

Abstracts

Georg Sørensen

Weak States: An Introduction

Weak states exhibit a low level of political-institutional development and a low level of popular legitimacy. Normally weak states are also socio-economically underdeveloped. The most frequent form of violent conflict today is within weak states. When weak states break down they become 'failed states', as in the case of Somalia, Liberia, and Rwanda. Weak states and 'failed states' will continue to present a problem; there are no easy ways to provide solutions.

Jakob Eilsøe Mikkelsen

Rwanda: An Analysis of State Failure

Genocide and civil war in Rwanda in 1994 led to a temporary break-down of formal as well as informal institutions. The conflict between Hutu and Tutsi is one of dynamic ethnic, regional and class identity rather than deep-rooted and ancient ethnic hatred. An understanding of the present situation in Rwanda must be based upon an analysis of the interplay between external and internal cultural, socio-economic and political factors.

Jørgen Dige Pedersen

The Paradox of India's Persistent Unity

Despite developmental problems whose magnitude and character equals those found in Sub-Saharan Africa the Indian state has succeeded in keeping the social order intact. At the same time social and economic developments within India have been regionally diverse with the states of Kerala and Kashmir representing positive and negative extremes, respectively. The overall success and the internal variations can largely be explained with reference to the historical origin of the Indian state and to the democratic and federal character of the political regime.

Mette Kjær og Palle Svensson

Reconstruction in Uganda

Because of military dictatorship and civil war the state in Uganda broke down during the 1970's and first part of the 1980s. Since the take over of power by Museveni and the NRM in 1986 the capacity of the state has been reconstructed, but this reconstruction has not been without its problems. The reconstruction of the failed state in Uganda has followed a pattern that can hardly be copied by other African countries, because only a few African states have broken down to the same extent as Uganda and because the preconditions for the rebuilding of the state in Uganda are rather exceptional. Thus, the reconstruction of the state has been highly dependent on a strong political leader and on the support of foreign donors.

Hans-Henrik Holm
**Weak States and a Strong
International System**

Weak states are the result of the way the colonies gained independence. After the end of the cold war the collapse of a number of these states have resulted in humanitarian interventions. Why do we have the problem with weak states? The reason is to be found in the international norms, that together with the structure of power sets the framework for the international system. This system is created on the basis of the norms from the dominant states: Legitimacy, Rule of Law and Nationhood. These are norms that the weak state can not implement. The resulting breakdown of weak states lead to either interventions or humanitarian disasters.

Peter Nannestad
**Germans on Trial:
The Goldhagen Debate**

The publication in 1996 of Daniel Jonah Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* was met with very negative reactions in Germany. Most German scholars (mainly historians of the holocaust) have been highly critical of Goldhagen's way of posing the problem, his approach, and his theses. While there are indeed weaknesses and lacunae in his arguments and his documentation, Goldhagen rightfully pionts out important shortcomings in the hitherto dominating functionalist approach to the study of the holocaust, especially its lack of a solid micro-foundation. From a broader social science point of view, the insistence on the importance af a micro-foundation for any explanation of the holocaust would seem to be the book's most important contribution