

DEBATES

Stateness in Latin America

by AGUSTINA GIRAUDY | Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies, Harvard University | American University, Associate Editor | agustina.giraudy@gmail.com

and JUAN PABLO LUNA | Instituto de Ciencia Política, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Associate Editor | jpluna@icp.puc.cl

Ahora bien, las razones del por qué de estas diferencias van más allá de esta breve colaboración, pero indiscutiblemente ameritan un estudio en profundidad mucho más acabado.

Notas

¹ Esta presentación es una versión notablemente abreviada de “Where is Knowledge Generated? On the Productivity and Impact of Political Science Departments in Latin America” publicado este año en el *European Political Science* 11 (1): 71-87.

² Sobre estos dos puntos véase Chernyha, Sierra y Snyder, y Malamud y Freidenberg en este mismo número de *LASA Forum*. ■

States in Latin America vary widely in terms of their capacity to extend their control over the entire national territory and the societies they rule. Whereas in some countries national rulers are able to control most of the territory, in others the presence of a wide variety of challengers, such as guerrilla insurgents and drug traffickers, or subnational conservative autonomy movements, has seriously limited the capacity of some central state rulers to impose order throughout the territory they govern. States in the region also differ in their capacity to deliver public goods and services, such as the rule of law, education, and health, public infrastructure, among others. Whereas some states effectively provide these goods, others lack the means necessary to do so.

The following contributions to the Debates section of this issue of the *Forum* examine, from a variety of analytical standpoints, the sources of this variation and consider concrete examples in which state capacity has been improved. Marta Arretche’s article focuses on Brazil’s incremental gains in state capacity to improve citizens’ well-being and highlights the role that fiscal transfers have played to reduce economic inequality. The second article, by Daniel Brinks, proposes to study two different dimensions of the rule of law—the vertical, which captures effective application of the rules by the state to its citizens and the horizontal, e.g., the effective compliance with the rules by citizens in their dealings with each other—as well as the direction of duties owed between state and citizens. As Brinks demonstrates, this way of unpacking the rule of law is better suited to capture different challenges to state capacity observed in contemporary Latin America. Using different analytic lenses, the third and fourth pieces explore the limits to state capacity when challengers emerge and contest state authority. Kent Eaton’s piece

focuses on recent conservative autonomy movements in Ecuador and Bolivia that have limited state authorities’ capacity to implement policy in subnational territories. Andreas Feldmann and Juan Pablo Luna’s contribution provides new analytical categories to better systematize, understand, and explain the different state-challengers interactions that can be observed in contemporary Latin America. Finally, in an analysis of state response to three recent natural disasters in Latin America, Soifer advances an explanation for the persistence of state weakness and state strength in Latin America. ■