State of the State:

The state is dead! Long live the state!

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Introduction

The State is Dead! Long live the State! At the turn of the century, many commentators from the right and left seemed united in their analysis that the state as an economic player was dead or at least no longer relevant. The combined pressures of globalisation, liberalisation and marketisation unleashed by the market-driven dogmas of Thatcherism and Reaganomics had massively expanded the private sector and concurrently downsized the public sector. Corporate power was in the ascendancy and many state-owned companies had become little more than second-rate government departments, and the underlying assumption was that, as the economy evolved, the government would close or sell them to private investors.

Yet just over a decade later, the state is once again at the centre of heated political and academic debates. The crises of recent years have demonstrated that those who proclaimed the irrelevance of the state so vociferously were grossly misled. Conservative business analysts express growing concern that public enterprises "show no signs of relinquishing the commanding heights" and "are on the offensive".[1] The failures of privatisation, evident in unequal access, unfulfilled promises and outrageous profit margins are prompting governments to take back control of essential public services, through processes of renationalisation and remunicipalisation.

State-owned or state-controlled enterprises (SOEs and SCEs, respectively) are also expanding in major industries: the world's ten biggest firms in the oil and gas sector, in terms of reserves, are all in state hands. State-controlled sovereign wealth funds (SWFs) have become strong components of the changing international economy — as illustrated by the mounting power of the China Investment Corporation, the Norwegian Government Pension Fund Global, or the assets managed by several oil- and gas-rich Gulf states

The nature and scope of state power and its potential either as an instrument for progressive change or as a catalyst for capitalist accumulation leading to further social exclusion and environmental degradation, need a much more critical examination. A greater or more influential public sector does not necessarily mean progressive change. Moreover, any discussion about the nature and roles of the state in the present global context requires a more detailed and unbiased analysis of its real economic weight around the world.

The 'return' of the state or the continuance of the state?

Recent research published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has measured the degree of public ownership among the world's 2,000 largest companies — those included in the Forbes Global 2000 index — and their 330,000 subsidiaries.[2] The authors identified as public companies those where the state owns, directly or indirectly, more than 50% of the shares. The findings are: more than 10% of the world's largest companies — 204 firms — belong to the state, with presence in 37 different countries and a total value of sales that amounted to US$ 3,600 billion in the year 2011. This turnover represents more than 10% of the combined sales of all the Forbes Global 2000 and is equivalent to 6% of the global GDP, exceeding the gross national product of countries such as Germany, France or the United Kingdom.

The economic weight of the public sector varies considerably across countries. SOEs and SCEs, for example, account for 80% of the capitalisation of the stock market in China and over 60% in Russia, but just less than 35% in Brazil.[3] In Latin America, while some major state companies emerged out of high-profile renationalisations, such as in Venezuela, Bolivia and Argentina, or through the establishment of new public enterprises as in Ecuador, many date back to prior to the wave of privatisation in the 1990s.

The country where the power of public enterprises is most evident is China. At present, some of the world's biggest and most influential companies are owned or controlled by China's central government. Most of these enterprises were created in the 1950s, following the Soviet model, but since the mid-1980s the Chinese government has pushed several reforms in their operations and management. As a result, today, "in many respects these companies look like multinational companies. Some are listed on overseas stock markets, and some feature prominently on lists of the world's largest corporations".[4]

The real number and economic and political weight of Chinese SOEs and SCEs is not easy to estimate, but according to figures disclosed by the official news agency[5] by the end of 2011 the country had 144,700 companies owned or controlled by the state, excluding financial institutions. Their total assets were calculated to be 85.4 trillion yuan (US$ 13.6 trillion), and they were estimated to contribute 35% of China's revenues and 43% of China's total industrial and business. Most public enterprises belong to local authorities; even if those managed by the central government receive most of the attention. The centrally-managed firms are those controlled by the powerful State-Owned Assets Supervision and Administration Committee (SASAC; a mega holding company).

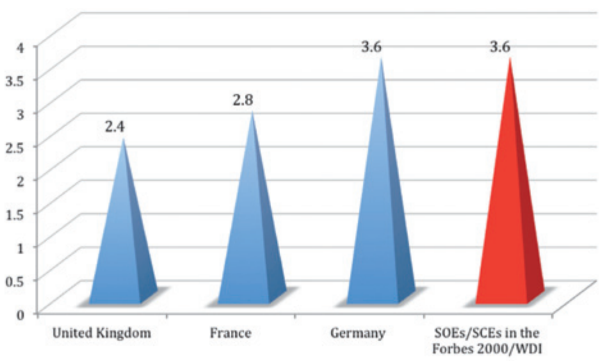
The other major Asian power, India, also continues to empower public entities as catalysts for both national development and foreign expansion. In recent years, the Indian government has granted Indian SOEs greater autonomy to invest in international operations and engage in joint ventures across borders. One such company is the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), that has initiated exploration and production projects in countries as diverse as Brazil, Burma, Cuba, China, Colombia, Iran, Iraq, Nigeria, Kazakhstan, Syria, Sudan, Uzbekistan and Vietnam[6] joining what Michael Klare has called "the global scramble for the world's last resources."[7]

In France, the State Assets Agency (Agence des Participations de l'Etat, APE) manages a large portfolio of strategic companies in the areas of defence, infrastructure, transport, energy, real estate and financial services. The composition and goals of the public companies are reviewed periodically to ensure they are aligned with the long-terms goals of France's industrial policy. The financial intermediary role played by what has been called the "shareholder state" (l'État actionnaire) via the Société de Prise de Participation de l'Etat (SPPE) has also ensured the availability of credit to rescue various ailing companies and contributed to economic recovery in times of crisis.[8]

Public enterprises also play an important role in small and middle European countries, such as Ireland. In 2010, an independent evaluation by Forfas,[9] a policy advisory board, noted the importance of state-owned enterprises for providing essential infrastructure and public services, enhancing skills and entrepreneurship, and promoting economic growth and social wellbeing.

The new economic dynamism of the state is particularly visible in Latin America. Five of the ten largest firms in the region are SOEs or SCEs — Brazil's Petrobras and Petrobras Distribuidora (1 and 2, respectively), Venezuela's PDVSA (2), Mexico's PEMEX (3), and Colombia's Ecopetrol (8), all of them major oil companies. A state-owned or state-controlled enterprise is also at the top of the national ranking of companies in most countries of the region.[10]

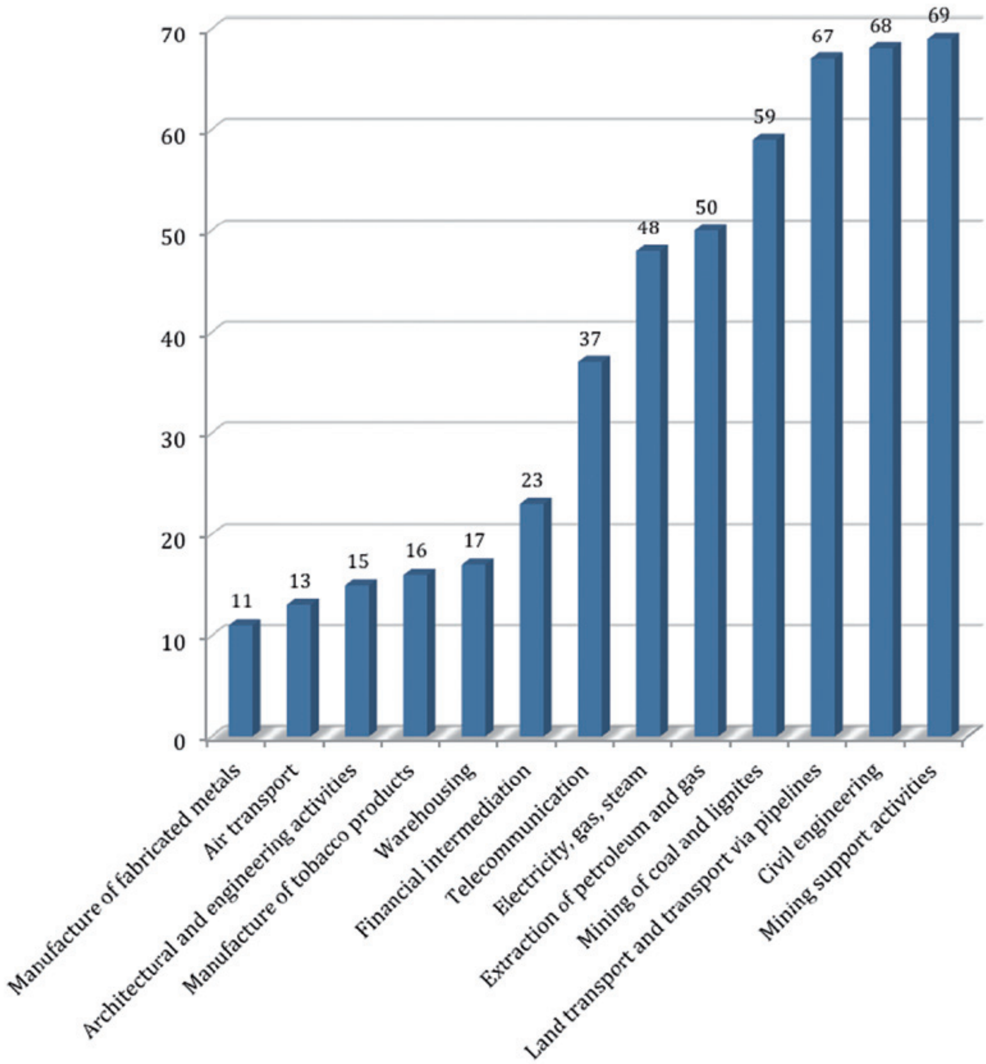
The GDP of the UK, France, and Germany compared to total sales of SOEs among top 2,000 global firms in 2011 (in US$ trillion)



Source: Based on Kowalski et al. (2013)

Several governments have also implemented renationalisation measures. The two Latin American countries that had privatised their oil companies in the 1990s, Bolivia (YPFB) and Argentina (YPF), are now walking the opposite path. In the case of YPF, in 2012 the

SOE share (%) by sector in Forbes 2000



Source: Based on Kowalski et al. (2013)

government expropriated 51% of the shares in the hands of the Spain-based transnational corporation Repsol.[11] Under progressive governments, the state has regained 100% control of the national oil companies of Venezuela (PDVSA), Ecuador (Petroecuador), Uruguay (ANCAP) and Bolivia (YPFB). In other cases, national oil companies that had been forced to open their capital to the private sector are still controlled by the state, as the cases of Brazil (Petrobras; 64% state ownership) and Colombia (Ecopetrol, 90%) show. In recent years, Venezuela has nationalised many companies operating in the industrial and public services sectors, while Bolivia and Argentina have also moved towards renationalisation in the tertiary sector. In the mining sector, despite Chile having been the first laboratory to test neoliberal policies, the state company in charge of cooper production, Codelco, always remained an exception in the region: it was highly corporatised, but never privatised.

Ironically, while the burgeoning economy in the South has been tied to the resurgence of the state, in the North privatisation has returned to the political agenda with great force. The industrialised countries that make up the OECD and which went through a first wave of privatisations in the 1990s are facing a new privatisation drive in the context of austerity policies. The current wave of privatisation is affecting sectors intrinsically at the core of the welfare state, such as hospitals and health care, social services, welfare programs for children and youth, prisons, etc. The return of privatisation is particularly visible in the countries of the Mediterranean area, where the agencies that make up the so-called *troika* — the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund — are imposing privatisation programmes very similar to those applied in Latin America in earlier decades as part of structural adjustment programmes.[12]

States as global investors and assets managers

Sovereign Wealth Funds (SWFs) have also seen extensive and rapid growth in the last decade. In a broad sense, SWFs are "large pools of government-owned funds that are invested in whole or in part outside their home country".[13] A more detailed definition has been offered by the International Working Group of Sovereign Wealth Funds:[14]

Sovereign wealth funds (SWFs) are special purpose investment funds or arrangements, owned by the general government. Created by the general government for macroeconomic purposes, SWFs hold, manage, or administer assets to achieve financial objectives, and employ a set of investment strategies which include investing in foreign financial assets. The SWFs are commonly established out of balance of payments surpluses, official foreign currency operations, the proceeds of privatizations, fiscal surpluses, and/or receipts resulting from commodity exports.

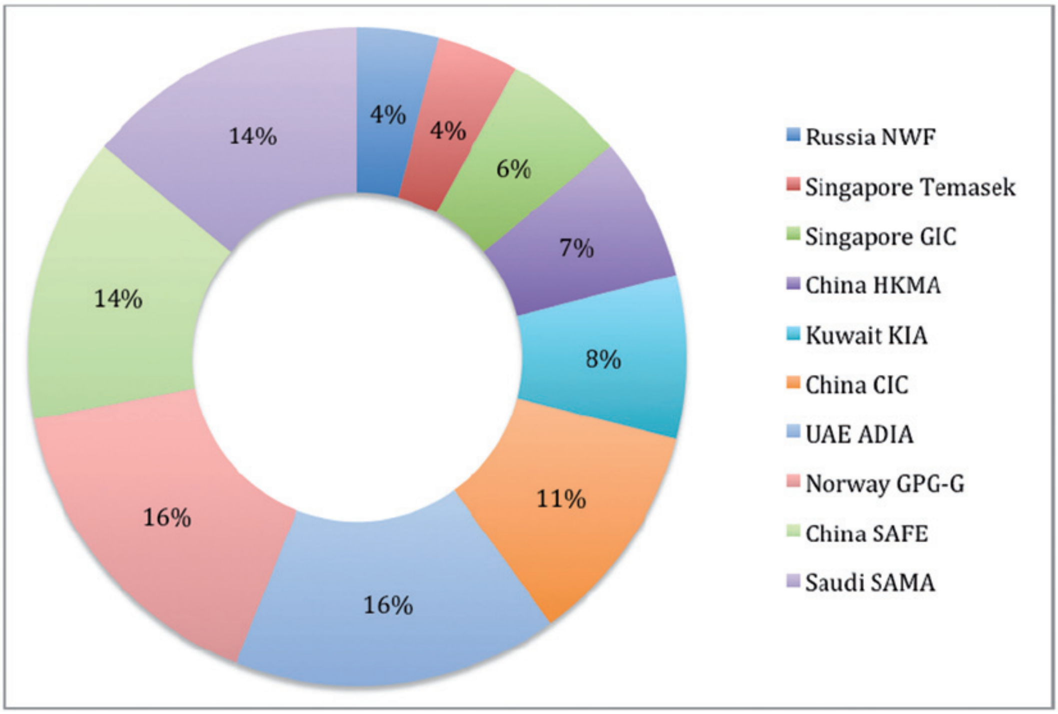
SWFs are not new actors in the world economy. Kuwait has been stashing a significant portion of its oil revenues since the mid-1950s. These funds are generally associated with commodity-driven wealth, such as Norway's Pension Fund Global, but new types of SWFs financed from trade or fiscal surpluses have recently emerged as important players. Singapore has been putting aside resources since the early 1980s, followed by a number of similar funds in China and other non-oil exporting countries. SWFs can be found in all regions of the world, with states as diverse as Angola, Australia, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Chile, Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, Russia, South Africa and Uganda — among many others — in different stages of preparation or implementation of this kind of financial schemes.[15]

While they are not new, their assets have grown impressively over the last five years, despite the post-2008 financial crisis. Exact figures on the SWFs' current assets and activities are very hard to get, as the lack of transparency about their operations is a strong feature of most of these funds. The latest published valuations vary, from the approximately US$ 5.6 trillion (in assets under management) reported by the Fletcher School's Center for Applied Research (CAR)[16] to the US$ 6.0 trillion revealed by the SWF Institute[17] based on data from 74 national and sub-national funds. Concentration of assets is very high in the world of sovereign funds, with the top 10 SWFs being in control of 79% of the total wealth, the top 20 holding 93.1% and[18] funds each holding assets above US$ 50 billion, as CAR has reported. These large pools of state-controlled capital administered by the SWFs are expected to grow significantly over the coming years.

Challenging the myth of private efficiency

The apparent return of the state seems to have caused

Concentration of 10 largest SWFs by assets (2012)



Source: CAR (2013)

Top 20 SWFs by year of inception, source of capitalisation and assets (September 2013)

	Country	Fund name	Inception	Source	Assets US$ billion)
1	Norway	Government Pension Fund - Global	1990	Oil	803.9
2	Saudi Arabia	SAMA Foreign Holding	n/a	Oil	675.9
3	UAE-Abu Dhabi	Abu Dhabi Investment Authority	1976	Oil	627.0
4	China	China Investment Corporation	2007	Non-commodity	575.2
5	China	SAFE Investment Company	1997	Non-commodity	567.9
6	Kuwait	Kuwait Investment Authority	1953	Oil	386.0
7	China-Hong Kong	Hong Kong Monetary Authority Investment Portfolio	1993	Non-commodity	326.7
8	Singapore	Government of Singapore Investment Corporation	1981	Non-commodity	285.0
9	Singapore	Temasek Holdings	1974	Non-commodity	173.3
10	China	National Social Security Fund	2000	Non-commodity	160.6
11	Qatar	Qatar Investment Authority	2005	Oil and gas	115.0
12	Australia	Australia Future Fund	2006	Non-commodity	88.7
13	Russia	National Welfare Fund	2008	Oil	88.0
14	Russia	Reserve Fund	2008	Oil	86.4
15	Kazakhstan	Samruk-Kazyna JSC	2008	Non-commodity	77.5
16	Algeria	Revenue Regulation Fund	2000	Oil and gas	77.2
17	UAE-Dubai	Investment Corporation of Dubai	2006	Oil	70.0
18	Kazakhstan	Kazakhstan National Fund	2000	Oil	68.9
19	UAE-Abu Dhabi	International Petroleum Investment Company	1984	Oil	65.3
20	Libya	Libyan Investment Authority	2006	Oil	65.0

Source: SWF Institute (2013)

some anxiety among many conservative commentators. In a special report on "state capitalism" published in January 2012, the world's most widely read business magazine warned its readers about the transit from a liberal capitalist model to alternative models centred around this kind of companies. Exactly two years before, *The Economist* had already voiced its great concern:[19]

Today big government is back with a vengeance: not just as a brute fact, but as a vigorous ideology [...]. Huge state-run companies such as Gazprom and PetroChina are on the march [...]. Annual lists of the world's biggest companies have begun to feature new kinds of corporate entities: companies that are either directly owned or substantially controlled by the state [...]. Chinese state-controlled companies have been buying up private companies during the financial crisis. Russia's state-controlled companies have a long record of snapping up private companies on the cheap. Sovereign wealth funds are increasingly important in the world's markets [...]. Three-quarters of the world's crude-oil reserves are owned by national oil companies. (By contrast, conventional multinationals control just 3% of the world's reserves and produce 10% of its oil and gas.) But it is also the result of something more fundamental: the shift in the balance of economic power to countries with a very different view of the state from the one celebrated in the Washington consensus. The world is seeing the rise of a new economic hybrid—what might be termed "state capitalism".

The underlying concern is that successful SOEs and SCEs challenge their widespread belief on the intrinsically inefficient nature of public enterprises. They pose an empirical challenge to the dubious statement first issued over a decade ago that "private companies are more efficient and more profitable than state-owned enterprises".[20] A meta-study recently released,[21] based on a very large database, concludes that there is no reason to believe that private enterprises are more efficient than public enterprises in general, and that new and more detailed analyses that compare the welfare effects of publicly and privately owned firms are still much needed.

Even in China, despite a series of recent press articles about the slowdown and lower economic performance of state companies, academic research provides evidence that Chinese public enterprises are in fact stronger than ever. Moreover, although foreign-owned firms seem to be more productive than non-exporting firms, "exporting SOEs are the most productive of all possible groupings of firms".[22]

Analysts and policymakers hostile to the state have lucidly anticipated the increasing importance of the public secto, demanding the imposition of new barriers to prevent their expansion. In the framework of negotiations of a new generation of international agreements to liberalise trade and secure greater protection for foreign investment — in particular the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) — the advocates of the market have called for more stringent conditions for the operations of public enterprises.[23] If these agreements are signed, "the constraints on the role of the state, and the reduction of the space for behaviour or operations of state-linked companies, will become the way of the future for all countries".[24]

Recently, the famous economist Nouriel Roubini — often presented by the mainstream media as "the guru who saw the current crisis coming" — turned his attention to the latest data from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (the so-called BRICS) and concluded that the model of "state capitalism" based on strong public enterprises had helped to foster the development of "emerging economies", but that nowadays state intervention would hinder productivity gains and be one of the main reasons for the current slowdown[25] This type of argument shows a marked ideological bias and ignores the potential of state enterprises for revitalising the world economy, considering the fact that they represent 19 of the 100 largest companies in the world and of the top 100 in the so-called "emerging markets".[26]

New tools for development?

In the right hands, SOEs and SCEs can be formidable tools to promote economic and social development. Recent research has highlighted the progressive potential of these enterprises and the need for an expanded research agenda in this area.[27] Public enterprises can play a crucial role in terms of innovation, including new and powerful ideas to get out the current crises.[28]

Based on empirical evidence, it can also be argued that in most countries state enterprises constitute the main or the only alternative to the privatisation of public services,[29] as well as essential instruments of industrial policy.[30] At the opening session of an international seminar organised by TNI in 2012, the Uruguayan Minister of Industry, Roberto Kreimerman, argued that "public companies are an opportunity for national progress because they enable innovation and development in various sectors" and "catalyse economic development and social inclusion."[-]

Similarly, SWFs could be an effective tool for state-driven economic growth. They have been set up with the explicit goals of macroeconomic stabilisation, supporting the development of domestic industries and secure the well-being of future generations after natural resources have been depleted. The SWFs wealth could provide much-needed funding to address the current lack of access to services, benefiting billions of people around the world, given the failure of privatisation to deliver water and sanitation, electricity and health care. The financial resources required to bridge the international public services gap and reach the largely unmet Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which have been estimated to amount to US$ 75 billion per year, could be managed by "a 'GapServe' bank in the form of a global non-governmental organization or a UN-affiliated entity financed by fund deposits and fund-owned equity".[32]

On the other side of the coin, SOEs and SCEs face the ever-present risk of corporatisation.[33] This refers to public enterprises becoming entities that in formal terms are still owned by the state but whose management has internalised the logic of the private sector, via the adoption of a market rationality primarily focused on financial gains, with the subsequent deterioration of the public ethos.

The Andean Development Corporation (CAF) published in 2012 a report highlighting the successful management of SOEs and SCEs in Latin America, pointing at the examples of Petrobras, Codelco, the energy companies of Colombia Isagen and Public Enterprises of Medellín (EPM), the Panama Canal Authority, and the Peruvian holding corporation FONAFE.[34] Worringly, the public companies praised by the CAF report are all highly corporatised.

Moreover, SOEs and SCEs can also be a dark force that greatly contributes to the environmental crisis. A recently published study has traced the anthropogenic carbon dioxide and methane emissions to fossil fuel and cement producers, in the period 1854–2010.[35] One of the clearest conclusions derived from this research is that some powerful state companies can be included in the 'most wanted' list of climate change culprits. "Cumulatively, emissions of 315 GtCO2e [the amount of CO2 released into the atmosphere] have been traced to investor-owned entities, 288 GtCO2e to *state-owned* enterprises, and 312 GtCO2e to *nation-states*" (the emphasis is mine).

Similarly, the progressive potential for SWFs is currently belied by their current operations, which are deeply embedded within the logics of financialisation.[36] Recent research shows that the investment aims and practices of SWFs tend to converge in form and function with the long-standing core institutions of the global financial market.[37] These funds are highly vulnerable to the volatility of financial markets, relying mostly on commodity and foreign exchange earnings. In recent

Shortfalls in the global provision of basic services

Report and year of publication	Estimated annual expenditure in US$ and time frame	Total costs over time frame of 2011-2030 (US$)	Per capita cost (US$) over 20 years
World Water Vision, 2000	75 billion, 2000-2025	3 trillion	2,000 or 100/year
Vision 21, 2000	8.92 billion, 2000-2025	357 billion	238 or 11.90/year
WHO/UNICEF, 2000	15.7 billion, 2000-2015	628 billion	419 or 20.93/year
World Bank, 2002	29 billion, 2000-2015	1.16 trillion	773 or 38.67/year
Camdessus Report, 2003	30-40 billion, 2000-2025	1.4 trillion	933 or 46.67/year
French Water Academy, 2003	32 billion, 2000-2015	1.28 trillion	853 or 42.67/year
MDG Task Force, 2004	6.7 billion, 2011-2015	268 billion	179 or 8.93/year
Hutton and Bartram, 2008	18 billion, 2004-2015	720 billion	480 or 24/year
Mean of previous estimates	28.9 billion, 2011-2030	1.1 trillion	734 or 36.72/year

Source: Lipschutz and Romano (2012).

years, the dominant SWFs have benefited from higher commodity prices. But they have also been seeking high benchmark returns on investments, "balancing among fixed income government bonds and riskier equities, derivatives, commodities and real estate".[38]

SWFs have showed their strong inclination to invest in four sectors: financial services, natural resources, real state and infrastructure. Together, these four sectors accounted for 75% to 80% of all SWF transactions in the past three years.[39] Too often, those countries most affected by the SWF's investment decisions are not the high-profile cases in the North, but those in the South that lack effective oversight of foreign inflows.[40] While international institutions are increasingly keen to promote SWFs for Southern nations for their ability to promote supposedly better management of resource revenues, relying on 'sound' technical expertise and not on 'arbitrary' political decisions, the reality of SWFs in the South, as Nigeria's Excess Crude Account illustrates, shows quite different results, deepening pre-existing problems rather than solving them.[41]

Moreover, as already noted, sovereign wealth funds can also be counted among the main culprits of climate change, as they get more of their assets from the exploitation of hydrocarbons. Four of the five largest SWFs — Norway's Government Pension Fund Global, Saudi Arabia's SAMA Foreign Holdings, UAE-Abu Dhabi's Investment Authority, and Kuwait's Investment Authority — are almost entirely based on oil revenues.[42]

State power: the good, the bad and the ugly

In conclusion, like in the famous spaghetti western directed by Sergio Leone in 1966, the analysis of the nature of state power in the current global context shows the coexistence of *the good, the bad and the ugly*. At present, the vast majority of governments are market-oriented and most discussions about the "return of the state" take place within capitalist economies with diverse degrees of neoliberalisation. From a progressive perspective, it is therefore necessary to clearly identify the good, the bad and the ugly sides of state power, in order to consolidate and expand the former, and resist and develop new ways to overcome the latters. As McDonald and Ruiters argue:[43]

Calls for bringing the state back in must therefore be conditional and clearly specified, making it important to take an historical and contextual perspective on the role of the state in challenging privatization, and proposing 'alternatives' [...]. Unless *it has been radically democratized [the emphasis is mine], there may be little point in bringing the state back in, since it can act as a crude instrument to reassert a neoliberal agenda and market ideology.*

We must also remember that market-driven politics have not hesitated in recent years to use the authority and the financial resources of the state to rescue corporate power from its demise. Research published after the outbreak of the financial crisis in 2008 denounced some shocking public bailouts. To cite just one example, the total value of the renationalisations of banks and insurance companies in the United States, Britain and the rest of Europe was equivalent to reversing about half of all the privatisations in the entire world over the previous three decades.[44]

From a different viewpoint, some analysts have also questioned the real feasibility for a 'return of the state'. Sceptical thinkers have pointed at "novel networked technologies, cross-border financial flows, transnational regulatory regimes, or non-state terrorist violence" as examples of international dynamics that "not only challenge the administrative capacity of the state itself but also pose an intellectual rebuff to the idea of the global order as a necessarily state-led one".[45]

In the South, and particularly in Latin America, progressive thinkers and social movements have also raised new questions about the nature of the state and its emancipatory potential.[46] Focusing on political processes currently evolving in the region they argue that the present leftist or progressive governments have effectively introduced positive changes in the structure of the state — such as constitutional reforms aimed at the realisation of the idea of buen vivir or 'good living', rooted in the holistic cosmovision of the indigenous peoples of the Andes — but have not challenged the inherited extractivist model and the all-permeating colonial ideology. In general, the advocates of alternatives to development or beyond development are pessimistic about the capacities of Latin American governments to move away from the current path of depletion of natural resources and the perpetuation of the rentier economy.

The experiments of several governments in Latin America with a broad assortment of 'post-neoliberal' policies[47] may be limited, but they nevertheless do represent real challenges to neoliberal capitalism vis-à-vis the state. However, the response by some radical segments of the social and political left, disillusioned by progressive governments unable or unwilling to implement the far-reaching changes, has been new calls for autonomist politics in line with the ideas originally popularised by John Holloway.[48] From their perspective, local communities should build alternatives *outside* of the state structures, rather than focusing on fighting the government or seizing state power.

The autonomist perspective puts social movements in a politically naïve and too often immobilist position. The real challenge is to engage in politics both *in* and *against* the state, including concrete actions aimed at reclaiming, restructuring and democratising the state. As Hilary Wainwright wrote: "we can't stand by and leave political institutions to those who want to be free of the pressures of the power of self-determining citizens. We need to occupy those institutions where we can while at the same time organising to replace them".[49] The occupation of institutions proposed by Wainwright also implies a recognition of the multiple levels of struggle. Social and political movements, including those in government, should be able to occupy old and new spaces of power at the local, national, and regional level.

The national level of struggle, in particular, is still an extremely important terrain of both conflict and progress, something that is quite often misunderstood by many political analysts and activists too focused on the local or global dimensions. Before the current crises, some thinkers[50] had already characterised the national sphere as a space for pointless resistance, while others[51] had conceded that progressive elites and nationalist groups (in particular in the South) could become important agents in the resistance to the global expansion of the neoliberal form of capitalism.

Beyond current academic and political debates, it is important to note how the tide has turned back in favour of the state. Just before the onset of the current crisis, one of the world's most influential economists had claimed that "increasing evidence indicates that most public enterprises either do not contribute strongly to development or perform their public service functions ineffectively or inefficiently".[52] Such perspective is increasingly challenged today, with many more now backing prominent economist Ha Joon Chang's view that "despite popular perception, encouraged by the business media and contemporary conventional wisdom and rhetoric, SOEs can be efficient and well-run".[53]

To conclude, state power is a social construct that can be at the same time good, bad and ugly. State power can be certainly used to impose neoliberal policies and enable extractivist growth. Within the current global context, it is also highly unlikely that the kind of alternatives proposed by the autonomist camp — based on the idea of delinking from the state — could materialise without the state acting to change the correlation of power (e.g. in the field of trade and investment) or without the state providing support through specific national or local policies.

In short, this is the right moment to revisit the notion of *non-reformist reforms*[54] coined by Andrew Gorz decades ago, or what Armando Bartra has more recently called revolutionary *reforms*[55] aimed at reclaiming state power. Such reforms mean not only to produce immediate and genuine improvements in people's lives, but also to build alternative and socially-rooted political capacity and thereby lay the foundation for further advances at subsequent stages of political struggle.

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