

2019-2020 Humanities Center Brown Bag Series

Analyzing the Transition from 'Fragile' to 'Failed' States in World Politics

The scholarly debate about factors leading to state failure is divided among different subfields of Comparative Politics as well as World Politics. It could be boiled down to two main schools, those who believe that state failure is due to mismanagement, and corruption of political elites in the Less Developed Countries (LDCs), and those who believe that mismanagement, and corruption contribute to state failure; But there are some structural elements in building those fragile states and their military, that make maintaining those states almost impossible.

The latter builds on the inherited characteristics of the decolonized states, and how the political and military structures they inherited are so weak and costly to preserve. The public goods provided by the LDCs states are decaying in most of the cases, including security which leads finally to state collapse. It becomes surprising that some of the LDCs recover from state failure.

The conditions of state failure and state recovery become not an easy task to explain. But still some of the previous attempts to correlate state failure empirically with other factors were statistically significant. In this paper, we will try to explain a model built on both structural criteria of fragile states, and other developments which gather to lead to the collapse of the state.

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