

PLS 140 Introduction to comparative politics

Week 2 – August 24
State autonomy and capacity

Dr. H el ene Thibault
Fall 2016

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 |