The Idea of Failed States
Community, Society, Nation, and Patterns of Cohesion

H. Christian Breede

The question of why some states are strong and others weak has traditionally been addressed using measures of economic growth, resources, and quality of life. This groundbreaking book compares the dimensions of state strength characterised by community, society, and nation. By exploring factors related to social cohesion the author demonstrates how the concept of social capital can be used as an analytical tool to measure state strength empirically. Rather than just being a universal good in-and-of-itself, the composition of certain types of social capital is shown to be what really matters when determining whether a state is ‘strong’ or ‘weak’.

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