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# FAILED STATES AND THEORIES: THE (RE)SECURITISATION OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT

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*Abstract: Over the past two decades, the term "failed state" has been popularised among both academics and policy-makers. This work seeks to adequately provide for the historical and cultural background driving the term and its theoretical and practical implications. However, the bulk of this work is concerned with questioning the analytical validity of the term "failed state" and argued that its creation was inextricably related to a phenomenon typical of the beginning and the end of the Cold War: the securitisation of underdevelopment. Accordingly, the concept of failed state is analysed as a discursive construction rather than an analytical tool.*

Keywords: Failed States, Securitisation, Development, Discourse, Policy-Making

## Introduction

According to Gates, fractured or failing states [are] the main security challenge of our time.[1] Yet such terms' entry into mainstream discourses render them "over-used" in the political lexicon of post-Cold War politics, a point reflected in the intimidating results produced by a simple Google search; some 468 million hits. Failed states have not only penetrated the Internet, other public communications systems have grown accustomed – some may even suggest comfortable – deploying the thematic.[2] Yet for all the attention the term failed states has received, it seems that international scholarship, let alone wider publics, are no closer to appreciating the gravity of situations facing the states which now have the term failed added as an adjective.

This work argues that the concept is analytically moot, and hence weighing into the definition debate is futile. However, to orientate readers, a popular depiction of failed states and how they are selected as such is provided for according to Newman's identifica-

ISSN 1802548X 9771802548012-97

tion which may be seen in Table 1.[3]

For methodological clarity, it is important to briefly present the indexes which provide such research to be able to gauge whether or not there are political motivations behind the deployment of the term.



### *Failed States: The Indexes Behind the Term*

This work examines five indexes which themselves have targeted failed states:

1. **The Failed States Index** (FSI) is sponsored by the so-called Fund for Peace and is published by in the Foreign Policy Journal.[4] This index deploys social, political and economic indicators to reach its conclusions;
2. **The Global Peace Index** (GPI) is sponsored by the Vision of Humanity, which is part of the Institute for Economics and Peace; an international think tank self-described as being 'dedicated to the[5] research and education of the relationship between economic development, business and peace.'[6] The main difference from the precedent one is that the Global Peace Index is more focused on the trends of armed conflicts, assuming the latter as the main indicator of state failure.[7]
3. **The Human Development Index** (HDI) is associated to the UN Development Programme and has become one of the leading indexes for measuring state capacities to deliver public goods (regarded as an indicator of state strength). As argued below, the HDI and GPI vary in conceptualising the functions of the state, with the former selecting a more Lockean approach (re: the state as a service provider[8]) and the latter opting for a more Weberian disposition, conceiving state functions as related to coercive-power monopolisation within a territory.[9]
4. **The Index of State Weakness** (ISW) in the Developing World of the Brookings Institution closely resembles the FSI though contains more robust security connotations.
5. **The State Fragility Index** (SFI) of the Centre for Systemic Peace and the Centre for Global Policy and sponsored by the One Earth Future Foundation measuring state effectiveness and legitimacy.

ISSN 1802548X 97718025480 12-97



Considering the above indexes and their associated institutions, two noteworthy aspects may be highlighted: first, the institutional prerogatives driving such research and, second, discrepancies between them.

The clear majority of centres and institutes tasked with examining failed states tend to be financed by governments. For instance, the State Failure Task Force – funded by the CIA – produced a series of reports which reflect US approaches. Hence, there is a decidedly subjective element to failed state assignments. The role of think tanks as epistemic communities and the interactions between them and policy-makers will be duly analysed in the following sections. Also, discrepancies are evident. While there is general consensus on the worst performers, the lists are rather dissimilar among themselves. Anyway, according to these studies, roughly a quarter of all states are fragile to different degrees; either failing or already failed and the situation is not progressing with the proverbial clock for some states, namely the weakest, has remained stuck in the 1970s without ameliorating their position. That is why, as illustrated below, many scholars question the Westphalian ontology and call for a post-sovereign international order.[10] Yet more traditional approaches to understanding failed states paints only a partial picture. Before moving on to addressing other, more dynamic aspects of the phenomenon, it is essential to first draw a line between failed and rogue states so as to avoid confusion. This is especially important since practitioners tend to misuse concepts of failed states; they deploy the logic of rogue states and apply the term failed.

Indeed, Bilgin and Morton commence their research via a theoretical lens to clarify the two thematics in IR and discover that the main difference is based on focus,[11] which is on the internal characteristics in the case of failed state and on the external behaviour in the case of rogue state.[12] Indeed, rogue state is used to indicate the behaviour of a given state in the international realm which is close in spirit to the concept of predation,[13] namely a state which does not follow the appropriate rules of the game, determined by the 'structure of identities and interests.'[14] After 9/11, rogue states were perceived as major sources of international threat or, as Bush noted, that unlike 'the Cold War today's most urgent threat stems from [...] a small number of missiles in the hands of these states, states for

ISSN 1802548X 9771802548012-97

whom terror and blackmail are a way of life.'[15] Also, concerns about rogue states are closely related to more classical conceptions of international security, whereas the concept of failed state is usually associated to so-called human security.



Such a view has recently been challenged by those advocating juxtaposition between such approaches to security. Keohane, for instance, notes that 'future military actions in failed states, or attempts to bolster states that are in danger of failing, may be more likely to be described *both* as self-defence and as humanitarian or public-spirited.'[16] Despite differences, many factors bolster the interconnection between the terms failed and rogue. Being a failed state may be a precondition for being a rogue state, as suggested by Stern who asserted that 'we have to understand the role of failed states that often provide or condone safe havens for organised terrorism.'[17] Furthermore, many scholars and policy-makers tend to overlook differences between such labels. Despite such obvious overlap, this work is limited to assessing failed states for several reasons. First, the concept is more related to the internal characteristics of a state and may be framed within the broader discussion on development. Second, it is a multi-faceted topic not limited to security issues; it extends to economic, social and political dynamics as well. Finally, the term failed state has many implications on the ontological and epistemological aspects of the study of the international system.[18] The following section illustrates the theoretical approaches to the study of failed states widespread in IR theories and political sciences.

## The Theoretical State of Art

Newman identifies three streams of studies on failed states, which will be analysed in this section.[19] It is worth conceiving them as 'opinion clusters [which are] more or less structured networks [with] formally structured orientations or approaches to [certain] issues.'[20] The first comprises those scholars who uncritically accept the concept of failed state and therefore, concentrate on practical implications.[21] The most noteworthy aspect of such a stream is its policy orientation. This is crucial since it bears consequences for how studies are conducted and the results these have on the functioning world. Additionally, this cluster is closely interconnected

ISSN 1802548X 97718025480 12-97

with security studies.[22] The following section will analyse this in light of the literature on epistemic communities and norm entrepreneurs with special attention to the relation between such an opinion cluster and policy-makers. The second stream on failed states is based on critical approaches and extends the analysis to broader discussions.[23] As mentioned, since roughly a quarter of the states in the international system have, since their formation, suffered from some form of weakness, several scholars have begun to question the pillars of the international arena itself. Starting from the concept of failed state, some challenge the concept of sovereignty and the Westphalian system,[24] whereas others focus on the epistemological factors which such a term bears starting from a critique to the first stream of studies.[25] This work may be framed in the latter approach despite acknowledging contributions of the others. Thirdly, many stress the interventionist connotations of the concept and wholly reject it.[26] The division between such approaches is for the sake of exposition and overlaps exist among them. Yet, for reasons of clarity it is worth analysing them separately.



The majority of studies on failed states may be included in the first cluster; this represents the so-called "establishment approach" towards this topic where roughly all relevant actors are influenced by it (states, international organizations etc.). For instance, the indices noted above clearly express this stream. Despite the heterogeneity of such studies, several common features may be identified; Bilgin and Morton stress the common assumptions, which will be integrated by contributions from other authors.[27] First, they all presuppose an approach to the development of the state inherently related to its internal characteristics in line with the so-called Washington Consensus and the approach typical of the international financial institutions (i.e. WTO and WB) since the 1990s.[28] Accordingly, causes of "failure" are exclusively internal, aloof from any consideration on the colonial experience of those states[29] or positions in the system.[30] Here, the state is regarded as the agent of development.[31] This bears important consequences such as the reduction of state failure to empirically observable factors, which in turn may be manipulated by foreign policy-makers. Whatever the conception of the state, whether Lockean or Weberian, these studies focus on the symptoms of state failure without understanding the surface. The result is a categorisation of states in order of weakness 'rath-

er like Victorian butterfly collectors, to construct lists and typologies of the different species.'[32] A myriad of such categorisations are available in the literature, from simple dichotomies strong/weak,[33] through detailed taxonomies[34] to *continua*.[35] Furthermore, the indices reveal examples of categorisations of states according to different criteria resting on the assumptions of this stream of studies. Consequently, the concept of state failure 'rests on the assumptions about stateness against which any given state should be measured as having succeeded or failed.'[36]

As mentioned, the main characteristic of this cluster is its policy-oriented nature. Indeed, the principal objective of categorising state is rarely merely an academic exercise: 'the goal is to assess states in order to assist in calibrating the conditions for successful intervention.'[37] The following section will present the fallacies of this approach.

Regarding the second stream, several differences between the various authors are clear, though it is possible to identify two subgroups. First, scholars who use failed states to investigate sovereignty via its Westphalian conception. Accordingly, sovereignty is not perceived as something monolithic and as a *status per se*. Rather, as Sorensen aptly notes, 'sovereignty is like being married, you either possess this status or you do not, one can no more be a 75% sovereign than 75% married.'[38] Such an ontological revolution entails two assumptions:[39] either new post-national politics based on human rights[40] or an international system where sovereignty remains a prerogative of states, which are capable of disaggregating, transferring and pooling it though.[41]

Both bear interventionist (even neo-colonialist) consequences in their extremist versions. Indeed, the 'responsibility to protect' inherently contains and 'intervention dilemma,'[42] namely the Westphalian state is not always compatible with global human rights. For instance, state sovereignty may hamper humanitarian intervention and popular sovereignty may produce tyrannous government with deleterious effects for human rights.[43] As Havel announced during the Kosovo conflict 'the evolution of civilisation has finally brought humanity to the recognition that human beings are more important than the state.'[44] Furthermore, Krasner, assuming that 'the fundamental rules of conventional sovereignty [...] no longer work,'[45] criticises the policy tools *repertoire* used to cope with failed states.

ISSN 1802548X 9771802548012-97

As a result, he proposes a variety of forms of '*de facto* trusteeship and shared sovereignty' to deal with the problem of failed states.

Regarding the second sub-group characterising this approach, many focus on the epistemological implications of the concept.[46] Since this approach will be utilised below, it is sufficient to mention two points for now. Firstly, discussions on failed states may not be separated from the broader discussion on development. Secondly, the concept concerned is set aside as an analytical tool, thus focusing on it as a discursive construction. The factors behind its creation and the effects it bears will be duly analysed in the ensuing section, which provides a critique of the first cluster based on the second.



The third opinion cluster focuses on rhetorical aspects of the concept of failed state underlining its interventionist connotations. In line with what Johnston defines as the second generation of security studies, namely the approach to security widespread in the mid-1980s[47] which focused on the rhetorical use of concepts by politicians,[48] this stream focuses on the 'failed state doctrine.'[49] Indeed, Pha and Symon stress the instrumental use of the concept of failed state for various purposes (all with interventionist consequences).[50] For instance, the concept may be used in order to fill the *vacuum* left by the fall of the USSR and thus the lack of a *nemesis* for the US hegemony,[51] or simply to pursue neo-colonialist policies. As Havel noted 'I really do inhabit a system [...] where words can prove mightier than ten military divisions.'[52] This work, despite acknowledging the importance of the instrumental use of rhetoric, extends the analysis to the discursive origins of the term failed state.

## Failed Theories

This section analyses under new epistemological premises the fallacies of the aforementioned first opinion cluster and its attempts to utilise the concept of failed state as a purely analytical tool. This analysis may not be separated from the broader discussion on development, of which the concept of failed state is a derivation. Indeed, the discourse is inherently interconnected with the modernisation theories on development formulated in the 1950s/1960s. As all concepts which are designed to describe reality with a certain degree of abstraction and without normative connotations, the definition of failed state has to respect a twofold requirement:[53] the coverage of

all *phenomena* concerned and the inclusion of all (and only) external characteristics. Such a concept (especially in the Weberian conception of state's functions) does not add anything to the already possessed tools used to analyse states.[54] Furthermore, as demonstrated by Rist, the concept of development as created in the 1950s/1960s falls short in respecting such requirements. Some of the criticisms which Rist refers to the Rostowian organic conception of development apply in turn also to the concept of "failed state." Such a concept relies on a given perception of development which has many characteristics. First of all, it entails a marked "directional" (if not teleological) connotation with two main consequences. For some authors the principal assumption is that development follows a defined path, which is the one already walked by *developed* states. Indeed, it is characterised by a strong ethnocentrism or by what Latour calls 'particular universalism'[55] falling into the field of studies of sociology's institutionalism, namely the diffusion of Western values, norms and institutions as benchmarks to analyse (and evaluate) other realities.[56]

For others, the unit of measurement is the ideal-type state and obviously 'compared to an ideal, reality is bound to appear as incomplete, even in the cases that served as the basis for the construction of the idea in the first place.'[57] The concept of sovereignty, like the concept of modernity, becomes to function like Fitzgerald's green light:[58] something sought but never reached. This approach is ethnocentric in a more subtle way, in that it compares the (Western) states themselves, which have been the basis for the creation of the ideal-type of state, to the concept derived from them. The logic behind the indices shown in the introduction reflects this. Furthermore, the concept of failed state as conceived by the first cluster is markedly ahistorical, namely it suffers from what Hobden and Hobson[59] define as chronofetishism and tempo-centrism. Indeed, the concept of failed state rests on the assumption that the present is something reified, naturalised (emerged spontaneously) and cut off from a historical context. Indeed, failed states are not perceived as former colonies: the elephant in the room is usually ignored. With decolonisation 'their right [of colonies] to self-determination had been acquired in exchange for a right to self-definition:'[60] the term "colony" disappeared along with its historical legacy. Furthermore, tempocentrism leads to the practice of conceiving the past as

ISSN 1802548X 9771802548012-97



a function of the present and thus seeing history as characterised by isomorphic systems functional to the ultimate stage and which alternate one after the other. A revealing example is the Rostowian take-off model,61 which represents the apex of modernisation theories and the basis for the Western approach to the Third World for more than two decades. Thirdly, the concept of failed state relies on a conceptualisation of the interaction between state and society as two separated (even counterpoised) realms. This *phenomenon*, defined as the "Huntingtonian formula,"[62] is one of the characteristics which link the concept of failed state to the securitisation of underdevelopment at the beginning of the Cold War; the next section will deal with this aspect. The ethnocentric, ahistorical and teleological conception of development and the concept of failed state in turn represent the central element of modern religion:[63] it is a mixture of beliefs and practices with strong normative connotations. Accordingly, it is worth analysing the concept concerned in its discursive connotation rather than in its analytical use. Under the light of post-modern conceptions of development the following section copes with development (and the concept of failed state) as a discourse; a social construction.[64]

Solutions sought by IR scholars to circumvent such a problem and thus individuating an analytically viable concept to describe reality are numerous, though they will be only mentioned here. Some focus on social forces in the historical creation of the state and thereby overcome the Huntingtonian separation between state and society.[65] Others claim the reunification of international political economy with security studies[66] whereas there are scholars who pose themselves in the broader discussion on development questing for a higher role of history. Indeed, it is noteworthy that the discourse on development has overcome the fallacies typical of its earlier approaches and thus introducing new elements in its theories, such as detailed historical analyses and a trans-disciplinary approach.[67]

## The (Re)Securitisation of Underdevelopment

Building on the previous section, this part analyses the concept of failed state as a discursive construction. A caveat is needed: the method utilised is qualitative discourse analysis, under the light of

an agent-centred constructivism[68] with focus projected on the role of epistemic communities and norm entrepreneurs in creating and propelling inter-subjective understandings.[69] The indices and major studies of the members of the first cluster are analysed to deduce the logic behind the origins of the term failed state. This part of the work explores the concept of failed states as an "inter-subjective understanding" which is sustained through agency and which shapes identities and interests of agents[70] by focusing on the similarities between the post-WWII discourse on development and the one on failed states in the last two decades. A parallel may be drawn between the *phenomena* which led to the creation of the modernisation theories of development in the 1950s/1960s and the ones which led to the concept of failed state. As Gilman suggested,[71] the concept of development was a discursive construction which was to play a crucial role in the "psychological warfare" throughout the Cold War. In 1950, Project Troy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) led to the creation of the Centre for International Studies (CIS) (1952) under the aegis of Millikan, who in turn recruited for research activities Lerner (communication scholar), Pye (political scientist), Rostow (economist)[72] and Hagen (philosopher). The project, funded by the CIA and the Ford Foundation, retained the mandate to consider different types of propaganda methods. While the members, who were all Lasswell's protégés and strongly influenced by his political psychology views, had different backgrounds, they shared one commonality: they were all markedly interconnected with security and strategic studies. Indeed, many of them played an active role in WWII with respect to strategic studies. The result of Project Troy were different policy proposals between 1954 and 1961, in which the theory of modernisation was drawn, and which took a crucial role in the formation of the US policy toward the so-called Third World.[73] Several factors reinforced the influence of the CIS, such as the power position of conservatives – re: Eisenhower's Administration and a Republican majority in Congress – the beginning of the Cold War and the way the discourse was structured.[74]

A comparison may be drawn in order to deduce the similarities between these two historical *momenta* and understand the reasons why the result was the (re)securitisation of underdevelopment. First of all, many structural characteristics are similar, in that both the 1950s and the 1990s may be considered as crises of the internation-

ISSN 1802548X 9771802548012-97



al system.[75] Secondly, such historical *momenta* were characterised by an high influence of (neo)conservatives in the US Administration and of (ultra)modernists in the American social sciences. Accordingly, the result was what Newman[76] calls the securitisation of underdevelopment; this section focuses on this aspect despite acknowledging the importance of the other factors.

As mentioned above, two factors bolstered the creation of the ethnocentric and an ahistorical concept of failed state in the first cluster: the influence of security and strategic studies and the close interconnection between scholarship and policy-making.[77] Although these are mutually reinforcing, this part of the work analyses them separately. Many authors emphasise the merging of security and development in the creation of the term failed state with the result of limiting the development agenda to geostrategic and security interests.[78]

The 'silliest academic development of the Cold War,'[79] namely the isolation of security studies from other approaches, is one of the main reasons for the creation of the concept of failed state. The mechanism whereby this happened is termed by Hay[80] conjunctural mode of political rationality: the solution to an external stimulus is sought in the pre-existing structure of the system; geostrategic approaches typical of the Cold War. Accordingly, reality is framed in a way suitable for pre-existing analytical/operational tools, and not vice-versa; as argued by Maslow who posited that:[81] 'it is tempting, if the only tool you have is a hammer, to treat everything as if it were a nail.' The result was the discursive creation of the concept of failed state through a process of abstraction in which 'contradictions are brought together in a simplified inter-subjective understanding within a broader meta-narration.'[82] Consequently, 'although the "formal Cold War" has ceased – involving the stalemate between capitalism and communism – a "structural Cold War" still prevails – involving new justifications for the persistence of old institutions.'[83] A second hand data analysis carried out on the main international economic newspapers[84] revealed that the term failed state and related jargon was mentioned only once in the last two decades: this is telling of the monopoly which security studies enjoys in this field.

The discourse on failed state is so diffused and broadly (almost universally) accepted in that it bears several features which are typical of a successful narrative. First of all, it is centred on the concept

ISSN 1802548X 9771802548012-97



of "direct responsibility,"[85] namely there is widespread consensus that bad governance in failed states is the reason for their situation. Indeed, in the first cluster the agency-based approach,[86] namely the conception that state failure is man-made, is a common assumption. Secondly, the same factor which led to the creation of such a concept has bolstered its diffusion among practitioners and academics: the fact that it does not represent a "Copernican revolution" in IR theories is an advantage given the resistance to change typical of social and political sciences, as pointed out by several behavioural scientists. Thirdly, a successful narrative has to recruit a variety of external symptoms in a simplified, general and flexible generalisation.[87] In fact, as illustrated above, the studies of the first cluster associate to the term failed states a myriad of complex political, economical, social phenomena. Accordingly, all the evil in the world may be reduced to a single source: failed states. This narrative points to a clearly defined enemy, which incarnates the perfect nemesis of liberal democracy. Thirdly, such studies have enjoyed attention by the means of dissemination: from the Internet, where the foreshown indices are available, through the broadcasting world to more specialist means of communication, such as political and IR publications.[88] Lastly, the role of epistemic communities and their close relationship to policy-makers strongly supports the diffusion of such a narrative not only in the academic world but also in the real one.[89] A telling example is the fact that the aforementioned Failed State Index is taken as a benchmark in the 2010 *Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, which sets the priorities of US Administrations in the development policy arena.

The other factor is the close interconnection between the scholars and policy-makers regarding the role norm entrepreneur the former plays. Indeed, the similarities between the task force created at the MIT in the 1950s and the Political Instability Task Force (PITF) created in 1994 are revealing. Both were/are funded by the CIA and established on the explicit request of a US Administration, these two bodies had (and the latter still has) the objective of carrying out studies for US policy-making. In fact, the 1995 report of the PITF was a milestone for the concept of state failure; it is considered the first comprehensive attempt to tackle the issue. Not only does such a close relationship bear consequences on the high attention granted to the narrative of failed states by practitioners,

ISSN 1802548X 9771802548012-97



but also on the way the narrative itself is structured. Concerning the first aspect, many scholars underline the role of think tanks as norm entrepreneurs in this regard. Institutes providing the failed states indices and many others have been able to 'convince a critical mass of [actors] to embrace new norms.'[90] Furthermore, prominent scholars have also played a role and blur the line between practitioners and academics. Telling examples are Jack Straw, (former) UK Foreign Secretary and Stephen Krasner, (former) Director of Policy Planning at the US Department of State.[91] Their roles as norm entrepreneurs has been supported by many exogenous factors, such as the influence of conservatives in key states and the high role of ultra-modernists in the social sciences.

Such a close relationship between academic and policy-making circles has influenced the discursive creation itself of the concept of failed state in two main manners. Firstly, that the first clusters' studies focus only on measurable and material indicators of this phenomenon is related to the necessity to build policies on such studies.[92] Secondly, the solutions implicitly or explicitly suggested by these studies are of a managerial and organisational nature.[93] That is why the aforementioned "Huntingtonian formula" is a characteristic of this approach to failed states; the solution is sought at the state level, which is more manageable than the societal one. Thirdly, such institutional tools represent a one-size-fits-all model perceived as a "silver bullet" solution. A noteworthy factor is their inherently interventionist connotation based on institutional engineering.

Consequently, the concept of failed state may be perceived as a discursive construction, but also as a normative concept. Indeed, while it falls short of describing reality and therefore being analytically unfeasible, it represents a model towards which policy-makers aspire. Accordingly, reality is shaped in order to fulfil the model and not vice-versa. As stated before, inter-subjective understandings shape identities and, in turn, the interests of actors.

The consequences of the uncritical use of the concept of failed state in the policy-making are multiple, though they will only be identified due to spatial constraints. First, there is the risk of a self-fulfilling prophecy; a juxtaposition between the "me" and the "I"[94] of the allegedly failed states: if conceived and dealt with by other states as failed it is probable they will become failed. Second,

the narrative of failed state has interventionist and even neo-colonialist connotations if instrumentally deployed. Thirdly, spurious interpretations of "failed states" may lead to ineffective or disproportionate actions, creating dynamics of path dependence.



## Conclusion

> *There were six men of Hindustan to learning much inclined, who went to see an elephant though all of them were blind, that each by observation might satisfy his mind [...]. So six blind men of Hindustan disputed loud and long, each in his own opinion exceeding stiff and strong; though each was partly in the right, they all were in the wrong!*[95]

As this quotation suggests, the common structural characteristics in place at the beginning and at the end of the Cold War led to the same phenomenon: the securitisation of underdevelopment. Despite differences, it is beyond doubt that the concept of failed state and related jargon is a derivation of an approach to development inextricably connected with security and strategic studies. The same factors which contributed to its creation have also played a crucial role in its diffusion as a mainstream narrative about development in the last two decades. Unfortunately, this has borne several drastic consequences in the way the major powers have dealt with the rest of the world. A last caveat is needed: the objective of this work was neither to give definite answers to the problem nor to fall into an infinite epistemological cycle. Instead, the aim of this work was to underline the dynamics where the term failed state has been created, not to propose an alternative narrative on the development of the state. Regarding the second point, this work avoided the eternal struggle between holism and individualism, which has been at the centre of the debate in social sciences since the 19th century. Indeed, constructivist theories tend to fall into the trap of cultural relativism, which may lead to intellectual stalemate. Nonetheless, even though not so easily achievable, the quest for an analytically viable concept is a reasonable objective: the important point is to acknowledge that such analytical tools derive from given agents acting in given circumstances and they may be the objects of analysis and evaluation themselves. In a pioneering work on the

ISSN 1802548X 9771802548012-97

epistemology of knowledge, Puchala (1971) compares the blind men of the notorious story with IR scholars. Indeed, like the blind men trying to identify the mysterious being by touching different parts of it, IR scholars conduct their research activities in the same way: by focusing on different dimensions of the same phenomenon and by wearing different theoretical glasses. As in the case of the blind men, there are not right or wrong answers.



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Notes to Pages

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3 Edward Newman (2009), 'Failed States and International Order: Constructing a Post-Westphalian World,' *Contemporary Security Policy,* 30:3, pp. 421-443.
4 See: <www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php> (accessed 12 December 2010).
5 Ibid.
6 '2010 GPI Results Report,' available at: <www.visionofhumanity.org>, (accessed 12 December 2010).
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ISSN 1802548X 9771802548012-97



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ISSN 1802548X 97718025480 12-97



*The Stages of Economic Growth: A non-communist manifest.*

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74 For reasons of time and space, this paper will cope only with the relation between security studies (more specifically strategic studies given the close interconnection with policy-makers) and development (and in turn the concept of failed state). Despite the high importance of the mentioned factors, it is appropriate to limit the analysis in this regard. For the same reasons the analysis will be deepened only with respect to the historical *momentum* at the end of the Cold War.

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88 Figure 4 illustrates the frequency at which the term failed state has appeared in the articles of Foreign Affairs.

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