can tax any of the agencies or functions of the National Government. Remember, too, each State has its own constitution. That document also denies many powers to the State.\textsuperscript{5}

\textbf{The Exclusive and the Concurrent Powers}

Most of the powers that the Constitution delegates to the National Government are \textbf{exclusive powers.} These powers can be exercised by the National Government alone. They cannot be exercised by the States under any circumstances.

Some of these powers are expressly denied to the States. Examples include the power to coin money, to make treaties with foreign states, and to lay duties (taxes) on imports. Some powers are not expressly denied to the States but are, nonetheless, among the exclusive powers of the Federal Government because of the nature of the particular power involved. The power to regulate interstate commerce is a leading example of this point. If the States could exercise that power, trade between and among the States would be at best chaotic and at worst impossible.\textsuperscript{6}

Some of the powers delegated to the National Government are \textbf{concurrent powers.} The concurrent powers are those powers that both the National Government and the States possess and exercise. They include, for example, the power to levy and collect taxes, to define crimes and set punishments for them, and to condemn (take) private property for public use.

The concurrent powers are held and exercised separately and simultaneously by the two basic levels of government. That is, the concurrent powers are those powers that the Constitution does not grant exclusively to the National Government and that, at the same time, does not deny to the States. The concurrent powers, in short, are those powers that make it possible for a federal system of government to function.

\textbf{The Federal System and Local Governments}

Government in the United States is often discussed in terms of three levels: national, State, and local. However convenient this view may be, it is at best misleading. Recall that there are only two basic levels in the federal system: the National Government and the State governments.

Governments do exist at the local level all across the country, of course. In fact, there are more than 87,000 units of local government in the United States today. You will take a look at them later in this book. For now, keep this important point in mind: All of these thousands of local governments are parts—subunits—of the various State governments.

Each of these local units is located within one of the 50 States. In its constitution and in its laws,