

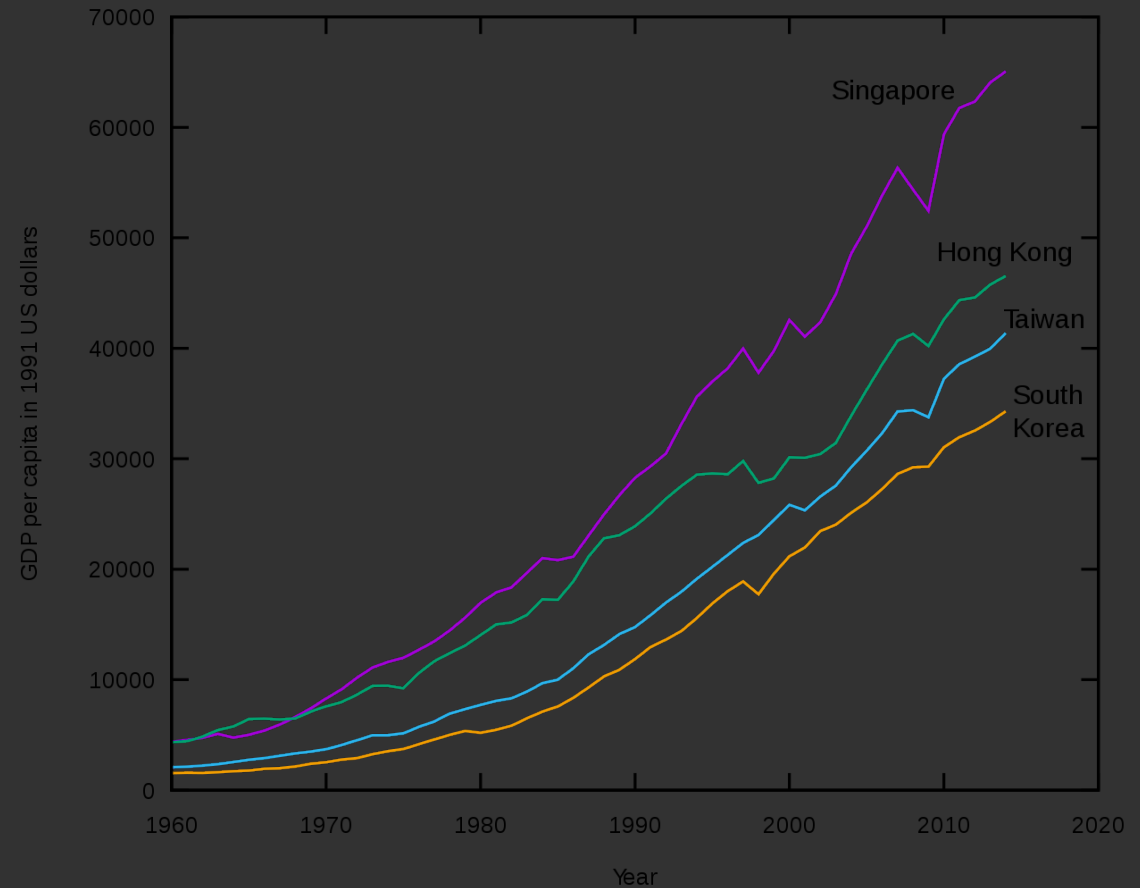
POL201Y1: Politics of Development

Lecture 12:

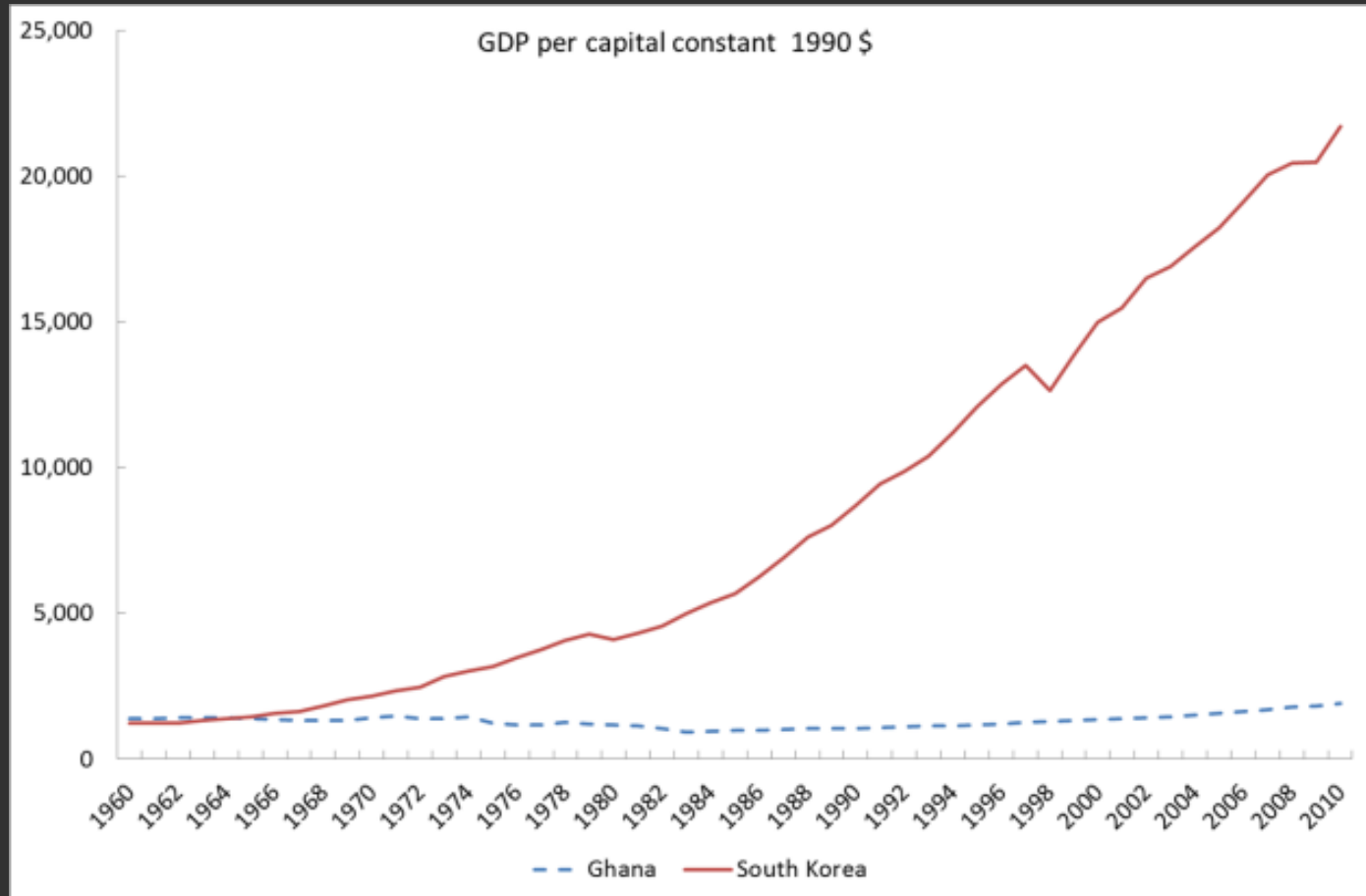
“Seeing like a state”

Recap

- Explanations of the success of developmental states:
 - Export-led industrialization
 - Investment and savings
 - International system
 - Historical legacies:
 - Land distribution
 - Colonialism
 - Governed market
 - State autonomy
 - Embedded autonomy



The importance of state capacity



Emergence of capable states (in Europe)

- War-making →
- Need to establish a growing degree of centralized control over the means of coercion and of finance →
- Creation of large, effective bureaucracies to administer wars, organize recruitment, and raise revenues →
- Increased capacity to extract (tax-collection agencies, police forces, courts, exchequers, etc.) →
- Popular resistance to extraction forced rulers to make concessions (guarantees of rights, representative institutions, courts)
 - Tilly, Charles. 1985. "Warmaking and State-Making as Organized Crime." In Peter Evans et al. (eds.), *Bringing the State Back In*. New York: Cambridge University Press: 169-191.
 - Tilly, Charles. 1990. *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1990*. Cambridge, Mass.: Basil Blackwell.

State capacity and taxation

- “The experience of being taxed engages citizens in the political process”
 - Moore, Mick. 2008. “Between Coercion and Contract: Competing Narratives on Taxation and Governance.” In *Taxation and State-Building in Developing Countries: Capacity and Consent*, ed. by Deborah Brautigam, Odd-Helge Fjeldstad, and Mick Moore.

State capacity according to Acemoglu

- The state apparatus is controlled by a self-interested ruler
- The ruler tries to divert resources for her own consumption, but can also invest in socially productive public goods
- ‘Consensually strong state equilibrium’:
 - The state is politically weak but is allowed to impose high taxes as long as a sufficient fraction of the proceeds are invested in public goods
- Excessively weak state:
 - The ruler anticipates that he will not be able to extract rents in the future and underinvests in public goods
 - Acemoglu, Daron. 2005. “Politics and Economics in Weak and Strong States.” *Journal of Monetary Economics* 52 (7): 1199–1226.

The pitfalls of capable states: Acemoglu's state capacity model

- Excessively strong state:
 - The ruler imposes high taxes → little private investment
 - Acemoglu, Daron. 2005. "Politics and Economics in Weak and Strong States." *Journal of Monetary Economics* 52 (7): 1199–1226.

The pitfalls of capable states

- Why can a state be too capable / strong?
 - Excessive taxation → little private investment
 - ...

Is development a technical problem?

Going west in 2015



Figure 6.1. How would you get from St Louis to Los Angeles in 2015?

Source: Google Maps

Source: Andrews, Matt, Lant Pritchett, and Michael Woolcock. 2017. *Building state capability. Evidence, analysis, action.* Corby: Oxford University Press.

Table 6.2. A strategy to Go West in 2015

What drives action?	A clearly identified and predefined solution
How is action identified, carried out?	Reference existing knowledge and experience, plot exact course out in a plan, implement as designed
What authority or leadership is required?	A single authorizer ensuring compliance with the plan, with no other demands or tensions
Who needs to be involved?	A small group of appropriately qualified individuals

Going west in 1804

Table 6.3. A strategy to Go West in 1804

What drives action?	A motivating problem that is felt by those involved
How is action identified, carried out?	Through experimental iterations where teams take an action step, learn, adapt, and take another step
What authority or leadership is required?	Multiple authorizers managing risks of the project (by motivating teams, and more) and supporting experimentation
Who needs to be involved?	Multi-agent groups (or teams) with many different functional responsibilities and talents

Source: Andrews, Matt, Lant Pritchett, and Michael Woolcock. 2017. *Building state capability. Evidence, analysis, action.* Corby: Oxford University Press.

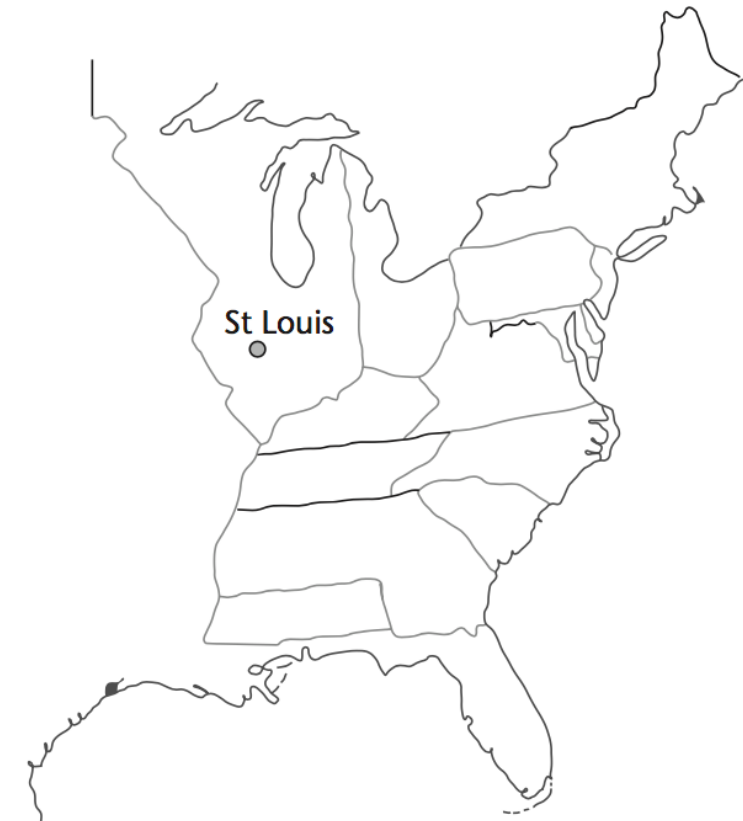
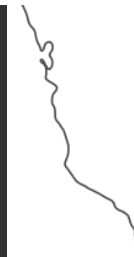
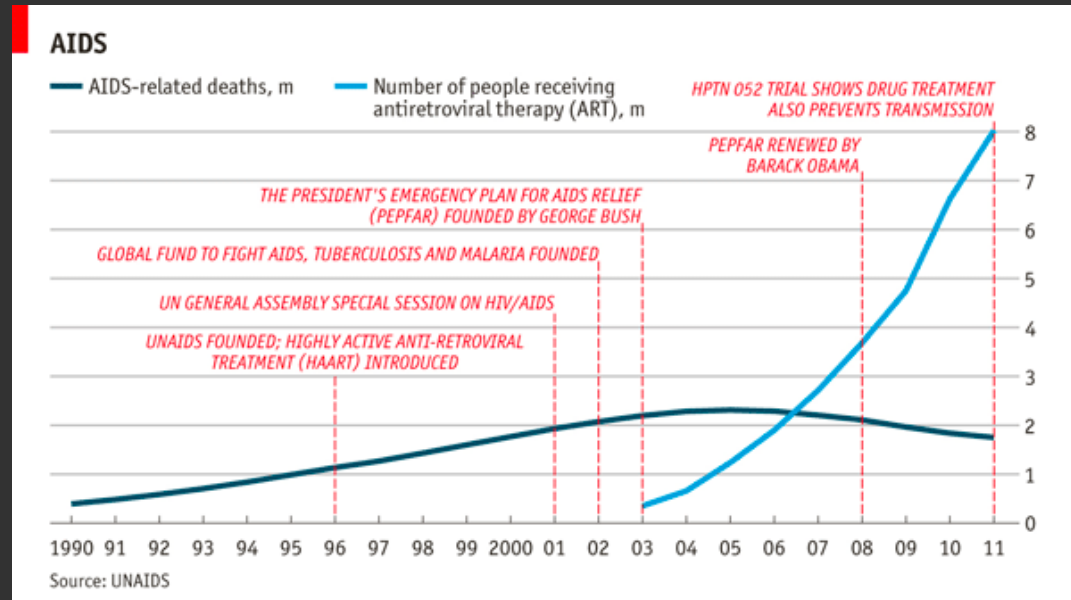
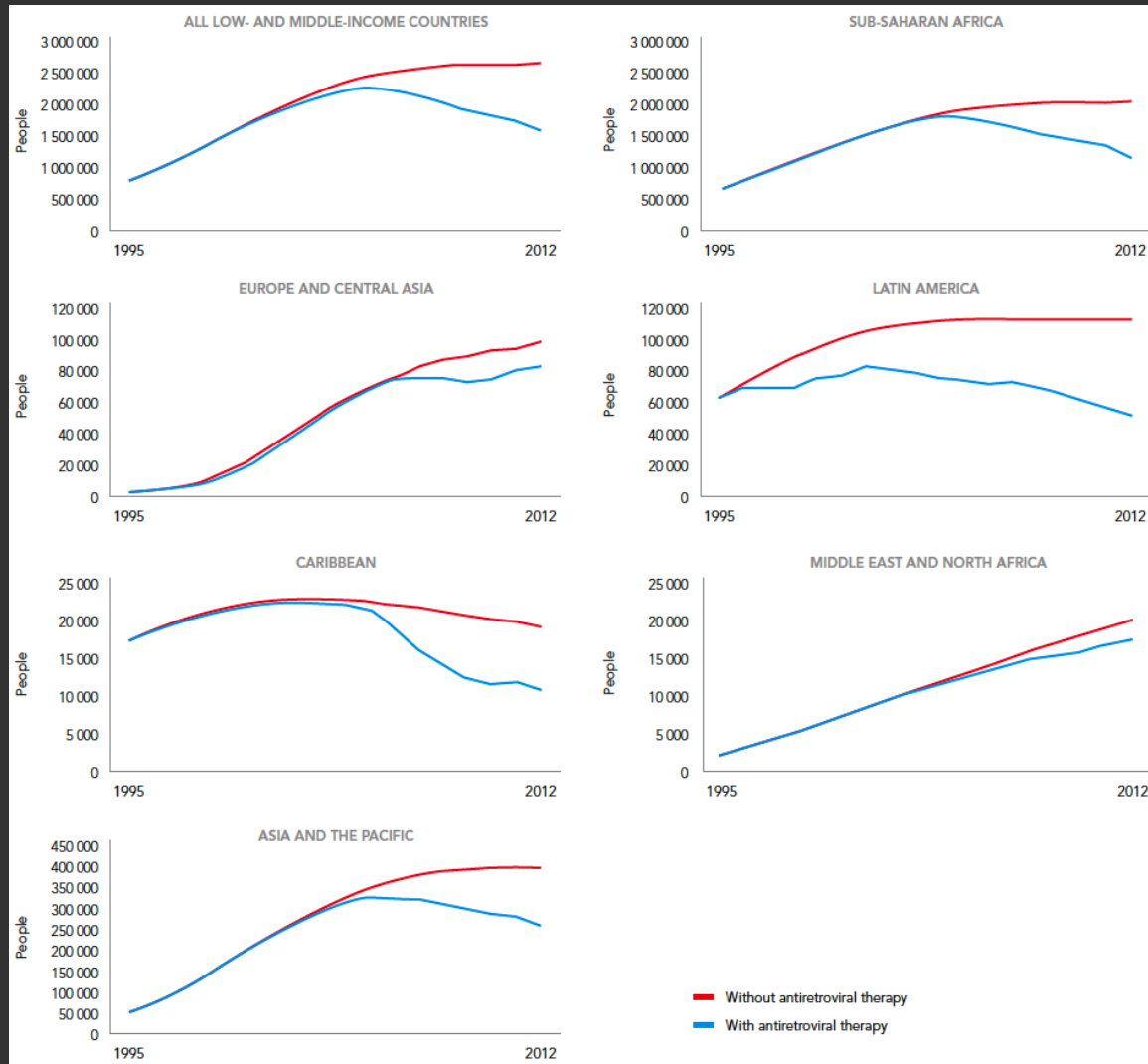


Figure 6.2. How would you get to the west coast from St Louis in 1804?

Development as a technical problem



Sources:
 Our World in Data: <https://ourworldindata.org/hiv-aids/>
 The Economist: <https://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2012/07/daily-chart-12>

When is development not a technical problem?

		Examples	
		Health	Finance
Policy making/elite services		Iodization of salt	Monetary policy
Logistics		Vaccinations	Payment systems
Implementation intensive service delivery		Curative care	Loans
Implementation intensive imposition of obligations		Regulation of private providers	Regulation of private providers
Wicked hard		Preventative health	Equity financing of start-ups

Figure 5.2. The five types of activities that have different capability needs in implementation

Seeing like a state

- Legibility as a central problem in statecraft
- Modern states attempt to make a society legible →
- Schemes to engineer society (and nature), i.e. to arrange the population in ways that simplify taxation, conscription, and prevention of rebellion
- Efforts to subvert local knowledge (*metis*) in favour of rational administrative ordering (*techne*)
 - Scott, James C. 1998. *Seeing Like a State*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Seeing like a state

- 18th-century Prussia and Saxony:
 - Invention of scientific forestry
 - Introduction of Norway spruce monocultures →
 - Disruption of the complex processes in forests, diseases, *Waldsterben*
- Tanzania in the 1970s:
 - The majority of rural population 'scattered' across the country, 'illegible' and outside the reach of the state
 - *Ujamaa* scheme / compulsory villagization
 - 5 million Tanzanians relocated to *ujamaa* villages
 - No attention paid to the local knowledge and practices of cultivators and pastoralists →
 - Economic and ecological failure

Seeing like a state

- Failure of state-initiated social engineering schemes due to “a pernicious combination of four elements”:
 - Administrative ordering of nature and society through processes of simplification and standardization intended to facilitate central monitoring and management
 - High-modernist ideology:
“It is best conceived as a strong, one might even say muscle-bound, version of the self-confidence about scientific and technical progress, the expansion of production, the growing satisfaction of human needs, the mastery of nature (including human nature), and, above all, the rational design of social order commensurate with the scientific understanding of natural laws. It originated, of course, in the West, as a by-product of unprecedented progress in science and industry.”
 - Authoritarian state willing and able to use the full weight of its coercive power to bring the high-modernist designs into being
 - Weak civil society (often weakened by a war, revolution, economic collapse, or late colonial rule)
 - Scott, James C. 1998. *Seeing Like a State*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Anti-politics machine

- Development interventions:
 - Standardized
 - Apolitical
 - Technical
- Development discourse employed to make the object/recipient (in this case, Lesotho) out to be a promising candidate for such interventions

Anti-politics machine

- Construction of Lesotho as a particular kind of object of knowledge and creation of a structure of knowledge around that object
- Real Lesotho:
 - South Africa's labour reserve
 - Economically dependent on SA
 - Capitalist (farming only 6 percent of rural household income)
- Lesotho in development discourse:
 - Traditional, bounded national economy based on agricultural production (i.e. the kind of country that is ripe for modernization in the modernization theory sense of the word)

Anti-politics machine

- Thaba-Tseka project (1975-1984) in the highlands of eastern Lesotho:
 - Failure as an agricultural development project
 - Powerful 'instrument-effects':
 - Construction of a road linking Thaba-Tseka with Maseru
 - Establishment of new district administration
 - Greater government presence in Thaba-Tseka

Anti-politics machine

- “In this perspective, the ‘development’ apparatus in Lesotho is not a machine for eliminating poverty that is incidentally involved with the state bureaucracy; it is a **machine for reinforcing and expanding the exercise of bureaucratic state power**, which incidentally takes ‘poverty’ as its point of entry—launching an intervention that may have no effect on the poverty but does in fact have other concrete effects.
Such a result may be no part of the planners’ intentions—indeed, it almost never is—but resultant systems have an intelligibility of their own.” →
- The political effects of ‘apolitical’ interventions
- ‘Anti-politics machine’:
 - “depoliticizing everything it touches, everywhere whisking political realities out of sight, all the while performing, almost unnoticed, its own pre-eminently political operation of expanding bureaucratic state power”
 - Ferguson, James. 1994. *The Anti-Politics Machine: “Development”, Depoliticization and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Anti-politics machine – an update



<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/23/magazine/universal-income-global-inequality.html>

How can the problem of excessive state power be addressed?

Voice, exit, loyalty

- Two ways in which individuals exercise control over organizations:
 - Exit
 - Voice
 - (Loyalty represses voice and exit)
 - Hirschman, Albert O. 1970. *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Voice



Exit

- “Virtually everything about these people's livelihoods, social organization, ideologies, and (more controversially) even their largely oral cultures, can be read as strategic positionings designed to keep the state at arm's length. Their physical dispersion in rugged terrain, their mobility, their cropping practices, their kinship structure, their pliable ethnic identities, and their devotion to prophetic, millenarian leaders effectively serve to avoid incorporation into states and to prevent states from springing up among them.”

- Scott, James C. 2009. *The art of not being governed: an anarchist history of upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

