually supported by the availability of inexpensive credit. This pattern can be perceived in England. Between 1535 and 1547, the English defense share (military portion of state expenditures) averaged 29.4 percent, with large yearly fluctuations. Between 1685 and 1813 its mean defense share increased to 74.6 percent, never falling below 55 percent, and England became the most feared fiscal-military power of the period.

The newly emerging nation states began to develop more centralized and productive revenue-expenditure systems, especially in the absolutist era. The cost and scale of warfare grew: during the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) between 100,000 and 200,000 men fought under arms on the average, whereas fifty years later, in the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714), some 450,000 to 500,000 men went to battle. The proportion of populations serving in the armed forces increased dramatically. For example, from about 1500 to 1700, the French armed forces share of