

PLS 140 Introduction to comparative politics

Week 2 – August 24
State autonomy and capacity

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State structures in the developing world

- Failed transposition from EU models?
- Colonizers never acted *ex nihilo*.
- States are not entirely artificial, their boundaries not entirely seen as arbitrary.
- They did not cease to exist after the Europeans left.

In the developing world

- Heterogeneous social structures (web-like societies) make the **penetration of society** and the establishment of political order difficult.
- In Central Asia, clans parasite the political system and undermine the efficiency and stability of systems.

State autonomy vs capacity

- **Capacity:** ability of the State to carry out basic functions of providing security and reconciling freedom and equality.
- **Autonomy:** exercise power independently of the public or international actors.
 - > Ex: corruption in Ukraine, clan politics.
- Low levels in one of them is not necessarily problematic, ex: Canada, Switzerland.

DO YOU HATE TAXES?



HATE GOVERNMENT?



HATE REGULATIONS?



LOVE GUNS?



Difference between Africa and FSU

- ◉ Different plural societies.
- ◉ In Africa, ethnic divisions lead groups to compete for the control of the State.
- ◉ Opposite dynamics in FSU where conflicts emerge for political autonomy (secessionism) not for the control of the State.
- ◉ Subject to surveillance by former colonial powers.
- ◉ In case of conflicts, neighboring States are affected in the FSU. Russian influence still strong.

State capacity and violent conflicts 1

- Many studies reveal that state weakness is the most important factor in the eruption of violent conflicts.
- After controlling for per capita income, more ethnically or religiously diverse countries have been no more likely to experience violence.

State capacity and violent conflicts 2

- Factors that explain civil wars are not ethnic or religious characteristics but rather the conditions that favor insurgency.
- These include poverty—which marks financially and bureaucratically weak states t—political instability, rough terrain, and large populations.

“Fragile” State definition

- The loss of physical control of its territory or a monopoly on the legitimate use of force;
- The erosion of legitimate authority to make collective decisions;
- An inability to provide reasonable public services;
- The inability to interact with other states as a full member of the international community

Failed/fragile States

- Term appeared in the 1990s.
- Controversial term: Implies that something needs to be “fixed” or “saved” – of course by liberal external forces.
- Ex: Afghanistan, Somalia, Libya, Yemen, Pakistan, Rwanda.
- And...Haiti marked by poverty and instability but not violence.

Country	2015 score	Change from 2014 ^[6]	Change from 2013 ^[7]	Change from 2012 ^[8]	Change from 2011 ^[9]	Change from 2010 ^[10]	Change from 2009 ^[11]	Change from 2008 ^[12]
 South Sudan	114.5	▲ 1.6	▲ 3.9	▲ 6.1	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
 Somalia	114.0	▲ 1.4	▲ 0.1	▼ 0.9	▲ 0.6	▼ 0.3	▼ 0.7	▼ 0.2
 Central African Republic	111.9	▲ 1.3	▲ 6.6	▲ 8.1	▲ 6.9	▲ 5.5	▲ 6.5	▲ 8.2
 Sudan	110.8	▲ 0.7	▼ 0.2	▲ 1.4	▲ 2.1	▼ 1.0	▼ 1.6	▼ 2.2
 Democratic Republic of the Congo	109.7	▼ 0.5	▼ 2.2	▼ 1.5	▲ 1.5	▼ 0.5	▲ 1.0	▲ 3.0
 Chad	108.4	▼ 0.3	▼ 0.6	▲ 0.8	▼ 1.9	▼ 4.9	▼ 3.8	▼ 2.5
 Yemen	108.1	▲ 2.7	▲ 1.1	▲ 3.3	▲ 7.8	▲ 7.4	▲ 10.0	▲ 12.7
 Syria	107.9	▲ 6.3	▲ 10.5	▲ 13.4	▲ 22.0	▲ 20.0	▲ 18.1	▲ 17.8
 Afghanistan	107.9	▲ 1.4	▲ 1.2	▲ 1.9	▲ 0.4	▲ 0.6	▼ 0.3	▲ 2.5
 Guinea	104.9	▲ 2.2	▲ 3.6	▲ 3.0	▲ 2.4	▲ 3.3	▲ 0.3	▲ 3.1
 Haiti	104.5	▲ 0.2	▼ 1.3	▼ 0.4	▼ 3.5	▼ 5.4	▲ 2.7	▲ 5.2
 Iraq	104.5	▲ 2.3	▲ 0.6	▲ 0.2	▼ 0.3	▼ 0.5	▼ 4.1	▼ 6.1
 Pakistan	102.9	▼ 0.1	▬ 0.0	▲ 1.3	▲ 0.6	▲ 1.7	▼ 1.2	▼ 0.9
 Nigeria	102.4	▲ 2.7	▲ 1.7	▲ 1.3	▲ 2.5	▲ 2.2	▲ 2.6	▲ 6.7