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on States and
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**FROM THE EDITORIAL
BOARD**

Dear members, colleagues,
friends,

*Disclaimer: The text below expresses
my personal views only, and cannot
be attributed or assumed to be shared
by other editors or contributors to this
newsletter, or by the Comparative
Democratization section of the
APSA and any of its affiliates.*

I am writing this on Friday
the 20th of January – the day
Donald Trump will be sworn in
as President of the United States.

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DISENTANGLING THE STATE-REGIME NEXUS

Thomas J. Altmeyden, *University of Tübingen*

Mirjam Edel, *University of Tübingen*



To a large extent, political science is about understanding political order and examining how differences in political order can be explained over time and space. Two concepts are usually at the heart of answers to this question: state and regime. Curiously, however, efforts at theorizing their mutual relationship are considerably less common than research on each of them, although some of the most urgent issues in world politics are directly related to the empirical realities behind the two concepts. For example, processes of both democratization and autocratization have variously resulted in outbreaks of large-scale domestic violence and state fragility. At the same time, post-conflict societies are often struggling with the dual challenge of state- and regime-building. While many would like to see those countries becoming stable, prosperous democracies, we know from Western efforts at coping with crumbling autocracies that short-term attempts at fostering political stability (by enhancing state capacities) are often at odds with the long-term policy objective of promoting democracy. To tackle this dilemma of “democracy vs. stability” and to understand the changing nature of political order, we must analytically disentangle the empirically complex relationships of states and regimes and develop a research agenda to

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**RE-EXAMINING THE STATE/REGIME NEXUS: THE
IMPORTANCE OF HISTORICAL CONTINGENCIES**

Robert M. Fishman, *Carlos III University, Madrid*



Thomas J. Altmeyden and Mirjam Edel, with crucial encouragement and inspiration from Oliver Schlumberger, have done the field a great service through their new formulation of a research agenda on the state/regime nexus. They make a strong case that despite the long history of work on these two conceptual tools for understanding the structuration and organization of political order, much work remains to be done specifying their interconnection. Indeed, the relation between these two concepts that identify and analyze structures of political power remains a matter of disagreement, uncertainty or in some cases outright confusion. Some social scientists make no effort at all to differentiate analytically between the two, an approach which can easily generate major errors in assessing the prospects for political continuity or change in concrete empirical settings. The assumption that this distinction is analytically important – not only for the sake of clarity but also to formulate both predictive expectations and explanatory theories of political change or continuity – was implicitly present in the work of many analysts well before social scientists began to elaborate in explicit terms the significance of the state-regime nexus. The emphasis on making this distinction quite

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OPPOSING PLURALISM: AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES WITHOUT DEMOCRATIC ASSUMPTIONS

Sofia Fenner, *Bryn Mawr College*

Dan Slater, *University of Chicago*



Despite nearly two decades of renewed interest in the topic, authoritarianism has yet to be defined in terms of what it is rather than what it lacks. Ever since totalitarianism gave way to “post-totalitarianism” with the winding down of the Cold War,¹ authoritarianism has been the disfavored half of a binary regime typology, defined both residually and negatively: it is the type of government present in all cases that fail to meet basic standards for democracy. This essay turns our attention to the “state-regime nexus” that is the subject of this symposium in order to define authoritarianism positively – and to reap attendant analytical benefits by shedding new light on the puzzle of why so many authoritarian regimes distribute resources so much more widely than our leading theories expect.

Scholars who are committed to a robust state-regime distinction have rightly come to define regimes by how power is accessed and states by how power is exercised. As welcome definitional advances often do, this development presents us with a conceptual conundrum: how power is exercised *determines* how it is accessed. We suggest that authoritarian regimes should be defined, most simply, as *those in which state institutions actively hinder pluralism from flourishing and opposition from competing for power*. When commanded by an authoritarian regime, state institutions are geared, above all else, toward forestalling the emergence

1. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

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STATES, REGIMES AND OTHER STRUCTURES OF RULE

Sebastián Mazzuca, *Johns Hopkins University*



The state is experiencing a fascinating revival in the study of comparative politics, political economy, and American politics. The state has found a renewed place at the podium of fundamental causes in research on economic development and regime change. The twin theses “no state, no growth” and “no state, no democracy” have received fresh theoretical and empirical support.¹ The state is also the central concern in the emerging agenda on “state failure,” which is a direct source of humanitarian catastrophes in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, and an indirect source of geopolitical threats and demographic pressures for the rest of the world. The state is a key component in studies on income inequality motivated by the rise of the *One Percent*, the ultra-rich class in the US. It has been persuasively argued that economic inequality in America is less a consequence of technological change and entrepreneurship than the reflection of state control by oligarchies specialized in the political protection of private wealth.²

The current revival of the state in social analysis can be seen as the emergence of a third generation of state theory. The first generation was based on Weber’s state theory, especially on the militaristic interpretations by Hintze, who attributed the same historical relevance to conflicts over the means of coercion that Marxists had reserved to conflicts over the means of production. A direct tributary of the founding generation, the second generation was best represented by Skocpol’s “Bringing the State Back In,” a masterful reconstruction of 1970s debates between neo-Weberian and neo-Marxist political sociologists.³

A key contribution of state theory was the definition of state attributes in terms of a “holy trinity” of qualities: *legitimacy*, *autonomy*, and *capacity* (LAC). The three attributes became the dominant way of unpacking the broader concept of state

1. Robert Bates, “The Role of the State in Development,” *The Oxford Handbook of Political Economy* (OUP 2006); Francis Fukuyama, “Stateness’ First,” *Journal of Democracy* 16.1 (2005): 84–88.

2. Jacob Hacker and Paul Pierson, *Winner-take-all Politics* (Simon and Schuster 2011).

3. Theda Skocpol, “Bringing the State Back In,” In Peter Evans et al (eds.), *Bringing the State Back In* (CUP, 1985).

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FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD, CONTINUED

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It is morning here in Sweden where I am, so it has not happened yet. With increasing trepidation, many of us have observed his various actions and statements leaving more than a whiff of a wanna-be autocrat. It is easy to brush off reactions to the American election and its implications for democracy in the United States, as fear-mongering and alarmist. But as a political scientist who monitors democratic trends in 176 countries, I haven't been sleeping well. And if you're not worried, too, maybe you should be.

We all know that during his campaign, Trump spouted lies and demeaned others. But what should worry us most are his anti-democratic statements and promises: he threatened to imprison political opponents and journalists; proclaimed that torture should be used in interrogations; incited "second amendment people" to murder; and declared his admiration for the Russian "elected" dictator Vladimir Putin. Dissatisfied whites in the United States drove a populist with clearly anti-democratic views to the helm of the world's strongest military, and political democracy. Trump's advisor Newt Gingrich recently suggested that the administration should use the brawl with CNN to "break" non-conformist media. This is extremely worrying. What is at stake is nothing less than the future of democracy in the United States and the rest of the world.

Beginning in the 1970s, the number of democracies in the world increased dramatically, especially after the Cold War ended in 1989. Data collected by the research program Varieties of Democracy, headquartered at the University of Gothenburg, shows that the democratization trend stalled about ten years ago. Since then, democracy has regressed or been completely abolished in several countries.

Turkey's president Erdogan was put in office by a democratic election in 2002, but has since turned the country into a dictatorship. After his election in 2010, Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has espoused "illiberal democracy" as an ideal. This year, the Philippines elected Rodrigo Duterte, who undermines democratic principles

by murdering and torturing in the name of the state. Prime Minister Narendra Modi in India is another populist-nationalist with anti-democratic tendencies who swept to power via elections in Asia's longest-standing democracy. ~~I could go on.~~

Throughout Europe, extreme right-wing and populist parties are gaining ground. In more and more countries, voices within the established right-center parties argue that we need to cooperate with these forces to maintain order. In parallel, the Republican Party in the United States agreed to allow Trump to be their candidate despite the fact that many of them felt disgust for his anti-democratic statements and proposals. Now, a wide range of politicians within the party aligns themselves with him, in order to cling on to power.

The parallels with 1930s Europe are scary where populism and right-wing movements were fostered in the wake of World War I. The same message then as now promised to restore national greatness and strength. Trump's slogan "Make America Great Again" and his eagerness to name scapegoats are strongly reminiscent of fascism and Nazism. The idea that we must cooperate with these dangerous political forces in order to maintain order and power also has a terrifying historical parallel. The German right wing government made a conscious choice to appoint Hitler as chancellor in order to keep a rightwing government in power. The democratic wave was reversed, and we saw Nazism, fascism, and communism absorb large parts of the world in a very short time.

How do we find ourselves in this current situation? The answer is certainly complex and varies in different countries. But I see several possible contributing factors. As academics, many of us devote far too much time producing research that is only read by other academics and too little time engaging in social analysis and public debate. One thing we can say for certain is that economic inequality has increased enormously since the 1980s, when neoliberal theory was first unleashed by Thatcher in Britain and Reagan in the United States, then in varying degrees in

many other countries. Changes included lower taxes for the wealthy and corporations and the privatization and trimming of the welfare state. Ordinary citizens felt increasingly vulnerable and that establishment politicians and the "system" does not defend them.

Another issue is the obvious complications refugees entail, especially if many come from societies whose values and norms are far different from the ones in recipient countries, and this is not discussed openly. People's perceived reality of growing challenges to their ways of life and values did not match the politicians' descriptions of "everything is fine". Confidence dropped, problems grew, people felt threatened in a different way and "the system" did nothing. So-called brown shirts have had free reign to grow.

The political parties and the media also have a responsibility. During the last 25 years, many European parties have been filled by spin doctors who write scripts for politicians to perform mechanically, while analysts and investigators play an increasingly smaller role. Some try to win public opinion with superficial, well-polished gimmicks, and media seek out sensations and missteps. This locks the politicians into an orchestrated drama pushing them even further into the use of prewritten phrases that do not sound authentic. Witnessing this superficial spectacle, citizens see that it lacks ordinary people and real debates. A Trump or a Le Pen "saying it like it is" with ordinary speech inspires their confidence. Meanwhile social media allows prejudices to be confirmed, as people can opt out of anything they do not want to hear or read. The worldview of different groups is reinforced and increasingly separated, allowing politicians like Trump to issue lie upon lie without consequence.

Are we on the verge of a seismic shift in the history of democracy, where politicians are paralyzed by their inability to act and make grave policy mistakes motivated by pressure from populist and extremist movements? Will the United States, France and other countries still be democracies in ten years? We do not know. But what we do know is that what happened in the

United States this year was a big step backward for a democratic society. It is not a coincidence that Russia's parliament erupted in applause when they received news of Trump's election or that France's right wing party, were among the first to congratulate Trump for his victory. "Their world is collapsing, ours is being built," in the words of Marine Le Pen's chief strategist. We also know that democracies have become dictatorships throughout history; there is no guarantee that any democracy will last. It is time for politicians and ordinary people to reflect upon what has happened and stand up for our core values and institutions to ensure their survival.

At this point in time, I find the current issue particularly timely, with essays focusing on the state, interwar Europe, nationalism and the question of democratic legitimacy. I hope you will enjoy reading it.

Staffan I. Lindberg, Executive Editor

From the Lead Editor of this issue:

For some time now, scholars of democratization have debated whether democracy is possible in the absence of a strong state. For the most part, this debate has focused on questions about sequencing – whether state building must precede democratization – and the extent to which strong states facilitate successful outcomes of democratic transitions, the survival of democratic institutions, or both. Although there remains more room for debate on these questions, recent advances in other areas of state and regime research, such as in understanding the workings of authoritarian regimes and their legacies for democratic for

rule, call for renewed attention to the questions and assumptions underlying research on the state-democracy relationship. This edition of the *APSA-CD* newsletter makes a modest attempt to begin to answer that call.

The newsletter is guided in part by a set of questions and problems identified by Thomas Altmeyden and Mirjam Edel in their piece, "Disentangling the State-Regime Nexus," and addressed at a workshop they hosted on this topic in Tuebingen this past June. Among the many insights they provide, their suggestion to consider a broader constellation of patterns between states and regimes is particularly germane to the more specific arguments made by the contributors to this newsletter.

Building on his past work on regime transitions in Southern Europe, Robert Fishman offers an important modification – that of historical contingency – to theories of the state's role in democratization. Given that states obviously exist in an international system, and that system can change quite rapidly, it makes clear sense that the role of states in regime transitions may change from one period to the next, or respond to other historical conditions.

Focusing on particular historical and geographic contexts, the next two pieces help us gain an understanding of which dimensions of states or "stateness" may be important for the adoption or breakdown of democratic institutions. In Maya Tudor's piece, she highlights in particular the importance of nationalist independence movements and their relationships to

regional elites to understand variation in the configurations of states and regimes that we see in contemporary India and Pakistan. David Andersen, studying inter-war Europe, provides us with a comprehensive inventory of the different ways that states during this period helped or hindered democratic breakdown. In very different yet equally informative ways, both of these pieces speak to questions raised by Altmeyden and Edel, and issues of historical contingency described by Fishman.

The newsletter concludes with two thought-provoking conceptual proposals. Sofia Fenner and Dan Slater propose a new definition of authoritarianism based on the concept of "coercive distribution." Whereas the other newsletter contributors call for more clarity in conceptual boundaries between state and regime, this piece challenges us to think about regime type as a function of state behavior.

Finally, Sebastian Mazzuca takes us on a typological journey that ends in what is surely to be a controversial conclusion – arguing that the attributes of legitimacy and capacity that we commonly associate with states belong much more squarely in the realm of regimes. Unsurprisingly, these pieces leave us with many more questions than answers, but also many new possible frontiers for research on the relationship on states and regimes.

Rachel Sigman, Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the V-Dem Institute, University of Gothenburg & Assistant Professor at the Naval Postgraduate School

Altmeppen and Edel, CONTINUED

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better grasp the state-regime nexus.¹

Obviously, there are many avenues of investigation that a research agenda on states and regimes could potentially address. In this article, we outline a set of specific directions for future research. Special attention will be given to challenges of conceptualization that are sometimes misconceived as distractions from solving empirical puzzles. Overall, we propose to focus on three aspects: First, there is a need to overcome transmission problems that hinder the cumulative acquisition of knowledge. Second, to tackle the relationships between states and regimes, it is crucial to consider the full range of state and regime types (i.e., to go beyond the Weberian state and democracies) and to make the consequences of decisions on conceptual boundaries more transparent since they can have profound repercussions on causal relationships themselves. Third, we suggest that the most relevant puzzles on the state-regime nexus are questions (1) on patterns, i.e. on whether and which state and regime characteristics co-occur, (2) on sequences and preconditions of (certain types of) state and regime, and (3) on how state and regime influence one another, especially in times of profound change, i.e. on state-/regime-building and -decay.

Transmission Problems

It's not that the state-regime nexus is completely absent from the agenda of comparative politics. Yet, so far, efforts at theorizing the mutual relationship

1. On regime change and civil war, see Lars Erik Cederman, Simon Hug, and Lutz F. Krebs, "Democratization and Civil War: Empirical Evidence" *Journal of Peace Research* 47(4): 377-394. On state- and regime-building, see Sebastián L. Mazzuca and Gerardo L. Munck, "State or Democracy First? Alternative Perspectives on the State-Democracy Nexus" *Democratization* 21(7): 1221-1243. On "democracy vs. stability"-promotion, see Sonja Grimm and Julia Leininger, "Not All Good Things Go Together: Conflicting Objectives in Democracy Promotion" *Democratization* 19(3): 391-414; Oliver Schlumberger, "Dilemmas of Democracy Promotion in Authoritarian Contexts", in *Democratization and Development: New Political Strategies for the Middle East*, edited by Dietrich Jung (New York: Palgrave, 2006): 33-60.

between states and regimes have been scattered over fairly disparate strands of literature. Our first task is thus to examine linkages between existing bodies of scholarship, with special attention to overcoming issues of parochialism and conceptual confusion. Three particularly pertinent transmission problems prevail in works on the subject matter: conceptual amnesia, insulated area expertise, and interdisciplinary eclecticism.

The first problem (*conceptual amnesia*) is the tendency to forget about earlier attempts at disentangling the state-regime nexus. This is often the case with publications that seem to be empirically outdated, but are theoretically intriguing. For instance, although the heydays of both totalitarianism and bureaucratic authoritarianism are long gone, delving into the first two waves of research on dictatorships is still worthwhile. Publications on Latin America in the 1970s – as exemplified by the edited volumes of James Malloy and David Collier – are treasure troves of ideas that still provide intriguing insights into state-regime relationships. For example, in his chapter on the characteristics of authoritarianism, Fernando Henrique Cardoso was among the first to systematically distinguish states from their regimes. What might even be of greater importance than the actual conceptual choices of those days, is the chance to learn from the past: it was already back in 1975 when Simon Schwartzman carefully contemplated about the advantages and pitfalls of conceptual travelling with Weberian categories and when Collier and Collier warned that some structural features, "such as corporatism," are likely to "cut across a democratic-nondemocratic divide" although we tend to associate them with particular regime types. In sum, Richard Snyder is therefore right in urging the subdiscipline to work on its "feeble professional memory."²

2. James M. Malloy, ed., *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh

The second transmission problem (*insulated area expertise*) is an unintended consequence of otherwise productive efforts at shedding new light on the state-regime nexus. Much of this research has been geared towards solving puzzles of regional salience – and rightly so. The question is, however, whether their findings allow for conceptual travelling. Empirically, it is questionable, for example, whether scholars actually study the same thing when assessing the impact of "state-building" on political regimes in post-Communist Eurasia and post-conflict societies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Theoretically, attempts at (re-)conceptualizing the state-regime nexus are often incompatible. For instance, whereas in their works on early-modern Europe and Latin America, Thomas Ertman and Sebastián Mazzuca keep the classical, Weberian distinction between patrimonial and bureaucratic types of state administrations analytically separate from differences between regime types, many studies of the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa portray neopatrimonialism – a double-diminished subtype of patrimonialism and legal-rational bureaucracy – as a distinctive (sub-)type of autocratic regimes or, else, as a hybrid type of regime, as Erdmann and Engel have highlighted. Since the notion of

University Press, 1975); David Collier, ed., *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979); Fernando Henrique Cardoso, "On the Characterization of Authoritarian Regimes in Latin America", in *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America*, edited by David Collier (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979): 33-57; Schwartzman, Simon, "Back to Weber: Corporatism and Patrimonialism in the Seventies", in David Collier and Ruth Berins Collier, *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America*, edited by James M. Malloy (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 1975): 89-106; "Who Does What, to Whom, and How: Toward a Comparative Analysis of Latin American Corporatism", in *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America*, edited by James M. Malloy (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 1975): 489-512; Richard Snyder, "The Human Dimension of Comparative Research", in *Passion, Craft, and Method in Comparative Politics*, edited by Gerardo L. Munck and Richard Snyder (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007): 1-31.

Altmeyden and Edel

political regime is alien to the writings of Max Weber, scholars in the field of comparative politics have, consciously or not, presented different versions of how to conceptually align their research on regime types with both the Weberian theory of the state and his tripartite typology of legitimate *Herrschaft*. As a consequence, we are faced with incompatible conceptual choices that hinder the cumulative acquisition of knowledge because scholars think of different things when applying the same term.³

The third and final transmission problem (*interdisciplinary eclecticism*) describes the difficulties that come along with (sub-)disciplinary boundaries and interdisciplinary attempts at drawing on conceptual distinctions of neighboring fields of study. For example, the two subdisciplines of comparative politics and peace and conflict studies differ profoundly in how states and regimes are related to each other. To illustrate, in comparative politics, Linz and Stepan as well as Levitsky and Way have argued that regime outcomes depend on, among other things, the question of whether and how rulers use state capacities.

3. For conceptual discussions of (neo-)patrimonialism and the question of regime type(s), see Gero Erdmann and Ulf Engel, "Neopatrimonialism Reconsidered: Critical Review and Elaboration of an Elusive Concept" *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 45(1): 95-119; Farid Guliyev, "Personal Rule, Neopatrimonialism, and Regime Typologies: Integrating Dahlian and Weberian Approaches to Regime Studies" *Democratization* 18(3): 575-601. For publications on state- and regime-building in different world regions, see Anna Grzymala-Busse and Pauline Jones Luong, "Reconceptualizing the State: Lessons from Post-Communism" *Politics & Society*, 30(4): 529-554; Dan Slater, *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Michael Bratton and Eric C. C. Chang, "State Building and Democratization in Sub-Saharan Africa: Forwards, Backwards, or Together?", *Comparative Political Studies* 39(9): 1059-1083; Thomas Ertmann, *Birth of the Leviathan: Building States and Regimes in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Sebastián L. Mazzuca, "Access to Power versus Exercise of Power: Reconceptualizing the Quality of Democracy in Latin America" *Studies in Comparative International Development* 45(3): 334-357.

On this reading, state capacity is what regime elites make of it. In peace and conflict studies, however, the political regime is frequently treated as either a feature of the state, for instance, by Charles Call, or else, as highlighted by Cullen Hendrix, as a proxy measure of state capacity. Overall, this leaves us with a serious problem of compatibility between two closely related subfields.⁴

Interdisciplinary eclecticism is even more evident in how political scientists draw on the state theory of sociologist Michael Mann. As exemplified by vom Hau and Soifer, scholars typically focus on one subtype of political power (infrastructural power) – at the expense of its relationship with the second subtype (despotic power) and the other, overarching sources of social power (ideological, economic, and military). Even if scholars were less eclectic in adapting Mann's two-dimensional theory of state power, they would still have to make sense of his actor-centric conceptualization of regime – as "an alliance of dominant ideological, economic, and military power actors, coordinated by the rulers of the state" (Mann 1993, 18) – which is close to everyday language but incompatible with the institutional understanding commonly implied by regime typologies in comparative politics. To be clear: scholars may analyze political order through any theoretical lens and by using

4. For comparative politics, see Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); David Andersen, Jørgen Møller, and Svend-Erik Skaaning, "The State-Democracy Nexus: Conceptual Distinctions, Theoretical Perspectives, and Comparative Approaches" *Democratization*, 21(7): 1203-1220. For peace and conflict studies, see Charles T. Call, "Beyond the 'Failed State': Toward Conceptual Alternatives" *European Journal of International Relations* 17(2): 303-326; Cullen S. Hendrix, "Measuring State Capacity: Theoretical and Empirical Implications for the Study of Civil Conflict" *Journal of Peace Research* 47(3): 273-285.

any concept that works out well – be it state or regime. Yet, if we use both and assume they designate two empirically distinct realities – as implied by research on their mutual relationship – we cannot use these terms synonymously or refrain from specifying their defining features. The example of Mann and his interlocutors in comparative politics shows that interdisciplinary exchange necessitates conceptual concern for consistency and compatibility on both sides. The same holds true for efforts at solving the transmission problems of conceptual amnesia and insulated area expertise. Caution is warranted because concepts constitute the building blocks of our theories and determine what we see when examining the empirical world. In this regard, we concur with Robert K. Merton in arguing that "a good part of the work called 'theorizing' is taken up with the clarification of concepts – and rightly so."⁵

Revisiting Conceptual Grounds

Widening the Agenda: Beyond Weber and Democracy

Efforts at crafting conceptual boundaries and tracing causal relationships between states and regimes have often suffered from an imbalance: an undue preference for both a particular regime type and a particular conception of the state. On the one hand, and despite an increasing

5. Hillel Soifer and Matthias vom Hau, "Unpacking the 'Strength' of the State: The Utility of State Infrastructural Power" *Studies in Comparative International Development* 43(3): 219-230; Michael Mann, "The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results" *European Journal of Sociology* 25(2): 185-213; Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power: The Rise of Classes and Nation-States, 1760-1914, Vol. 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Michael Mann, "Infrastructural Power Revisited" *Studies in Comparative International Development* 43(3): 355-365. For issues of concept analysis: Robert Merton, "The Bearing of Empirical Research upon the Development of Social Theory" *American Sociological Review* 13(5): 505-515; Giovanni Sartori, "The Tower of Babel", in *Concepts and Methods in Social Science: The Tradition of Giovanni Sartori*, edited by David Collier and John Gerring (Abingdon, England: Routledge, 2009): 61-96.

plurality of approaches in contemporary state theory, many scholars still invoke Max Weber when studying the state-regime nexus all across the globe although there might be other ideal types of states and although his concept of the state was never meant to travel beyond Europe, as post-Weberians like Migdal and Schlichte rightly stress. This does not imply that conceptual travelling with Weber is impossible, but by taking as a theoretical premise that strong states – i.e., those with high capacities – are states with a Weberian legal-rational bureaucracy, scholars preclude by definitional fiat what can be but one empirical result of comparative analysis. According to Keith Darden, this premise had the effect that during the 1990s, post-Communist state administrations have almost automatically and prematurely been portrayed as corrupt and, therefore, weak. Similar concerns about a single ideal type of stateness and state-building have been raised by Dan Slater and Diana Kim who draw on evidence from Southeast Asia to show that some states deliberately refrain from increasing administrative capacities.⁶ Besides the Weberian or, at least, “one size fits all”-bias, there exists also an enduring democracy bias caused by two sources: a political source and a methodological source. Politically, many research projects have been triggered by the dual agenda of external state-building and democracy promotion, that is, by foreign policy objectives of Western governments towards post-conflict societies. Not surprisingly, autocracies have therefore played an, at best, marginal role in prominent controversies about the state-regime nexus that are framed

6. Joel S. Migdal and Klaus Schlichte, “Rethinking the State”, in *The Dynamics of States: The Formation and Crises of State Domination*, edited by Klaus Schlichte (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2005): 1-40; Keith Darden, “The Integrity of Corrupt States: Graft as an Informal Political Institution” *Politics & Society* 36(1): 35-59; Dan Slater and Diana Kim, “Standoffish States: Nonliterate Leviathans in Southeast Asia”, *TRANS: Trans – Regional and – National Studies of Southeast Asia* 3(1): 25-44.

in terms of “gradualism vs. sequencing” and “forwards vs. backwards”-democratization. Methodologically, political science is, in the words of Ahram and Goode, still “the Discipline of Democracy” since its methods are primarily aimed at conducting research on and in democracies – with all the amenities of sophisticated statistics, low-risk fieldwork, free press, and public opinion surveys.

Among others, much scholarship is biased because its empirical evidence rests on quantitative indices placing the political systems of the world on continua of democraticness. By measuring the democraticness of autocracies, even the most advanced indices do not capture the rules of the game in non-democratic regimes. To illustrate this point, let’s assume that a group of scholars creates a dataset by operationalizing the eight institutional guaranties which were famously identified by Robert Dahl to ensure polyarchy. Overall, this index measures, regardless of the actual number of indicators, to what degree contestation and inclusiveness are present, that is, whether the rules of the game in a country approximate a Dahlian real-world democracy. But we know from research on autocracies that they should not primarily be defined by their lack of democraticness because by looking at them ex negativo through the lenses of contestation and inclusiveness, we ignore that dictatorships constitute a distinct regime type, we miss what actually characterizes them, and we fail to identify indicators that capture autocratic mechanisms of regime survival (e.g., cooptation, repression strategies, elite rotation, ideology, etc.).⁷

7. For the policy-driven literature, see Thomas Carothers, “How Democracies Emerge: The ‘Sequencing’ Fallacy” *Journal of Democracy* 18(1): 12-27; Edward D. Mansfield and Jack L. Snyder, “The Sequencing ‘Fallacy’” *Journal of Democracy* 18(3): 5-9; Thomas Carothers, “Misunderstanding Gradualism” *Journal of Democracy* 18(3): 18-22. For methodological concerns about degrees of democracy, see Giovanni Sartori, *The Theory of Democracy*

How to Approach the State-Regime Nexus
In light of the foregoing issues, we make three strategic suggestions for approaching the state-regime nexus: First, *definitional details should be reconsidered*. On our reading, Robert Fishman’s widely-known conceptual distinction of state and regime is a good starting point for this endeavor. According to him, a regime is “the formal and informal organization of the center of political power, and of its relations with the broader society. A regime determines who has access to power, and how those who are in power deal with those who are not. [...] The state, by contrast, is a (normally) more permanent structure of domination and coordination including a coercive apparatus and the means to administer a society and extract resources from it” (Fishman 1990, 428). These definitions are not only sufficiently parsimonious but also in line with large parts of the literature and are, therefore, well-suited to facilitate cumulative theory-building. When discussing crucial conceptual choices, more scholars should engage in the kind of rigorous reassessment exemplified by Sebastián Mazzuca whose intriguing distinction between access and exercise of power breaks away, however, from Fishman’s conception of the regime.

Second, it is important to move back and forth between different levels of abstraction, that is, between particular regime types, on the one side, and “political regime” as the root concept,

Revisited (Chatham: Chatham House, 1987): 182-185. Oliver Schlumberger, “Assessing Political Regimes: What Typologies and Measurements Tell Us – and What They Don’t”, in *Democracy Building and Democracy Erosion: Political Regimes North and South of the Mediterranean*, edited by Eberhard Kienle (London: Saqi Press, 2009): 19-42. For more general methodological concerns, see Ariel I. Ahram and J. Paul Goode, “Researching Authoritarianism in the Discipline of Democracy” *Social Science Quarterly* 97(4): 834-849. The above-mentioned donor interests are – together with the large scholarly focus on democratic theory compared to theories of autocracy – also a main reason why measures of democracy have seen more advancement than those of autocracy.

on the other. *Climbing the ladder of abstraction* and (re-)conceptualizing political regime vis-à-vis the state constitutes a logical necessity in our field of study – regarding both concrete patterns of state-regime relationships and processes of political change. Otherwise, it would be impossible to uphold claims according to which modern dictatorships, as Way suggests, are “defined by the conflation of state and regime” or that democratization processes foster greater state/regime/government distinctions, as Lawson argues.

Third, we suggest implementing a piece of advice given by Richard Snyder who asks, *how do rulers actually rule?* This can help to capture different regime features and to go beyond democratic rules and their imitation. Also, such an approach may help solving tricky questions about conceptual boundaries between states and regimes. The rule of law, for instance, is a concept which is difficult to situate: it has been argued that the rule of law or, at least, rule by law is a state feature, but also that it is one definitional aspect of democracy. To give this debate a different twist, it might help to take one step back to understand how law can be used to rule. For example, do constitutional reforms effectively limit the power of the ruling elites, or are they a tool in the hands of essentially unconstrained rulers to increase their legitimacy?

One way to approach the question of how rulers rule is to focus on capacities. Distinguishing and *analyzing states and regimes in terms of capacities* can lay the groundwork necessary to relate state and regime to one another when actual links between the two entities are at play. In parts, this is what scholars already intuitively do when referring to states’ capacities in the study of regime dynamics, for instance, when arguing that calls for democratization are more likely to gain momentum when the ruling elites lack sufficient personnel or

equipment to crack down on protesters. In recent years, we have learned quite a bit about subtypes of state capacity (e.g., administrative, extractive, coercive etc.) and about differences among states in scope and reach. In addition to state capacities, we suggest that the study of political order would benefit from including yet another root type of capacity: regime capacities. These capacities help a regime to survive and can be conceptualized at the intersection of structure and agency: as a function of the state’s capacities, on the one side, and the political will of the ruling elites, on the other.

The analysis of regime capacities prevents us from both overstretching the concept of state capacity and inventing too many subtypes of state capacity while at the same time acknowledging that scope and strength of states are not sufficient to explain political stability. Furthermore, this perspective allows us to include agency into the equation by analyzing whether and why the ruling elites are willing to make use of the state’s capacities. Arguably, this depends on how elites relate to one another, how they relate to which segments of society, and how they perceive of themselves and potential threats to their rule. Given her emphasis on the question of who rules, the typology of Barbara Geddes could serve as a starting point to study differences in regime capacities among autocracies. Alternatively, one could draw on the three dimensions identified by Juan Linz to classify dictatorships: a regime’s capacities to mobilize, to manage pluralism, and to ideologize politics.⁸

8. For the first suggestion, see Robert M. Fishman, “Rethinking State and Regime: Southern Europe’s Transition to Democracy” *World Politics* 42(3): 422-440. For the second suggestion, see Stephanie Lawson, “Conceptual Issues in the Comparative Study of Regime Change” *Comparative Politics* 25(2): 183-205; Lucan Way, “Authoritarian Failure: How Does State Weakness Strengthen Electoral Competition?”, in *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*, edited by Andreas Schedler (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2006):

Tracing State-Regime Patterns and Interactions

When it comes to future efforts at theorizing the empirical realities behind the state-regime nexus, three kinds of puzzles are in need of investigation: (1) issues of patterns, (2) issues of temporal sequences, and (3) the mutual influence of both realities. While scholarship on the state-regime nexus is usually empirically driven and ultimately aimed at puzzle solving, theoretically sound concepts are a prerequisite for this endeavor and remain, a constitutive part

167-180. For the third suggestion, see Richard Snyder, “Beyond Electoral Authoritarianism: The Spectrum of Non-Democratic Regimes” in *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*, edited by Andreas Schedler (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006): 219-231. For the suggestion of capacity-centered analyses of states and regimes, see Giraudy, Agustina, “Conceptualizing State Strength: Moving Beyond Strong and Weak States”, *Revista de Ciencia Política* 32(3): 599-611; Hillel Soifer, “Measuring State Capacity in Contemporary Latin America”, *Revista de Ciencia Política*, 32(3): 585-598; Barbara Geddes, “What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?”, *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2(1999): 115-144. Juan J. Linz, “Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes”, in *Handbook of Political Science. Vol. 3*, edited by Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby (Reading, PA: Addison-Wesley, 1975): 175-411. For the first suggestion, see Robert M. Fishman, “Rethinking State and Regime: Southern Europe’s Transition to Democracy”, *World Politics* 42(3): 422-440. For the second suggestion, see Stephanie Lawson, “Conceptual Issues in the Comparative Study of Regime Change”, *Comparative Politics* 25(2): 183-205; Lucan Way, “Authoritarian Failure: How Does State Weakness Strengthen Electoral Competition?”, in *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*, edited by Andreas Schedler (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2006): 167-180. For the third suggestion, see Richard Snyder, “Beyond Electoral Authoritarianism: The Spectrum of Non-Democratic Regimes” in *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*, edited by Andreas Schedler (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006): 219-231. For the suggestion of capacity-centered analyses of states and regimes, see Giraudy, Agustina, “Conceptualizing State Strength: Moving Beyond Strong and Weak States”, *Revista de Ciencia Política* 32(3): 599-611; Hillel Soifer, “Measuring State Capacity in Contemporary Latin America”, *Revista de Ciencia Política*, 32(3): 585-598; Barbara Geddes, “What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?”, *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2(1999): 115-144. Juan J. Linz, “Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes”, in *Handbook of Political Science. Vol. 3*, edited by Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby (Reading, PA: Addison-Wesley, 1975): 175-411.

of the overall agenda since the question of what entities exist logically precedes the question of how two of them relate to one another. Hence, we must establish clear-cut conceptual boundaries before we tackle the following questions.

The first question is: Can we make any statements about the constellations in which state and regime pair? As noted above, the *degree* of state-regime interconnectedness can vary. It is thus challenging, if not impossible, to fully disentangle state and regime empirically – which does not, however, diminish the importance of disentangling them analytically. In fact, state-regime overlaps are, in our opinion, exactly where some of the most interesting puzzles can be found. The central, but rarely asked question is: What is the *nature* of the state-regime relationship? Follow-up questions include whether and which state-regime patterns dominate at certain times and places and if we can observe a convergence towards certain patterns.

The second set of puzzles is about the temporal sequencing of state and regime. The “state first” literature importantly contributes to the state-regime nexus by proposing arguments about which state preconditions are necessary for democratization and democratic consolidation. At the same time, this literature is but one example of the Weberian bias and the democracy bias in scholarship on state-regime puzzles. Other questions about sequencing are less systematically asked, but empirically no less relevant. For example, are there state preconditions to authoritarian consolidation? Or else, which regime characteristics are conducive to large bureaucracies, welfare states, federalism, or other state features?

The third and last type of puzzle is about how changes in state or regime influence the other entity. Periods of change are particularly interesting and illuminating

to uncover state-regime interaction. The first set of phenomena are instances of “regime breakdown” or “state erosion” – illustrating how these events can have serious repercussion on the nature and stability of regime. Second, the interaction of “state-building” and “regime-building” is equally important for understanding this relationship. Analytically, the causal links between the two concepts can, of course, always be approached from both sides: either by tracing the impact of regime features on the state and its capacities or by examining how regime elites use these capacities.

Conclusion

To work on the state-regime nexus is, by and large, to engage in research on (1) constellations in which state and regime characteristics go together and form patterns; (2) the sequencing of features of state and regime; and (3) how and when they induce change in the other. As always, the relationship between states and regimes does not come in a vacuum but in complex contexts. Hence, it is necessary both to be clear about contingencies and to specify conditions that causally effect state-regime dynamics – as Robert Fishman suggests in his contribution to this newsletter. It is therefore important to spell out precisely which mechanisms of state-regime interactions are theoretically at work and to examine empirically whether state and regime do, indeed, co-vary accordingly.

Since conceptual clarity is indispensable for any comparative analysis, we have pointed at a couple of transmission problems and biases in research on the state-regime nexus before sketching actual avenues of investigation. To be clear: We do not believe that there can or should be one definition of state and regime that fits all puzzles, purposes, and perspectives. On the contrary: we appreciate reflections on alternative conceptualizations of the state-regime nexus since conceptual controversies

bear the potential to stimulate efforts at improving and refining explanations and arguments.

Andreas Schedler is probably right in noting that conceptual discussions in the tradition of Giovanni Sartori “often carry therapeutic ambitions”, but in the end, they help structuring and aligning findings, such as those presented by the contributors to the newsletter at hand and to its most recent, closely related issue on democratization and civil conflict.⁹

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9. Andreas Schedler, “Concept Formation”, in *International Encyclopedia of Political Science*, Vol. 2, edited by Badie Bertrand, Dirk Berg-Schlosser, and Leonardo Morlino (London: Sage, 2011): 370-382.

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explicit has encouraged scholars to search for ways to theoretically specify the nature of the state-regime nexus and of its relevance for causal analysis.

Altmeyden and Edel do a fine job of outlining areas that merit future empirical investigation and theoretical work, including the search for probabilistic configurations of association or autonomy between state and regime forms as well as the effort to specify trajectories of co-development or independence between state and regime types. This work must, by necessity, be both conceptual and empirical. Much of the justification for this area of research is rooted in the claim that the analytical distinction between state and regime should be retained even in those political formations in which the two seem to be fused together. My primary proposed addition to their framework for new scholarly investigation is the suggestion that in reality much of the relationship between forms of state and regime organization may be to a large extent *historically contingent* – rather than functionally fixed. If this is indeed so, although research should be able to identify probabilistic regularities in the connection between pathways of state and of regime development, our theoretical framing of such probabilistic patterns ought to recognize the partially open nature of the underlying causal processes at work. In a world of historically contingent relations between state and regime development, much of the task of social science scholarship is to identify the range of possible configurations and their central characteristics.

Without the conceptual leverage provided by the analytical distinction between state and regime, many scholarly objectives – including the actual empirical focus, the predictive expectations and the theoretical import of studies centered on political

order and change – can be difficult to establish with clarity. Samuel Huntington's classic theorization of "political order in changing societies" offers one of the clearest examples of the explanatory and predictive cost of failing to distinguish between types of political institutions, such as state vs. regime structures.¹ Huntington's argument asserted that the overall level of system institutionalization – and therefore of stability in a political system – is a simple function of the strength of its component institutions, thus failing to take up the possibility that different political institutions may generate quite dissimilar effects on system stability. This failure to draw relevant distinctions among political institutions and their significance for political change or continuity led to that author's famously inexact claim that the United States and the Soviet Union shared similar probabilities for long term system survival. In a far more consequential instance of such an analytical "shortfall", this one in the world of practical politics, several decades later American policy-makers launched a war promising to deliver "regime change" in Iraq while in fact focusing their military efforts on the destruction of a state, thereby generating enduring problems of civil strife and internal war. In contrast, in the origins of democracy's "third wave" of worldwide expansion in the mid-1970s, the scholarly distinction between state and regime structures – and between the actors located in those two quite different institutional venues – proved to be quite helpful for understanding the range of cross-case variation in pathways to democracy.² Whether studies center on historical change, cross-national variation, instances of

continuity, or any number of other themes related to systemic performance, and whether the disciplinary home of the analysis lies within political science or sociology, the import of this analytical distinction has proved to be quite large.

The underlying empirical reality which we seek to understand is characterized, in Weberian fashion, by a set of *probabilistic* regularities alongside numerous exceptions to the most common patterns. Historical contingencies, in this view, may play a decisive role in shaping those exceptions and often also in configuring more broad-based patterns. This perspective can be seen as a "friendly amendment" to the framework for study proposed by Altmeyden and Edel. Theories that assert the predominance of functional *necessity* in the connections between state and regime forms tend to miss such dynamics and present us with an inadequate rendering of empirical reality and of the dynamics which shape its development. In quite practical terms this argument implies that efforts to alter (or reinforce) the political order can easily flounder if they fail to appreciate the ways in which historically specific cases of transformation may differentially impact states and regimes or if they fail to take cognizance of historically distinctive patterns of state-regime interconnection which can shape political possibilities.

This approach may strike some as an abandonment of the effort to identify and theorize causal regularities – but it is not intended in that way at all. Indeed, this argument on historical contingency follows directly from the classic Weberian position on methodology with its dual commitment to cross-case theorization – understood always in probabilistic terms – and the simultaneous effort to identify and understand the complexities and historical specificities which

1. Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

2. Robert M. Fishman, "Rethinking State and Regime: Southern Europe's Transition to Democracy" *World Politics* 42 (1990): 422-440.

characterize empirical reality. Although some social scientists may take those twin commitments to be contradictory, for Weber they were constitutive elements of the methodology he elaborated.³ Indeed at its analytical core the state/regime distinction is a quintessentially Weberian one. The classic work of the great Weberian Juan Linz on political regimes and Weber's own work on the state form the crucial conceptual underpinning for this endeavor.

Many scholars of the state-regime nexus look toward Weber, not only in the methodological terms advocated here but also in substantive and theoretical terms – assuming that there must be a strong connection between the development of effective legal rational state structures on the one hand and the consolidation of democratic regimes on the other hand. The rule of law, the elaboration and guarantee of broad civil and political liberties and the provision of public order hold multiple positive implications for the viability of democracy: The bureaucratic principle of equal treatment for all and of the impartial enforcement of laws would appear to provide much needed assurances for oppositions, ordinary citizens and office-holders alike. To put the matter slightly differently, as various theorists have argued, the robust guarantee of legal procedures which is provided in bureaucratic states would appear to lower the stakes of electoral outcomes at least to some extent thereby broadening the support for democracy. However, assuming this theoretical intuition to be well founded, there remains the large question of whether the presumed relationship between the bureaucratic state form and the democratic regime form is to be understood causally as a

3. Robert M. Fishman, "On Being a Weberian (after Spain's 11 – 14 March): Notes on the Continuing Relevance of the Methodological Perspective Proposed by Weber" p. 261-289 in *Max Weber's "Objectivity" Reconsidered*, edited by Laurence McFalls (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

tight functional necessity or instead as a probabilistic pattern that coexists alongside greater or lesser exceptions to the expected outcome. There is, in fact, major empirical evidence in favor of this latter view: Ertman's important comparative historical study of the relationship between state and regime development in early Modern Europe shows substantial independence between these two forms of political organization.⁴ The bureaucratic form of state organization proved not to be a necessary condition for the advance of representative constitutional government in Europe. Moreover Ertman shows that the bureaucratic state was not historically *sufficient* to guarantee the political ascendancy of democracy.

Thus the pre-twentieth century record of political trajectories in Europe offers support for a purely probabilistic linkage or "elective affinity" between bureaucratic state development and political dynamics leading toward a democratic regime. There is, however, no empirical support for a stronger theoretical claim arguing for a fixed functional relationship of necessity between these two political forms – bureaucratic states and democratic regimes. What of the more recent evidence – both from Europe and from other world regions? The thrust of the available evidence seems to confirm this initial impression. In the case of the United States, significant departures from the bureaucratic model of state development – for example high levels of both political patronage and corruption – proved to be compatible with generally high levels of participation by those citizens eligible to do so in nineteenth century American democracy.⁵ Significant shortfalls in the

4. Thomas Ertman, *Birth of the Leviathan: Building States and Regimes in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

5. Peri E. Arnold "Democracy and Corruption in

country's early efforts at state-building – for example the absence of a central-state monopoly on circulating currency until the mid-nineteenth century – coexisted with early steps toward full-scale democratization. In a distant end of the Americas, the small nation of Uruguay offers strong evidence of the absence of state monopoly in another crucial arena: the creation and diffusion of national symbols taken to be constitutive of the democratic polity. Whereas most countries have one national flag – designed or selected by the state – Uruguay has three recognized national flags, one of them the central symbol of the state whereas the other two are symbols of movements that played a crucial role in the country's political history (and which ultimately obtained legal recognition as official flags, in the most recent instance in the mid-twentieth century). Thus, in one of Latin America's most successful democracies we find evidence that the presumed relationship between the state and the development of national symbols such as officially-recognized flags is not fully fixed in universally valid functional terms but instead is subject to at least some cross-case variation as a result of national histories. In this national case we see that a function which is typically filled by the state – namely the elaboration and diffusion of national flags – can instead be filled by political society.

To what extent do such instances of complexity in the relationship between state and regime development effectively require us to theoretically revise the widespread assumption of a functionally fixed relationship between state and regime forms? In their recent judicious theoretical review of the evidence on the connection between state development and democracy, political

the 19th Century United States: Parties, 'Spoils,' and Political Participation," in Seppo Tiihonen (ed.), *The History of Corruption in Central Government* (Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2003), pp. 197-213.

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scientists Sebastian Mazzuca and Gerardo Munck introduce numerous qualifications into the presumed nexus between the bureaucratic state and democratic regimes, for example asserting that democracy and the state can “co-evolve” instead of following a causally fixed sequence of one sort or another. Mazzuca and Munck also effectively discard the curiously resilient (but empirically unsupported) claim that democracy requires the prior existence of a nation-state – as opposed to a pluri-national state. Nonetheless, those two scholars take as a given – indeed as a point of departure for their inquiry – the assumption that “there is no democracy without a state; the state is a definitional aspect of democracy.”⁶ In making that claim Mazzuca and Munck follow a long line of theorization on democracy – and the state.

Although the normal circumstance in the modern world is obviously for regimes to constitute forms of government by power-holders in a state apparatus, I argue that in its genesis democracy – and other regime forms – should not be seen as fully contingent on the existence of a state. Associations, movements, communities of various types and primitive societies all lack the full set of attributes required for membership in the genus of states yet all of these entities can be either democratic or non-democratic

6. See Sebastián Mazzuca and Gerardo Munck, “State or Democracy First: Alternative Perspectives on the State-Democracy Nexus” *Democratization* 21(2014): 1226. For extensive analysis of efforts to build democracy in pluri-national states, see Juan Linz, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown and Reequilibration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America and Post-communist Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); and Alfred Stepan, Juan Linz and Yogendra Tadvad, *Crafting State-Nations: India and other Multinational Democracies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011). For the passage where Mazzuca and Munck argue that ‘there is no democracy without a state’ see Mazzuca and Munck 2014, p. 1221

in their handling of decision-making. To some extent the same can be said of insurgent armies; although they may be seen as proto-states, they tend to lack some attributes of states. Democracies and new regime forms of all sorts can emerge not only from a transformation in the nature of power – and of rules linking power-holding to the rest of society – within an existing state, but also from tendencies and collective action which originate within non-state entities. Those tendencies include not only decision-making practices but also cultural commitments and perspectives which may align with the assumptions of one or another regime type. Scholarly perspectives on democratization which prioritize the significance of movements, and of political contention, in effect argue as much,⁷ and the emergence of democracy in some settler colonies may be understood to constitute another pathway in which self-government is initially rooted in non-state entities.

This argument is not intended to reject the claim that on average failing or unviable states tend to offer highly unfavorable circumstances for the emergence and consolidation of democracy. In fact, that observation – and warning – provides one of the strongest grounds for insisting on the analytical distinction between states and regimes; without this analytical device it would be very difficult to conceptualize the claim that failing states are usually inhospitable environments for democratization. Strategies or pathways of regime-transition which weaken – or fully disable – the state tend to offer a highly inauspicious basis for building and consolidating democracy. However, that assertion fails to capture the existence of significant exceptions to the probabilistic pattern which it identifies.

7. John Markoff, *Waves of Democracy: Social Movements and Political Change* (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 1996).

Despite the analytical importance of differentiating between state and regime, in many political systems the two are thoroughly intertwined with one another in ways that may introduce limitations on the ability of the existing state apparatus to remain in place and fully viable in the context of regime change. To put the matter slightly differently, in certain political formations the state and regime are so strongly identified with one another that it may prove difficult for actors or observers to imagine a pathway of fundamental regime change that leaves existing state structures intact. This is the case not only in instances of “sultanistic”⁸ or neo-patrimonial regimes – in which the ruler’s personal enrichment and networks come to fully dominate both state and regime – but also in totalitarian systems and other political formations in which the regime “refounds” the state and thoroughly dominates its ethos and identity. In such settings many political actors may question whether the existing state apparatus would be able to effectively operate in a thoroughly transformed regime. A politically compromised state apparatus could theoretically be displaced during instances of regime change or could succumb to state erosion. Of course, that scenario could easily lead to a weakened or incapacitated state – instead of a viable new apparatus freed up from the association with a failed regime.

Thus at least two configurations of the state-regime nexus – the tight intertwining of the two political forms, seemingly binding them together as politically-linked components of anti-democratic rule, and the severe erosion or weakening of the state apparatus in the context of regime change – might seem to provide a highly inauspicious

8. H.E. Chehabi and Juan Linz, Eds. *Sultanistic Regimes* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

basis for successful democratization. However, I argue that this negative effect is simply probabilistic in nature. I specify below two exceptions to the expected probabilistic pattern. These scenarios are not intended to capture all possibilities; they are simply meant to illustrate the historical contingencies which underpin the broad range of possible outcomes.

In defeated states which proved unsuccessful in war, the erosion or even total collapse of domestic administrative and coercive capacities may be compatible with successful democratization if the victorious powers are able to simultaneously install a new state apparatus and democratic institutions. Yet as Stepan argues, that scenario can only succeed if the new externally imposed order enjoys widespread domestic legitimacy.⁹ That outcome, Stepan reasons, was possible in post-World War II settings because of the thoroughly discredited nature of the defeated fascist systems. However, that circumstance was, in Stepan's analysis, a great historical exception. Thus the first significant qualification to the most common pattern was contingent on the specific character of World War II and the anti-democratic regimes united in the Axis powers. In earlier historical settings, such as the end of World War I, the defeat of non-democratic rulers proved to offer an inhospitable environment for the emergence of durable democratic rule.

Perhaps the most interesting case – and scenario – for our theoretical purposes is one in which a major state crisis gave way to the successful revolutionary regeneration of the state – at a time

of democratic regime founding. In Portugal, a 1974 military coup led by captains joined together in the Armed Forces Movement put an end to that country's unsuccessful colonial war in Africa and to decades of right-wing authoritarian rule. This hierarchy-challenging military coup, and the colonial war which helped to precipitate it, brought about a state crisis and a period of social mobilization which quickly developed into a historically unusual pathway to democracy – that of social revolution. Portugal's democratizing social revolution left in place a state apparatus marked by its revolutionary remaking and a new democratic regime marked by cultural assumptions, forms of practice and policy outcomes which were far more socially inclusionary than those which characterized otherwise similar democratic systems such as that of Spain. The contrast between Portugal and Spain is especially illuminating from the standpoint of this paper's theoretical concerns. In the Spanish case, state institutions linked to that country's decades-long Franco regime survived the post-Franco democratic transition largely intact – thereby conditioning the new political reality. In Portugal, the post-authoritarian transformation encompassed state, regime and society – generating much more thorough-going change following a period of state crisis in the close aftermath of the 1974 coup. If in an ahistorical and fixed way, state stability invariably provided a stronger basis for democratization – and democratic regime stability – than the crisis and revolutionary remaking of state institutions, Spanish democracy would be significantly advantaged over Portuguese democracy, but that is not the case.¹⁰ This is not to argue that all

instances of social revolution are more favorable to democratic outcomes than regime transitions carried out under conditions of state continuity. Clearly such an argument would be wrong on multiple grounds and would clash with the evidence provided by many cases. However, the Portuguese/Spanish comparison clearly does indicate that the implications of state crisis for successful democratic regime transition can under certain conditions be strongly positive.

If the range of possible state-regime configurations is in fact quite large and if it is strongly marked by historical contingencies, the causal relevance of such configurations may be best studied by focusing on rather fine-grained dependent variables – instead of simply trying to explain regime type. It may be useful to try to account for outcomes on different dimensions of variation in democracy, a theme on which numerous recent efforts have focused. In doing so, scholarly efforts should build on both conceptual and empirical work that strives to make theoretical advances without losing sight of historical contingencies. Analytical distinctions such as the one identified by the state/regime nexus are essential if empirical research is to realize its full potential to generate deeply meaningful and useful conclusions.

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9. Alfred Stepan, "Paths toward Redemocratization: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives", in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead (eds.) *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp. 64-84.

10. For a highly useful general history of the Portuguese Revolution, see Kenneth Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). For the most important scholarly analysis of the social revolution, see Nancy Bermeo, *Revolution within the Revolution*

(Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986). On the enduring legacies of Portugal's historically unusual social revolutionary path to democracy, and some contrasts with Spain, see Robert M. Fishman "Democratic Practice after the Revolution: The Case of Portugal and Beyond" *Politics & Society*, 39(2011): 233-267.

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collection of institutional patterns of colonial rule despite (distinct but broad) similarities in their colonial states—enables a causally robust interrogation of how distinct state and regimes patterns developed in the South Asian corner of the post-colonial world.

In India, the presence of stable coalitions of support, organizational depth and programmatic agendas within the nationalist movement enabled the newly independent government to quickly subordinate the rump colonial military and bureaucracy. In Pakistan, a weak and relatively recent nationalist movement governed the newly formed state. When regional elites in Pakistan resisted the governing directives of the central government, the central government utilized the support of the erstwhile colonial military and bureaucracy. Absent a predictable elite support for the party, Pakistan's nationalist movement-turned-government needed the colonial bureaucratic and military to enforce its mandate. Because the central government proved unable to gain the assent of local elites to govern, the central government relied on state institutions to govern by, for example, imposing martial law in a large city. Progressively, local elites made common cause with the state institutions for the latter to directly assume governing powers. After two unconstitutional dismissals of the central government, the military assumed power in a 1958 coup. Therewith, the empirical distinction between the state and the regime collapsed. Since this formative decade, though Pakistan has oscillated between democracy and autocracy, the clearest empirical regularity has been instability in regime type that stems from the fusion of state institutions and political power. These distinct regime-state patterns were the path-dependent result of differing degrees of

organizational development within the nationalist moment at the moment of colonial independence.

A Definitional Detour

A brief detour into definitions is in order. Drawing on Fishman, I define a regime as the “formal or informal institutions at the center of political power, and of its relations with broader society [determining]. . . . who has access to political power and how those who are in power deal with those who are not.” A state is instead a “more permanent structure of domination and coordination, including the coercive apparatus and the means to administer a society and extract resources from it.”¹ The analytical distinction between these two is not always matched by an empirical distinction, for doing so depends on regime type.

I focus upon the state institutions of the military and administrative bureaucracy and show that the divergent regime-state patterns in Pakistan and India emerged because the Indian nationalist movement was and the Pakistani nationalist movement was not able to subordinate these institutions. At independence, the balance of power between the nationalist movement on the one hand and the colonial military and bureaucracy on the other hand lay at the heart of the divergent state-regime nexus.

Reform and Reaction: From Colonial Regimes to Varied National Movements

A thin colonial state was established throughout British colonial India throughout the 17th and 18th centuries and gradually expanded by the state-sponsored but not state-run East India Company. In 1858, Britain directly assumed power over the colonial regime and formed an elite bureaucracy—

the Indian Civil Service. A standing colonial army was also recruited from geographically concentrated ethnic groups.

The growth of nationalist movements in India and Pakistan emerged out of elites with different incentives to establish programmatic organizations. Throughout the 19th century in India, the growing ranks of the British-educated indigenous elite formed an incipient nationalist movement to achieve greater electorally-driven representation within the colonial government from which that class alone would benefit. Started in 1885 by British-educated, upper-caste and urban elite working to overcome ubiquitous regional and linguistic divisions, the Indian nationalist movement (Indian National Congress) embraced limited measures reform only within the context of loyalism to colonial rule.

Over time, as it was successful in gaining limited concessions from the colonial regime, the Indian national movements' push for electoral representation was threatening to a different set of elites who were both supportive of and supported by the colonial regime. Political support for colonial rule was underpinned by a large, landowning elite across swathes of northern India. In the United Provinces (today's Uttar Pradesh or UP), both the landowning class and the government civil servants were disproportionately Muslim. The introduction of limited elections to replace nominations diminished the representation of this Urdu-speaking, predominantly Muslim elite in colonial governing councils with urban, educated Hindu elites. Reaction to the growing clout of the Indian nationalist movement also emerged in the form of the nationalist movement for Pakistan—the Muslim League—

1. Robert Fishman, “Rethinking State and Regime: Southern Europe's Transition to Democracy,” *World Politics* 42(3): 422-440.

established in 1906.

This movement to protect the interests of the UP Muslim elite initially grew powerful because it was cultivated by the colonial regime as a bulwark against claims for political reform. The short-term goal of the Muslim League was to lobby for separate electorates. Granted in 1909, separate electorates – which fixed a number of seats in colonial legislative councils to Muslims and only allowed Muslims to vote for these seats—guaranteed the relevance of Muslim minorities to strategic negotiations between the colonial regime and the growing Indian nationalist movement. Separate electorates also insulated the Muslim League from any need to organize until national independence was imminent for India. Thus, early colonial guarantees paradoxically helped to ensure that Pakistan's nationalist movement would simultaneously remain politically relevant and organizationally sclerotic.

In short, the nationalist movements for India and Pakistan differentially developed throughout the pre-independence decades in order to promote the interests of the elites represented within those movements. The need for mass political support to advance the nationalist claims of the upper-caste, urban, educated elites represented within Indian's nationalist movement impelled its programmatic and organizational development through three means: first, by creating coalitions with rural socially powerful dominant peasants groups in rural India on the basis of more favorable land revenue treatment; second, by articulating a slew of programmatic goals such as village uplift, the rejection of caste identities and the promotion of import-substitution industrial policy; and third by organizing a robust and

linguistically accessible organization that had representatives in every district and which promoted national leaders from within the ranks of the party.

In contrast, for all but the very last decade before independence, Pakistan's nationalist movement was neither a nationalist movement nor particularly developed along coalitional, programmatic or organizational dimensions. Only when Congress' sweep of regional elections made colonial independence an imminent reality did the Muslim League begin to build coalitions, develop organizations and articulate platforms. But the last-minute nature of the mobilization inhibited possibilities of mobilizing new political coalitions. Instead, in a desperate bid to maintain power, the nationalist movement resorted to allying with existing organizations in the Muslim-majority regions. These organizations—a coalition of large landlords in what would become West Pakistan and a smallholding peasant-rights movement in what would become East Pakistan—represented diametrically opposed class interests, rendering it nigh-impossible for Pakistan's nationalist movement to develop organizationally or programmatically. While a short-term coalition with the national Muslim League was sufficient to achieve sovereignty for Pakistan, the regional elites within the national movement developed neither shared interests within nor the organizational commitment to the national party.

Independence & State-Regime Sequencing

Independence and the partition of colonial India into two successor states of India and Pakistan happened simultaneously in 1947, amidst immense bloodshed and one of the greatest mass migrations in human history as millions

relocated and the erstwhile colonial state institutions were cleaved into two successor states. In both countries, *de jure* power was held by the Constituent Assemblies tasked with drawing up constitutions. These Assemblies were in both countries dominated by the nationalist movements, to which three-quarters of their respective Assembly representatives belonged, though Pakistan received a greater-than-proportionate share of military officers and a greater share of migrants than India.

A detailed examination of the post-independence political developments shows that the most striking difference in the two countries was how the nationalist movements differed in where *de facto* governing power was held—what Fishman (1990) would define as the regime. As I detail elsewhere, India's nationalist movement possessed the political power to strike compromises among the major social groups represented within their newly created country while Pakistan's Muslim League did not.² The Indian National Congress's ability to govern and discipline regional elites stemmed from a prolonged pursuit of colonial independence – in which it had developed a coherent, organized, programmatic party that could and sometimes did function independently of the socio-economic interests represented within it. Over the decades that the nationalist party mobilized in the shared pursuit of national sovereignty, mobilization, regional elites occasionally subordinating regional interests to national ones. Over time, as the nationalist party had emerged victorious in regional elections and even in achieving independence, the party became the regime because

2. Maya Tudor, *The Promise of Power: The Origins of Democracy in India and Autocracy in Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Tudor

it became the primary vehicle for accessing political power.

Pakistan's nationalist movement never fully functioned independently of the interests of regional elites. The Muslim League, which had been headquartered in a region that remained in India, mobilized support in areas that became Pakistan only in the few years before independence when colonial departure was imminent. The regional elites in the two provinces with a vast majority of the new country's population—Punjab and Bengal—opportunistically joined the Muslim League less than five years before independence, and then only in order to influence negotiations over the possibility of creating Pakistan. In most every province of the new state, regional elites held power and were able to thwart the agendas of the central government. Moreover, because the two regions with a large majority of the population—large landowning elites of Punjab and the peasant movement leaders of Bengal—shared very little in the way of political or economic interests, the Constituent Assembly remained deadlocked on major issues of state design.

Disentangling the state-regime nexus in these two newly independent countries requires examining whether and how the new regimes or structures of power in place after colonial departure were able to govern independently of the colonial institutions left behind. Both nationalist movements had mobilized millions of supporters to vote, to march, and to protest before independence. But only in India was the nationalist movement organized enough to gain the long-term commitment of regional elites in the decades before independence. Because of this power to gain the assent and subordination of regional elites, the Indian nationalist movement was able to quickly create a constitution that

gained the consent of regional elites. Divisive questions over, for example, federal versus state powersharing were resolved by reminding elites about the programmatic commitments that had served as the organizing impetus of the nationalist movement for decades. A strong national movement, led by an entire cadre of well-respected independence-era leaders, effectively subordinated the military protest on occasion, by for example, creating a Defense Minister superior to the Commander-in-Chief of the army.

In contrast, the nationalist movement in Pakistan was not able to gain the assent of regional elites on similarly divisive issues. When central government clashed with regional governments in Pakistan and questions of power-sharing arose, the central government was not able to gain the assent of regional leaders, who simply exited the Muslim League and formed opposition movements and parties. The national Muslim League did not possess an internally disciplined party organization able to forge consensus, as did the nationalist movement in India. Because Pakistan's government had shallow roots of support in the very areas it now governed, it needed to rely on the military and the bureaucracy to enforce its writ. The first instance of martial law in 1953 occurred because the central government needed to call in the military to put down riots in Lahore fomented by Punjabi elites who were revolting against the writ of the central government.

Conclusion

In the middle of the twentieth century, colonial independence formally wrenched apart Europe's political regimes from the thin, extractive states they had established across Asia. Yet what would ultimately replace the colonial regime hinged on the

resources available to new rulers. If nationalist or other social movements had struck stable, well-organized and programmatic alliances with rural social forces, rulers could and often did utilize these movements to govern, offering up the possibility of relegating inherited colonial state institutions to supporting roles in an emerging political drama. In these cases, regimes and states became distinct.

The opening essay for this newsletter urged authors to move towards generalizations about the degree of 'interconnectedness' between states and regimes. The answer that I have developed here is that in postcolonial South Asia, during the moments of profound upheaval accompanying the departure of the British colonial regime, the connection between states and regimes that ultimately emerged was a function of the degree to which nationalist movements were able to broker political order.

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number of mechanisms some of which should be observed if the co-variation is causal.

Disaggregating the state

I here present a variety of state weaknesses. The weaknesses mirror three attributes of the state taken from the Weberian understanding of the state – monopoly on violence, administrative effectiveness, and citizenship agreement – with related components.

Monopoly on violence entails the capacity of the military and police to impose public order throughout the territory of the state. This involves three necessary and jointly sufficient components. First, the state must acquire resource supremacy, i.e. be superior in coercive capacities relative to the capacities of all societal forces combined. Second, monopoly on violence implies high cohesion among the security forces. That is, the military and police are effectively functioning hierarchical organizations with professionally trained members. Third, the military and police organizations must accept ultimate subordination to the political executive in matters of their organizational interests (salary, level of administrative autonomy, and political prerogatives) – whether the executive is democratically elected, a civilian autocrat, or a military leader.⁴ If the military and police do not connect with the political executive, they form a parallel state rather than *the* state's monopoly on violence. Non-subordination is identified by a pattern of conflicts with the political level over the organizational interests of the security forces prior to the breakdown of democracy.

Administrative effectiveness is the capacity of the civil service, including the judiciary, to construct and implement

4. Alfred C. Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), Ch. 6.

policies regarding public services and regulations accurately, swiftly, and with high quality throughout the territory. The three components here are, first, territorial penetration by basic administrative infrastructures. Second, administrative effectiveness hinges on a functioning meritocracy, i.e. a civil service personnel mostly recruited and promoted on merit. The third requirement regards the responsiveness of the civil service implying a willingness to serve with equal effectiveness any government decision.⁵ Unresponsiveness is identified by a pattern of interrupted or sabotaged implementation of government policies prior to the democratic breakdown.

Citizenship agreement is different from the other two attributes by concerning the people within the state and not the state apparatus as such. However, citizenship agreement is the basis of the state's territorial integrity in Linz and Stepan's view. It is the sheer agreement on who are and could potentially be the members of the state. The first component, mutual group acceptance, requires that the significant ethnic groups (along racial, religious, or linguistic lines) inside the state territory accept each other's presence. Second, it entails a measure of state legitimacy – that is, a non-conflictual view of the state as an ethno-cultural symbol.⁶ Ethnic conflicts and state illegitimacy are identified by severe grievances between ethnic groups or against the state as an ethno-cultural symbol prior to the democratic breakdown.

Based on the authoritative codings of Boix, Miller, and Rosato, I define

5. Patrick Dunleavy, "Bureaucrats, Budgets and the Growth of the State: Reconstructing an Instrumental Model," *British Journal of Political Science* 15 (July 1985): 299-328; James E. Rauch and Peter B. Evans, "Bureaucratic structure and bureaucratic performance in less developed countries," *Journal of Public Economics* 75 (January 2000): 49-71.

6. Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition*, 16.

democracy as a political regime producing governments from free and fair elections with suffrage for at least half of the adult male population.⁷ Just as the three state attributes are likely interrelated, so are the mechanisms that connect each of them with democratic breakdown. Yet, to evaluate their relative importance we can separate them analytically.

Mechanisms of a disputed monopoly on violence

A disputed monopoly on violence – either via resource problems, lack of coherence, lack of subordination, or some combination of these deficiencies – may spur two mechanisms leading to democratic breakdown.⁸ I term the first mechanism an 'authoritarian restoration'. If the problem is incohesion, frustrated by stalled implementation or internal disagreement about the appropriate means to be employed in containing demonstrators, rebels, or coup plotters enable opposition or incumbent elites to succeed in a coup d'état or rebellion. Thus, anti-systemic forces are actually fought but without success. Alternatively, if the problem is insubordination, the state security forces initiate a coup d'état to restore their organizational powers. Conflicts with the civilian sphere radicalize military or police officials and provoke them to oust the elected incumbent.

The other mechanism regards a 'security delegitimation'. This results from problems of controlling crime and public order. Either the security forces lack the resources or organizational coordination to provide public security. As a

7. Carles Boix, Michael Miller, and Sebastian Rosato, "A Complete Data Set of Political Regimes, 1800-2007," *Comparative Political Studies* 5 (2012): 8.

8. See e.g. Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics*, Chs. 6-7; Charles Tilly, *Democracy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); and Bo Rothstein, *The Quality of Government* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2011).

consequence, the output performance of the regime in terms of security is hampered. This leads to revolution or civil war, invites a strongman to take dictatorial powers to restore public order, or provokes the installation of a permanent martial law.

Mechanisms of administrative ineffectiveness

At least three mechanisms of administrative ineffectiveness may lead to democratic breakdown.⁹ The first mechanism, 'socioeconomic delegitimation', occurs when an economic recession or stagnation produces social hardships which raise grievances in the broader public. If the civil service is unresponsive or politicized, poor performance in servicing the government with public policy proposals addressing the hardships and implementing the policies rigorously ensues. The output performance of the civil service reflects upon the government's legitimacy among the public. This raises the risk that aggrieved crowds turn anti-systemic and call for a bureaucratic authoritarian system. Eventually, coup plotters or rebellious groups crystallize.

The second and third mechanisms are termed 'elite bias delegitimation' and 'mass bias legitimation', respectively. Both are limited to the cases where recruitment to the civil service is based on political or social concerns rather than merit. Given the direct dependence of their job on the will of the elected incumbents, civil servants in such systems provide less credible limits to executive power and are thus more likely to engage in biased policies in matters of socioeconomic distribution or breach the rule of law to discriminate

or outright suppress the opposition. The opposition then rallies to 'end the injustices' and attempt to oust the government or provoke the government or military to initiate a precautionary coup d'état. While the process in the elite-based mechanism is structured around foreseeable party political polarization and is thus relatively easy to predict, the mass-based process is muddier, often ends in rebellion, and has the particular explosive potential to lead to civil war.

Mechanisms of Citizenship Disagreement

The mechanisms of citizenship disagreement do not stem directly from weaknesses in the state apparatus but from problems with the state's territorial integrity. This directly evaluates Linz and Stepan's proposition of 'stateness'. One mechanism connecting citizenship disagreement with democratic breakdown regards a process of 'citizenship violence'.¹⁰ Ethnic identity differences lead to high levels of interethnic violence. If the problem instead pertains to state illegitimacy, we might also see violent attacks on state symbols and representatives. Any attempts to protect public order and contain coup attempts are less likely to succeed if ethnically based violence is frequent because such violence tends to be more extreme and persistent. One ethnic group then demand concessions that spur counter-reactions from other ethnic groups, based in state institutions or not. This leads to a variety of attacks on the democratic order. Alternatively, the state security forces take action and install a military dictatorship to end violence.

Another mechanism is 'citizenship

injustices'. When ethnically based citizenship disagreements exist, the ability for parliament to manage a strained economic situation may be undermined because distribution of socioeconomic goods augments existing ethnic cleavages. If this is the case, I expect that ethnic divisions in parliament polarize the parties on a scale of ethnic and socioeconomic distribution thus hindering viable compromises. This centrifugalism radicalizes ethnic groups, inside or outside of the political elite, and lead to the same destabilizing situation as under the mechanism of citizenship violence.

The state in the interwar democratic breakdowns

Based on Boix, Miller, and Rosato's coding, 14 democracies broke down between 1918 and 1939. I have coded the presence/absence of the three attributes, including the eight components, in all democratic years prior to breakdown and the observable implications of the mechanisms. Full analyses of all cases, including coding rules and threshold ambiguities, are available upon request. I also engaged a research assistant to code 5 of the 14 cases by random selection (Greece 1926-1936; Germany 1919-1933; Lithuania 1920-1926; Uruguay 1919-1934; Portugal 1918-1926) as a reliability check on my own codings.

Observing a given mechanism only makes sense if the relevant state attribute was absent in the year of breakdown. Before identifying any mechanisms, Table 1 thus notes weaknesses in the state attributes and their components in the year of democratic breakdown.

Focusing on the state weaknesses pertaining to monopoly on violence, only one case, Estonia, exhibits monopoly on violence. I thus exclude Estonia from the analysis of the mechanisms of authoritarian

9. See e.g. Guillermo O'Donnell, *Democracy, Agency, and the State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Agnes Cornell and Victor Lapuente, "Meritocratic administration and democratic stability," *Democratization* 21 (Nov. 2014): 1286-1304.

10. Apart from Linz and Stepan, see e.g. Alberto Alesina et al., "Fractionalization," *Journal of Economic Growth* 8 (June 2003): 155-194; Andreas Wimmer, *Waves of War: Nationalism, State Formation, and Ethnic Exclusion in the Modern World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

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Table 1: Interwar state weaknesses in the year of democratic breakdown

Case (spell)	Monopoly on violence			Administrative effectiveness			Citizenship agreement	
	Resource supremacy	Cohesion	Subordination	Territorial penetration	Meritocracy	Responsiveness	Mutual group acceptance	State legitimacy
Italy (1919-1922)	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Chile (1918-1925)		x	x		x	x	x	x
Poland (1918-1926)		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Portugal (1918-1926)		x	x		x	x		
Lithuania (1920-1926)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Yugoslavia (1921-1929)	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Argentina (1918-1931)		x	x	x	x	x		
Germany (1919-1933)			x			x	x	x
Austria (1920-1933)	x							x
Estonia (1919-1934)					x	x		
Uruguay (1919-1934)		x	x		x	x		
Latvia (1920-1934)			x		x	x	x	x
Greece (1926-1936)	x	x	x		x	x	x	
Spain (1931-1937)	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Cases without component	6	10	12	3	12	13	9	9
Cases without attribute		13			13		10	

restoration and security delegitimation. In 5 of 14 cases, the military and police lack resource supremacy. By contrast, no less than 10 and 12 cases lack cohesion and subordination, respectively. This discrepancy between the three components of monopoly on violence indicates the importance of disaggregation: Based only on resource supremacy, we would infer that monopoly on violence was present in 8 of 14 cases (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Portugal, Germany, Latvia, Greece, and Poland). These 8 cases would not be considered for the analysis of mechanisms even though they, according to my coding, comprise state weaknesses that may have been highly relevant for democratic breakdown. The distinction between cohesion and subordination of the security forces seems less relevant. A discrepancy of merely one case nevertheless in principle justifies disaggregation.

The only democracy that had achieved administrative effectiveness in the year of breakdown is Austria. Challenges to

territorial penetration exist in only 3 of 14 cases whereas the arguably more demanding components of meritocracy and responsiveness are weak in 12 and 13 cases, respectively. Again, disaggregation to the component level is vital to assess the relative number of mechanisms accurately even though the distinction between meritocracy and responsiveness is less relevant. For both monopoly on violence and administrative effectiveness, the most important distinction is between extending state authority (resource supremacy and territorial penetration) and improving the organizational quality of that authority (cohesion, subordination, meritocracy, and responsiveness).

We find citizenship agreement in 4 of 14 cases (Argentina, Estonia, Uruguay, and Portugal). Disrespect between ethnic groups as well as state illegitimacy existed in 9 of 14 cases. The overlap of these two components is thus large but focusing on only one of them still leads to questionable exclusions of 2 cases (Austria and Greece) from the

consideration of mechanisms.

The most dominating observation is of multiple weaknesses in the three state attributes in the year of breakdown. Disputed monopoly on violence, administrative ineffectiveness, and citizenship disagreement are all represented by more than two-thirds of the cases. But no democracy was strong on all three attributes. This indicates the fruitfulness of disaggregation. If basing the judgment on only one attribute, we run the risk of excluding 5 cases from the consideration of mechanisms thus potentially miscalculating the effect of the attributes.

I now analyze the observed mechanisms of each attribute in turn (see Table 2). Security delegitimation and authoritarian restorations can be identified in 5 and 8 cases, respectively. In 3 cases with disputed monopoly on violence, no mechanisms are found. However, taken together authoritarian restoration and security delegitimation occurred 13 times in 10 different cases

Table 2: Mechanisms connecting interwar state weaknesses with democratic breakdown

Case (breakdown year)	Disputed monopoly on violence		Administrative ineffectiveness			Citizenship disagreement	
	Authoritarian restoration	Security delegiti- mation	Socio- economic delegitimation	Elite bias delegitimation	Mass bias delegitimation	Citizenship violence	Citizenship injustices
Italy (1922)	x	x			x	x	x
Chile (1925)	x		x				
Poland (1926)	x		x				x
Portugal (1926)	x	x	x	x			
Lithuania (1926)	x						x
Yugoslavia (1929)		x		x	x	x	x
Argentina (1931)	x		x		x		
Germany (1933)		x	x				x
Austria (1933)							
Estonia (1934)							
Uruguay (1934)				x			
Latvia (1934)							x
Greece (1936)	x	x	x	x	x		
Spain (1937)	x		x	x	x		x
<i>Cases with mechanism</i>	8	5	7	5	5	2	7
<i>Cases with mechanism by attribute</i>	10		10			7	
<i>Mechanisms by attribute</i>	13		17			9	

indicating that disputed monopoly on violence was an important explanation for democratic breakdown in the interwar period.

Socioeconomic delegitimation is observed 7 times and elite and mass bias delegitimation 5 times each. The mechanisms together are observed 17 times in 10 different cases. Whereas no mechanisms of administrative ineffectiveness explain the 3 Baltic breakdowns, administrative ineffectiveness was generally an important explanation. Just as those of monopoly on violence, the mechanisms further apply to a varied group of countries.

Citizenship violence and citizenship injustices are observed 2 and 7 times, respectively. In total, they apply 9 times to a varied group of 7 cases. 3 cases are left unexplained. While citizenship

disagreements thus still appear important, it seems less important than the other attributes. Given our prior knowledge of a co-variation between a strong state and interwar democratic stability, the state-democracy relationship is likely driven by a variety of mechanisms related to weaknesses in monopoly on violence and administrative effectiveness but less so in citizenship agreement.

The importance of state disaggregation The previous analysis indicates the importance of all three state attributes for the interwar democratic breakdowns. But the diversity of state weaknesses and number and type of mechanisms observed amount to different explanatory strengths of the attributes and indicate that their effects cover multiple causal interpretations with different actors and processes. The multiple influences of the state in the interwar democratic breakdowns thus illustrate well that

disaggregating the state is not only stimulating for academics but warranted if we want to invest in those state- and nation-building projects that are likely to pay off most on the ground. Nevertheless, the interwar breakdowns yield conclusions that may be amended when more recent democratic breakdowns occurring in different international contexts and postcolonial societies are included. Future state-democracy research should thus pay attention to regional specifics of state and regime while employing universally applicable concepts of the state that are clearly demarcated from the regime.

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and development of organizational and ideological pluralism that might evolve into outright and open opposition, and thereby put the regime's power monopoly in jeopardy. Authoritarianism requires not just an attitude of intolerance toward opposition and pluralism, but actions to curtail them.

Our definition of authoritarianism clearly encompasses cases where rulers deliberately deploy state agencies for the explicit goal of suppressing opponents. Yet it is also designed to capture those cases in which state agencies have been structured in a way that forecloses opportunities for independent mobilization and the formation of new political alternatives – even when such authoritarian outcomes cannot be directly traced to a particular autocrat's repressive move. In both scenarios, it is state institutions that hamper, hinder, and foreclose the development of pluralism, imparting to authoritarianism its distinctive political features: a dearth of political alternatives and control based on recourse to force rather than consent.

Defining authoritarianism thus requires a working definition of the state. Different intellectual traditions place different boundaries around the category of state institutions, however, and we do not aim to resolve those deep differences here. Weberian scholars may continue to explore state institutions as if they enjoy some relative autonomy from society, while Foucauldians continue to treat the state-society boundary skeptically as an object of analysis. For our purposes, any institution invested with sovereign governmental powers has at least the potential to hinder opposition and pluralism in ways that make politics authoritarian. Most of the specific institutions we discuss in this essay are the “infrastructural institutions” that

implement regime commands, primarily through the bureaucracy. It is more of an open empirical question to what extent the work of limiting pluralism is also accomplished by decision-making “despotic institutions,”² including parliaments and elections, that determine what those regime commands will actually be – and whose status as “state institutions” may be more uncertain.

If authoritarianism takes a state, does it necessarily take a *strong* state? In cases of extreme state weakness, a regime might cease to be experienced as authoritarian simply because its state institutions are too frail to prevent opposition from developing.³ Such political arrangements do not necessarily fit conventional criteria for democracy. We propose, therefore, that authoritarianism's most exact opposite is not democracy – which demands much more than an absence of opposition repression – but *pluralism*: a system in which multiple organized actors with different sets of values share access to various forms of power.

By opposing authoritarianism to pluralism, we propose a disruption of the post-Cold War dichotomous relationship between authoritarianism and democracy. A regime that fails to be authoritarian should not automatically be awarded democratic laurels, nor should a regime that fails in some way to be democratic automatically be consigned to authoritarian status. This allows us to define one regime type

2. Dan Slater, “Iron Cage in an Iron Fist: Authoritarian Institutions and the Personalization of Power in Malaysia,” *Comparative Politics* (2003): 81-101; Michael Mann, “The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms, and Results,” *European Journal of Sociology* 25(2): 185-213.

3. A state of affairs observed by Way in Eastern Europe and Wedeen in Yemen (Lucan Way, “Pluralism by default in Moldova,” *Journal of Democracy* 13(4): 127-141; and Lisa Wedeen, *Peripheral Visions: Power, Publics, and Performance in Yemen* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

without defining the other – to liberate our studies of authoritarianism from the normatively-laden and seemingly unending work of defining democracy.

Lest we appear to be defining authoritarianism residually yet again, however, it is essential to clarify that an authoritarian regime is not one that happens to lack pluralism, in the same sense that it is currently defined as regimes lacking free and fair elections, for example. An authoritarian regime, in our positive definition, is *one in which state power has been organized and deployed so as to hamstring the emergence of pluralism and, therefore, opposition*. Authoritarianism is not simply the absence of pluralism; it is active anti-pluralism that works primarily through the exercise of state power.

Defining authoritarianism on its own terms is the essential first conceptual step toward ridding our regime studies of their democratic bias. As we will discuss below, in the critical case of authoritarian distribution, canonical theories of authoritarianism often build on democratic assumptions, many of which stem from the basic democratic principle of politics as a straightforward exchange of policies, influence, or benefits for political support. Democratic systems are, after all, supposed to be those in which citizens' consent is freely and voluntarily given and retracted in response to ruler performance. When we argue that authoritarian ruling parties work by sharing power among elites, that members of an authoritarian ruling coalition must (s) elect and approve of their leaders, or that authoritarian parliaments serve regimes by aggregating interests, we conceptualize authoritarianism as if it were fundamentally similar to democracy: that is, as a group of freely-gathered people using their

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collective decision-making power to choose the ruler who will provide them with a preferred mix of goods. We argue, by contrast, that even in the case of economic distribution – where authoritarian politics often seem most contractual – what the authoritarian state is actually up to is more sinister: hindering pluralism and forestalling opposition.

Coercive Distribution and Its Theoretical Alternatives

In what remains of this essay, we demonstrate the analytical payoff of our definition of authoritarianism through an analysis of one subset of authoritarian state power: what we call coercive distribution.⁴ Our definition sheds light on a persistent puzzle in the literature on authoritarian political economy: why do authoritarian regimes, free from the requirement that they must compete on a level playing field to earn citizens' votes, ever undertake broad distributive programs? In democratic contexts, voter preferences and interest group pressures are expected to determine the distribution of resources; the imperative to appease the median voter is supposed to produce broad distribution that roughly resembles the provision of public goods. At first glance, authoritarian regimes are relatively free of such pressures and thus should not distribute broadly. Yet many autocratic regimes do in fact undertake broad, costly distributive programs. To account for this inconvenient empirical fact, scholars have tended to re-conceptualize authoritarian regimes as quasi-democracies, focusing on how distribution serves democratic aims of attraction and appeasement by endearing citizens and powerful elites alike to their rulers. Let us briefly consider four leading accounts of authoritarian distribution: 1) selectorate, 2) squeaky

wheel, 3) punishment regime, and 4) performance legitimacy models.

Selectorate models of distribution minimize the structural differences between authoritarian and democratic regimes by reimagining authoritarianism as democracy with a highly limited (s) electorate.⁵ Both authoritarian and democratic rulers must use distributive buyoffs to gain the support of a winning coalition in order to survive in power; the only meaningful difference between the two regime types is that the typical authoritarian winning coalition includes only a small minority of citizens. In both types of regime, rulers offer benefits to members of the winning coalition, who then reciprocate with political support. Indeed, it is not entirely clear in selectorate theory that an authoritarian regime with a broad winning coalition (in relationship to its selectorate) is in any significant way different from a run-of-the-mill majoritarian democracy. In both cases, the fundamental logic of rule is the same: citizens exchange political support for material benefits.

Selectorate theories therefore struggle to account for broad authoritarian distribution precisely because they assume that resources should only be offered to those whose political approval is absolutely necessary. This is especially true in electoral authoritarian regimes, where the winning coalition is small but the selectorate is technically quite large, producing a small W/S ratio that, according to selectorate models, should lead to narrow distribution. Yet electoral authoritarian regimes – as examples below will illustrate – number among the most distributive known authoritarian regimes.

Another common account of

authoritarian distribution, which we call the “squeaky wheel” perspective, similarly imports a democratic logic of societal demand and governmental response into authoritarian contexts. In this framework, authoritarian regimes will distribute toward communities or groups that make public claims on state resources. Thus peasants who protest a lack of development assistance are more likely to receive resources than those who do not; rowdy urbanites will get school funding before quiescent ones do. As Wallace puts it in his analysis of distribution in authoritarian China, “the squeaky wheel gets the grease.”⁶ While the demand-response relationship in “squeaky wheel” accounts takes place outside of electoral channels, the relationship between ruler and ruled is still based primarily on the credible promise of mutually beneficial exchange rather than the credible threat of unidirectional force.

Perhaps the most democratic model of authoritarian distribution, however, is the “performance legitimacy” approach: the idea that regimes will benefit from greater and genuine popular support if they provide high-quality infrastructure, rising incomes, and steady economic growth. Performance legitimacy arguments assume that citizens exchange their heartfelt political support for policy performance – precisely what they are theorized to do in democracies. If we understand legitimacy as popular support and set aside methodological problems related to observing sincerity,⁷ then it is certainly true that democratic incumbents need legitimacy, at least in relative terms, to survive in power. Many authoritarian regimes, however,

6. Jeremy Wallace, *Cities and Stability: Urbanization, Redistribution, and Regime Survival in China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 35.

7. See Lisa Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination: Rhetoric and Symbols in Contemporary Syria* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999).

4. What follows is adapted from an ongoing project with Mike Albertus

5. See, for example, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival* (Boston, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2005).

get by without much popular support at all – a discrepancy that should remind us of the distinct logic of authoritarian rule.

Several theories of authoritarian distribution have come closer to taking seriously the coercive dimensions of benefit provision. “Punishment regime” accounts and recent acknowledgments of clientelism’s coercive possibilities focus on the forceful power of “negative inducements:”⁸ threats to withhold valuable or necessary resources if political support is not forthcoming. While these theories more closely capture authoritarian logics of rule, they nevertheless fall short when it comes to explaining actual patterns of authoritarian distribution. In a subset of authoritarian regimes – Mexico under the PRI, UMNO-ruled Malaysia, July Regime Egypt, Taiwan under the KMT, and PAP-led Singapore, among others – distribution has not been targeted only to supporters: it has been nearly comprehensive in its scope, encompassing supporters and opponents alike. Under authoritarian conditions, coercion is the rule, not the exception; and it does not only begin where the spending stops. Scholars seeking to explain why some authoritarian regimes distribute broadly must remain attentive to the coercive potential of even the most comprehensive distributive policies.

Comprehensive distribution can work coercively at two levels, helping authoritarian regimes respond to both elite and mass threats by forestalling

pluralism – and with it, the emergence of spaces and organizations that might give rise to opposition. At the elite level, expropriation of alternative service providers can displace rivals for power, isolating them from their social bases and establishing the regime-controlled state as the purveyor of life’s necessities. In this respect the origins of (re)distributed resources are as important as their recipients – the land, for example, that authoritarian rulers distributed to peasants in 1950s Egypt and postrevolutionary Mexico came originally from rival political actors and their aristocratic support bases. Because of their coercive foundations and streamlined decision-making procedures, authoritarian regimes are particularly well-positioned to expropriate and redistribute resources without the cooperation of their owners, as seen in cases ranging from Peru to Taiwan.⁹

At the mass level, extending benefits and services renders ordinary citizens legible, enmeshes them in relationships of material dependence, and inoculates them against rivals’ material inducements. Public service provision can bind mass populations to regimes by making the regime, and the state it controls, the center of citizens’ “strategies of survival”: the sets of practices and expectations that help ordinary people locate and secure the goods and services they need to live and thrive.¹⁰ Strategies of survival go beyond what might be understood

as the strictly material; they include expectations about what is possible and what is not. Enmeshing citizens in complex systems of agricultural support, subsidized housing, and social insurance involves the collection of tremendous amounts of data about individual citizens and households, and the penetration of state agents into everyday life. Meanwhile, re-centering strategies of survival around the state can make that state – and the regime that controls it – seem much more powerful and unitary than it actually is. When the state is regularly present and citizens expect that basic goods and services come from it and only it, a regime’s threats become more credible and more ominous – and its replacement less thinkable.

Thus, while provision may sometimes endear citizens to the regime, trigger shared cultural expectations about reciprocity, or engender feelings of contractual obligation, these are not what makes comprehensive distribution an *authoritarian* – that is, anti-pluralistic – practice. State employees, residents in public housing, or recipients of redistributed public land may wish to challenge their regimes; people have certainly been known to (politically) bite the hands that feed them. What comprehensive distribution can coercively affect is their *ability to do so collectively and successfully*. Legibility, dependence, narrowed political horizons, and the marginalization of alternatives can forestall, hamper, and help defeat organized political opposition to authoritarian rule. Where autonomous social organizations are hindered from freely forming, fewer political alternatives exist; deprived of Brandeis’ “laboratories of democracy,” new political structures are less thinkable. This is the critically anti-pluralistic –

8. The term “punishment regime” is from Beatriz Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and Its Demise in Mexico* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006). See, for examples, Susan Stokes et al., *Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism: The Puzzle of Distributive Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013) and Isabela Mares and Lauren E. Young, “The Core Voter’s Curse: Coercion and Clientelism in Hungarian Elections,” unpublished manuscript, 2016.

9. Michael Albertus, *Autocracy and Redistribution: The Politics of Land Reform* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

10. On the ways that the extensions of benefits and services connects regime and society, see Dan Slater and Sofia Fenner, “State Power and Staying Power: Infrastructural Mechanisms and Authoritarian Durability,” *Journal of International Affairs* (2011): 15–29. On “strategies of survival,” see Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State–Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

and constitutively authoritarian – work of state coercive distribution.

Our argument here does not suggest that what has previously been labeled clientelistic exchange is never taking place, nor that positive economic performance never earns regimes sincere support. Just as democratic regimes sometimes lose sight of their pluralistic commitments and lapse into authoritarian coercive practices (at Kent State or the Dakota Access Pipeline, for example), so too can authoritarian rulers make use of a range of distributive practices. It is coercive distribution, however, that best and most reliably underpins specifically *authoritarian* rule, because it is coercive distribution that most reliably blocks the flourishing of peaceful opposition. Cash side payments, vote-buying, and other targeted, ad hoc distributive methods are less effective tools for

social control than complex distributive programs, precisely because they do not take up social space or displace rival providers in so systematic a way.

Implications

To be sure, all regime definitions are ideal types, and actual regimes usually combine exercises of power that promote pluralism with those that impede it. An intriguing implication of our positive definition of authoritarianism, however, is that scholars have been looking for “hybrid regimes” in all the wrong places. Even when authoritarian regimes adopt institutional features that we typically associate with democracies, their core authoritarian *logic* is rarely upset. By contrast, when procedural democracies fail to use state institutions in a manner that encourages pluralism and opens ample space for peaceful opposition, they assume enough of an authoritarian character to warrant “hybrid regime”

status.

A final, more methodological implication is that we should be looking more attentively for authoritarianism not only in ostensibly democratic settings, but at unfamiliar sites within autocracies themselves. Once we recognize that benefits can work coercively, we should also begin to see that regimes’ authoritarian apparatuses extend far beyond the police and the military to encompass a wide range of seemingly “harmless” state agencies – agencies scholars might never have considered as sources of specifically *coercive* stability.

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MAZZUCA, CONTINUED

(continued from page 3)

strength in national politics (as opposed to the state's external power in the field of international relations, which is customarily defined by its position in world geopolitical hierarchies). *Legitimacy* was a definitional component in Weber's original concept of the state. In the 1970s, research on the state in advanced capitalist societies found it useful to see legitimacy not as a defining attribute of the state but as a dimension of variation across states. An identical operation was performed on the concept of *autonomy*. Orthodox Marxists had theorized that a definitional attribute of the state was the lack of autonomy in relation to powerful corporate interests or structural imperatives of capitalist economies. Neo-Weberians in the 1980s embraced the Marxist concern with state autonomy, but they treated autonomy as a true variable, which could have different scores in different national cases.⁴ Additionally, neo-Weberians invested substantial effort in differentiating state autonomy from state capacity, and in showing that, depending on the research context, autonomy and capacity could be as important as legitimacy itself.⁵

The current revival of state theory is largely channeled through the LAC trinity of state attributes. State failure, for instance, combines a dual breakdown in state legitimacy and capacity. Authors who view the state as a precondition for prosperity and democracy highlight the capacity of the state to enforce rules of economic and political competition, and to provide basic public goods and services (starting with security). The literature on the political sources of income inequality prompts a re-evaluation of old insights about the autonomy of the state vis-à-vis powerful sectors of the economy.⁶

The Blind Spot

4. Peter Evans, *Embedded Autonomy* (Princeton University Press, 1995).

5. Skocpol, Op cit.

6. Jeffrey Winters, *Oligarchy* (Wiley&Sons, 2011)

A serious blind spot in the current revival of state theory is the lack of differentiation between the state and three other macro-political objects, which are in principle equally valid foci of legitimacy, capacity and autonomy. The three alternative sites are the regime, the administration and the government. No systematic effort has been made, for instance, to distinguish state legitimacy from regime legitimacy, state capacity from administration capacity, or state autonomy from government autonomy. The lack of conceptual clarity undermines the quality of the analysis. In the developing world, some cases of state failure may actually be more accurately re-described as *administration* failure, and the alternative diagnosis would point to alternative remedies. Similarly, processes that are usually reported as involving state de-legitimation can be better understood as processes of *regime* de-legitimation, a change of perspective that suggests different origins, mechanisms, and repercussions. In advanced economies, a change of perspective about the relevant site of political autonomy, from the state to the government, is highly consequential. State capture by entrenched oligarchies is a different, less reversible phenomenon than *government* influence by special interest groups.

This research note makes two contributions. The first one is general, aimed at strengthening the conceptual foundations of the third generation of state theory. The other contribution is specific, aimed at re-assessing the value of the "no state, no democracy" thesis, a distinct claim of the third generation. The general contribution consists in drawing clear boundaries and connections among the four macro-political objects (state, regime, administration and government) and the trinity of attributes (legitimacy, autonomy and capacity). The general contribution will show that a large subset of compound terms, including

"state autonomy" and "regime capacity," despite their metaphorical ring, have no analytical value. The specific contribution will show that the claim "no state, no democracy" misses the many ways in which democratization contributes to state formation and stabilization.

Back to Basics: State, Regime, Administration and Government Defined

The concepts of legitimacy, capacity and autonomy were developed without a clear sense of the boundaries and connections between the state and the neighboring concepts of regime, administration and government. As a consequence, analysts largely remain unaware of the relative payoffs of attributing capacity, autonomy and legitimacy to the state instead of the regime, the administration or the government. Conceptual choices have huge analytical implications.

State and Regime

The most prominent attribute in the definition of the state, and the only undisputed one, is the monopoly of violence over a substantial territory. The definition is more compact than the original Weberian concept for it leaves the "legitimacy" component out of it. Research has abundantly shown that it is more useful to treat legitimacy not as a definitional attribute of the state but as a dimension of variation across states. On the other hand, the political regime can be defined as the rules of access to top positions in the state, which, following Dahl, varies along two dimensions, competition and participation. The sub-Weberian state and the Dahlian regime are separate but closely connected concepts. The state is the destination to which the rules of the regime provide access. The conceptual connection is hierarchical: the definition of "regime" builds on the definition of "state" but not vice-versa, for the state can be defined without any reference to

its regime.

The choice of the sub-Weberian and Dahlian definitions of state and regime is made on the basis of proven analytical results. Research on state formation and regime change based on such definitions has been enormously successful both in terms of describing some of the most relevant patterns of variation in human history (the transition from fragmented sovereignty to the modern state, and from authoritarian rule to democracy), and in terms of identifying the causes. The secret in the success of these definitions is that they are both minimalist. The number of elements in the set defining the concept has been kept as small as possible—so long as they still help to identify relevant phenomena. A larger number of attributes in the definitions of state and regime would simply interfere with causal analysis. Some attributes are better kept outside the definition so that they can be analyzed as potential causes or effects.

Domains: Resources, Rules, and Actors

A key step in every taxonomy is the identification of the distinct domains to which relevant objects belong. A useful analogy can be drawn from the natural sciences, which differentiate among the domains of animals, plants and minerals (to locate, for instance, mammals, conifers and quartz). What is the domain of state, regime, administration, and government? From sociology to economics, all modern social sciences have differentiated between the domain of actors and the domain of surrounding conditions or structures. “Men make their own history but under circumstances existing already.”

Clearly, state and regime belong to the domain of structures rather than to the domain actors. Definitions of states and regimes in terms of actors, like the “dominant social coalition,” have been seriously counterproductive. When the

regime is understood as the dominant coalition, it becomes impossible to understand the role of coalitional dynamics in shaping regime pathways; and when the state is conceptualized as the dominant coalition, the “autonomy” of the state is abolished by definition. If regime and state are both structures, and explicitly not actors, a further distinction is needed to differentiate between them. Whereas states are *resources*, regimes are *rules*. The main resource defining the state is the concentrated stock of means of coercion, accompanied by the physical territory and the flow of taxes to finance them. The rules of the regime are those that define the prevailing method of access to state resources.

Government and Administration

The only macro-political object that is unambiguously and entirely an actor is the government. The government can be easily defined as the individual or group who gained access to state power. State, regime and government are separate concepts but they are nicely (hierarchically) connected. The regime is defined by reference to the state, and the government is defined by reference to the state and the regime.

Administration, the fourth macro-political object, is the only concept for which it is not possible to reconstruct an unambiguous definition from the literature. But we can delineate two broad options. The administration could alternatively be seen as a set of rules or a set of actors. The meaning of the administration qua rules gains precision when contrasted with the regime. If the regime is the rules of access to state power, and can be differentiated in terms of authoritarianism and democracy, the administration is the rules of exercise of state power, and can be differentiated—after Weber—in terms of patrimonial versus bureaucratic rule. The meaning of the administration qua actors can be contrasted with the

notion of government. The government is the set of political leaders who gained control of the state via the regime. The administration is the staff, which fills state positions in a clientelistic or meritocratic fashion depending on the dominant form of exercise.

The analysis of domains helps to gain new insight into the costs and benefits involved in associating legitimacy, autonomy, and capacity to different macro-political objects. We can invoke the broad domains containing the macro-political objects, and ask the most basic question: what is the analytical value of assigning legitimacy, capacity and autonomy to actors, resources, and rules?

As we will see, autonomy and capacity, in all viable versions of their scholarly definitions, are attributes of actors, and of actors only. It might make some metaphorical sense to associate capacity and autonomy with rules and resources, but such operation is plagued by logical inconsistencies and yields little analytical value. Since the state belongs to the domain of resources rather than to that of actors, “state capacity” and “state autonomy” do not make logical sense. The relevant question for the third generation of state theory is: what are the actors with the autonomy and capacities that in a metaphorical way are usually attributed to the state?

Legitimacy, Autonomy and Capacity Revisited

Legitimacy differs from capacity and autonomy in that its main component part is given by subjective *beliefs*, whereas capacity and autonomy are objective features. The legitimacy of any macro-political object is granted by the population who has to obey to it. A political regime, for instance, is legitimate if those who have to abide by the prevailing rules of access believe that their own obedience is justified. Beliefs

	STATE	REGIME	ADMINISTRATION		GOVERNMENT
			Rules	Actors	
Legitimacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Autonomy	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Capacity	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓

underlying democratic legitimacy range from the deep conviction that it is the best regime imaginable to the vague feeling that it is the least bad available. For Weber, the focus of legitimacy *par excellence* is the state. However, Linz locates legitimacy squarely at the level of the regime.⁷ Linz's and Weber's positions are not necessarily incompatible. Since legitimacy is approval from subjects, in principle all four macro-political objects can be a separate focus of legitimacy. In the same country, state, regime, administration and government legitimacy may all reach different levels and be based on different sets of reasons.

If legitimacy is a matter of beliefs from below, capacity and autonomy are objective qualities at the top. Autonomy is the ability of agents to set goals for their actions without interference from other actors. The acid test for political autonomy is the degree of independence of the agenda of the rulers from the agenda of the wealthy. Capacity, on the other hand, is the ability of agents to actually achieve the goals. When applied to macro-political entities, autonomy and capacity can only be associated with political domains that include actors. The only concepts involving concrete actors are the government and the administration staff—the only elements that might possess goals or mobilize the means to achieve them. It makes no sense to attribute capacity or autonomy to political regime or administration methods. They consist of rules (of access and exercise, respectively) and, as such, have no faculties to define goals or

choose means.

Performing the same analysis in relation to the state is more controversial because “state capacity” and “state autonomy” have become the subject of scholarly sub-fields in their own right. In a technical sense, however, state capacity can be reduced, with no analytical residues, and greater precision, to government capacity, administration capacity, or a combination of both. The state does not have capacities. The state is a capacity. It is a specific set of resources (violence, territory, taxes) for political actors to use. The same applies to autonomy. States do not have goal-setting faculties because they are inanimate objects, not actors. Like airplanes, states need pilots to operate them and set a destination. The government is the pilot of the state, and the administration staff, the co-pilot or the crew.

A serious theoretical loss occurs when the state is inadvertently used as a synonym of the government or the administration staff. States, governments, and administration staffs are distinct objects, with their own laws of motion, which at the same time, in the real world, are possibly connected in multiple ways. If they are not kept conceptually separate, political analysis about their causes, effects and interactions is simply not possible. The table below recapitulates the analysis of the concepts about macro-political objects and their dimensions of variation.

The “State/Regime Nexus”

The state has two keys dimensions of variation. The first one derives from

the very definition of state, and could be called *stateness*: the extent to which violence in a territory is monopolized. This dimension provides the shared conceptual ground to the various generations of studies on state formation and the current debates on state failure. This dimension is too relevant humanly, and too precious analytically, not to receive special demarcation or to be mixed with other dimensions of rule. Current developments in analyses of state failure seem to think that intellectual progress is achieved by adding more and more dimensions to the definition of the problem. That is the wrong move: other dimensions should be left outside of the definition as potential causes or effects of variations in stateness. Collapses in government capacity, paralysis in the administration, regime de-legitimation are all relevant phenomena, but they are different from state failure and are actually prime candidates for causes.

The other key dimension is legitimacy. Variations in state legitimacy are a proximate cause of variations in state survival. Legitimacy can be assessed for all levels and objects of political rule. The big challenge in relation to legitimacy is whether the subjects themselves differentiate in their hearts and minds among the four macro-political objects. State legitimacy means approval of the existence of a central monopoly of violence and its territorial borders, *irrespective* of the specific rules of access to the state (regime) and the specific group in power (government).

“No state, no democracy” is the foundational statement in the emerging agenda on the state-regime nexus. It has become an axiomatic truth for several scholars, policy-makers and international development agencies. The “no state, no democracy” can be seen as a definitional claim or as a causal claim. Its advocates have failed to differentiate the two types of claim, and have confused

7. Juan Linz, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

the “definitional hierarchy” of state over regime with what could be called the “causal primacy,” the sequential hypothesis that state formation has to occur before democracy for democracy to emerge (or become stable).

The problem is that, from a definitional point of view, the opposite statement is also true: “no state, no dictatorship.” This is a direct implication of the conceptual analysis advanced above. The concept of state is a building block of any viable definition of political regime. Instead of “no state, no democracy,” a more accurate definitional statement would be “no state, no regime.” In stateless societies, we cannot apply regime analysis, for no real destination exists for the rules of the regime to provide access to.

What about the causal version of the claim? Does *stateness* cause democratization? Is state-formation a *pre-condition* of democratization? State-formation has preceded democratization in almost all cases of modern democracy. Moreover, in several cases, the temporal order reflects true causality. State formation in Western Europe and North America usually set in motion processes of cooperation and conflict that resulted in durable settlements about the regime of access to the emerging central power. The canonical causal mechanism is the taxation-representation cycle. In addition to coercion concentration, state formation involves the extraction of economic resources from the underlying population. Over time, the underlying population may demand political rights in exchange for tax compliance. “No taxation without representation” has been a robust mechanism of democratization in the West. The persistence of authoritarian regimes in the Persian Gulf provides additional support to the causal version of the claim. The availability of oil rents afforded several Arab rulers the luxury of not having to engage in taxation and

make the ensuing political concessions.⁸

However, the temporal and causal primacy of the state over democracy is not universal. In several cases, crucial components of the state and democracy were established at the same time. Democratic reforms in Switzerland, Sweden, Uruguay, and Colombia (first democratization wave), in Lebanon and Costa Rica (second), and in Nicaragua and El Salvador (third) were agreed upon under anarchical conditions resulting from years of civil war between rival political parties or ethnic groups. In all three sets of cases, democratic reform was the key ingredient of the peace agreement. To generalize, state formation after civil war termination involves transitions to states with different regime types. A decisive victory by one of the rival groups may exempt the winner from political concessions, and result in a state with an autocratic regime. Stalemates, on the other hand, may induce warring parties to agree on a power-sharing arrangement, and result in a state with a democratic regime. In the latter cases, although state and democracy emerge simultaneously, it is the prospect of democratic power-sharing that causes pacification.

Democracy also causes stateness in a less spectacular but more important and general sense. Even in the large set of cases where the state was born with an authoritarian regime, once they transitioned to democracy, democracy has helped to stabilize the state. Legitimacy provides the key stabilizing mechanism. In many contemporary societies, state legitimacy, the proximate source of state stability, is actually based on regime legitimacy: citizens view the state as legitimate mainly because its regime is democratic, and they would question the state’s legitimacy if the regime was transformed in an

8. Sebastián Mazzuca and Gerardo Munck. “State or Democracy First?” *Democratization* 21.7 (2014): 1221-1243

authoritarian direction. In these cases, democracy transfers legitimacy from the regime to the state.

The policy recommendation of building the state before experimenting with democracy implies, for contemporary cases of state failure, that pacification requires some form of dictatorship. The recommendation seems to ignore the fact that since the Third Wave, democracy has become an increasingly universal formula of political legitimacy. If it has always been hard to build political order, in the contemporary world it is substantially more challenging because in many cases only states with a democratic regime will be able pacify their territory and stabilize their power.

The primacy of the state over democracy is true in a definitional but causally trivial sense. From a definitional perspective, the state also has primacy over authoritarianism. From a causal perspective, in most democratic countries, the state predated democracy, and state formation set in motion processes that resulted in democratic transitions. In a smaller but considerable set of cases, however, the opposite was true. Democracy caused the state by facilitating pacification in countries that made a direct transition from civil war to democracy and skipped intermediate authoritarian periods. Democracy is probably also causing state stability in most parts of the democratic world by transferring legitimacy from the regime to the state itself.

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