

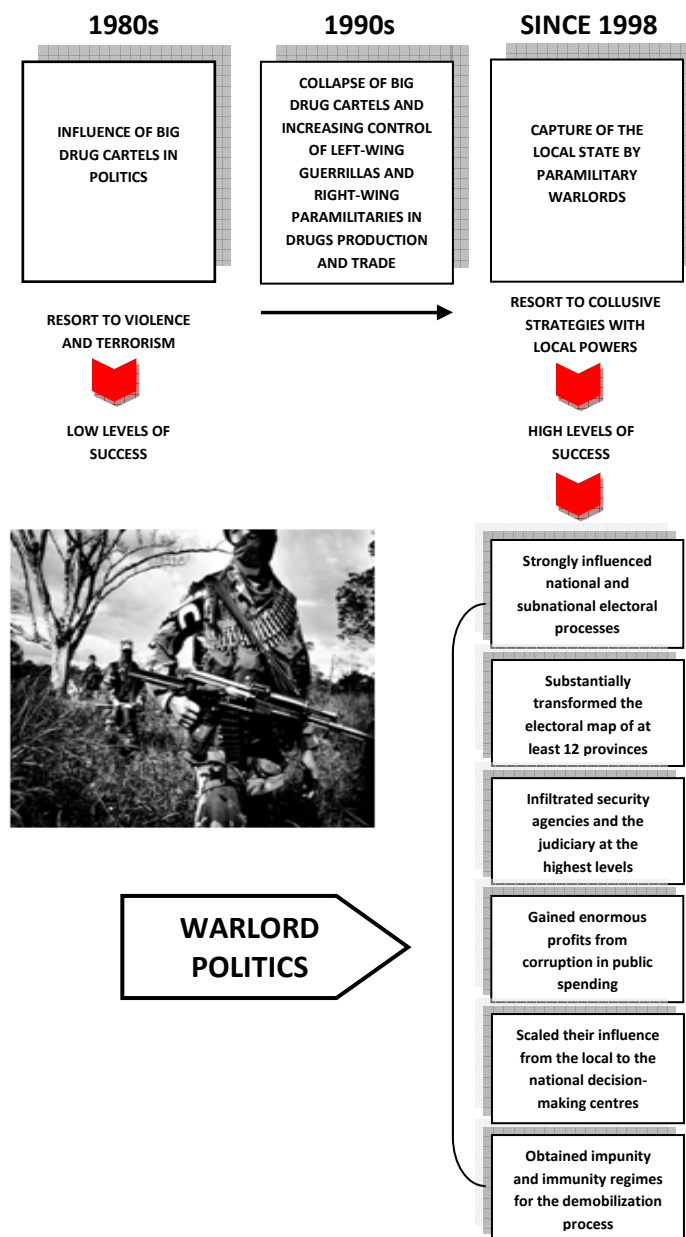
Seize the State, Seize the Way: State Capture as a Form of Warlord Politics in Colombia

Mariana Escobar Arango
Government Department

The phenomenon of **corruption in the context of civil wars** is of increasing interest in scholarly literature, but large-scale forms such as **state capture** have been hardly addressed. Colombia exhibits a particular case in which in many regions the recently demobilized **United Self-Defence of Colombia** (right-wing paramilitary organization) succeeded since 1998 in **capturing the local state** and **creating specific frameworks of rule** within formal state institutions, backed by **local political elites and authorities**.

THE PROBLEM

STRONG CORRELATION BETWEEN CRIMINALIZATION OF COLOMBIAN POLITICS AND DRUGTRAFFICKING



SOME FACTS



320 elected officials, 106 appointed officials, and 240 military and police officers are currently being prosecuted or have been convicted by the Attorney General's Office and the Supreme Court of Justice for colluding with paramilitary groups



During their aggressive campaign of territorial expansion and control, paramilitaries committed over 150,000 assassinations, 2,500 forcible disappearances, 2,326 cases of forcible displacement, and 1,033 kidnappings of civilians



It is calculated that between 1997 and 2005 Colombian paramilitaries exported over 350,000 kg of cocaine, worth approximately US\$150 million



Between 2002 and 2006 over 34,000 men-at-arms from the United Self-Defence of Colombia were demobilized under an impunity and immunity regime. It is calculated that over 20% of ex-combatants have been recycled into re-emerging paramilitary structures

THE RESEARCH

RESEARCH QUESTION

Why (conditions), how (mechanisms) and to what purpose (ultimate goal) did state capture as a form of warlord politics emerge in Colombia?

RESEARCH METHOD

Subnational comparative analysis

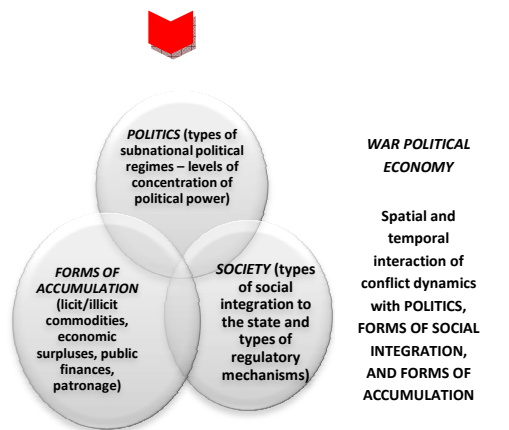
CASE SELECTION



Sucre and Norte de Santander provinces

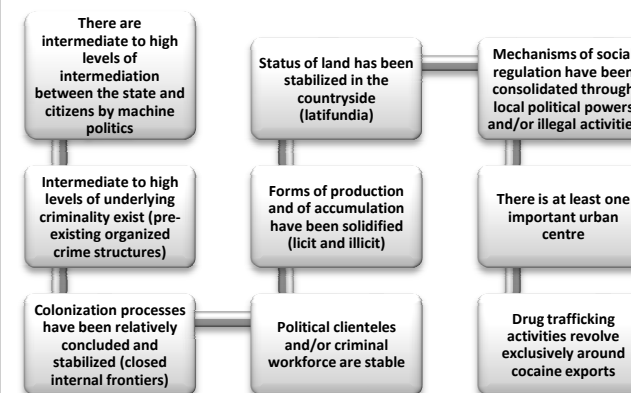
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Explaining state capture as a function of *subnational war political economies* and substantiating the differences found on the dependent variable (state capture) in the selected cases



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Success in state capture is **more likely** to be achieved in regions where:



Success in state capture is **less likely** to be achieved in regions where:

