Echoing Churchill's famous aphorism about democracy, *Politics without Sovereignty* argues that the sovereign state is the worst form of governance except for all others. In a forceful post-revisionist critique, the editors and contributors contend that only the sovereign state allows both collective agency and political accountability...This volume is a powerful challenge to current theory in international relations and requires all of us to think deeper about the virtues and necessity of global political change.
David A. Lake, University of California, San Diego, USA

This multi-sided onslaught on fashionable notions and theories about the decline and the mischiefs of state sovereignty is not likely to convince all readers, but the authors' central point, about the fact that political accountability and agency require state sovereignty, is one that needs to be faced rather than evaded out of distaste for the excesses and liabilities of sovereignty.
Stanley Hoffmann, Harvard University, USA

The chapters provide bold, closely argued and provocative normative evaluations of the notion of state sovereignty. The arguments here will start a number of hares that will run and run...The ideas in this book will be tested in the vigorous reaction which will undoubtedly follow its publication.
Mervyn Frost, King's College, UK

Curiously, the defense of state sovereignty has so far amounted to little more than the bland reassertion of analytical state-centrism. *Politics without Sovereignty* lifts this defense to a higher plane. Together, the editors and contributors advance a defense of sovereignty that is at once analytical, normative, and deeply political. It is a volume that will confront and provoke, and in so doing fuel debate and, in turn, insight.
Chris Reus-Smit, Australian National University, Australia

Christopher J. Bickerton, St Johns College, University of Oxford, UK.
Philip Cunliffe, King's College, London, UK.
Alexander Gourevitch, Columbia University, USA.

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Edited by Christopher J. Bickerton,
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POLITICS WITHOUT SOVEREIGNTY

A CRITIQUE OF CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Christopher J. Bickerton, Philip Cunliffe
and Alexander Gourevitch

53 G.W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, Washington, DC: White House, 2002, p.4.
54 Ibid., pp.21–23.
55 Marc Sageman has shown in his study of 400 Al Qaeda terrorists that three quarters come from the upper or middle classes and had gone to study abroad. M. Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
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5 State-building

Exporting state failure

Christopher J. Bickerton

Introduction

There is a consensus today that it is urgently necessary to use international support to sustain domestic institutions in the developing world, even sometimes to the extent of rescinding self-determination in favour of trusteeship. Whereas in the last century, the threat to international peace was perceived to come from strong, aggressive states with ambitions on their neighbours' territory, today it is weak and failing states that are seen as major sources of global insecurity, drawing in their neighbours and the international community against their will. Internationalized state-building is seen as necessary in order to ensure international security and to enable societies to function effectively. Initially confined to 'post-conflict reconstruction' and peacekeeping operations in war-torn societies, state-building policies are now seen as applicable to a wide spectrum of developing countries, both in war and peace. International stability, economic progress and political development are increasingly fused together under the rubric of strengthening domestic governance.

This chapter explores the contradictions in the theory and practice of this new form of internationalized state-building. After establishing state-building as a leading form of international intervention today, I shall argue that state-building cannot succeed in the goals it sets itself. As a process that draws in international institution and external forces, state-building today necessarily relegates citizens to the role of passive recipients of the institutions being built. In short, removing popular will from the process of political creation, as state-building does, produces hollow institutions with shallow roots in the societies for which they are being built. While many analysts, policy-makers and occasionally even the viceroys of state-building are at least dimly aware of this problem, they are unable to grasp its origins, magnitude and full implications. The purpose of this chapter is to make some of these flaws of state-building apparent, by demonstrating that they inhere in the enterprise itself. Since these problems arise from the political nature of the state-building project, they are not amenable to mere technocratic solutions.

After demonstrating some of the contradictions of state-building, I will provide a historical sketch of the emergence of internationalized state-building through a

discussion of the concept of state failure. The theory and practice of state-building logically flows from the problematic concept of 'state failure'. This concept is based on a particular understanding of sovereignty drawn from the disastrous development of some post-colonial states. The highly influential theory of state failure led to a reworking, perhaps even an inversion, of the basic categories of International Relations (IR). Traditional IR theory was built on the assumption that state sovereignty was the precondition for social and political order within domestic society. In the absence of any ultimate political authority, the international realm, by contrast was seen as a domain of strife, where all political and legal order was undermined by the ever-present possibility of conflict. Thus one of the traditional problems for liberal theories of international politics in the last century was how to 'domesticate anarchy'; that is, how to make the world order more like the domestic order.

The theory of state failure helped to change this perspective. This theory held that state sovereignty in vast swathes of the post-colonial world was a sham, disguising societies riven with conflict, with no political life or social order to speak of. This focus on the problem of domestic disorder, against the backdrop of an increasingly harmonious international order, raised the prospect that the international order could offer a solution to the problems of war-torn domestic societies. In this new context, the 'domestication of anarchy' effectively has come to mean the 'internationalization of the state'. State-building is thus a form of political intervention that seems to uphold autonomy by seeking to create sovereign states where they appear to have failed. However, state-building actually extends and radicalizes a critique of sovereignty that, as we shall see, first emerged as a response to problems facing post-colonial states.

The new state-building agenda

State-building has emerged as the leading form of international intervention in recent years. Writing in 2004, Francis Fukuyama argued that 'the ability to shore up or create from whole cloth missing state capabilities and institutions has risen to the top of the global agenda and seems likely to be a major condition for security in important parts of the world'.[1] Writing about 'state failure in a time of terror', Robert J. Rotberg echoes Fukuyama: 'how best to strengthen weak states and prevent state failure are among the urgent questions of the twenty-first century'.[2] The Dutch Africanist Martin Doornbus notes: 'Increasingly, international agencies . . . representing a new type of "staying" element in a rapidly changing global context, find themselves called upon to restore law and order and to initiate peacebuilding processes in these internal conflict situations.'[3]

These statements attest to the fact that state-building informs policy-making at the highest national and international levels. Former Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin wrote in 2004 that one of the key foreign policy questions faced by Western governments was 'how well are we doing in helping to make weak states stronger so that they can better fulfil their responsibilities to their own people and others?' He went on to state that 'all the aid in the world will have only a fleeting effect if a country does not have functioning public institutions and a rule of law. Development depends on good governance.'[4] US President George W. Bush echoed the same sentiments in his second inaugural speech in January 2004. Commenting on the speech, the editor-in-chief of the *Washington Times* observed: 'Four years ago George W. Bush was bubbling with scepticism, if not barely concealed contempt, for the notion of "nation-building." Yesterday he promised to rebuild the world.'[5] More recently US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice placed state-building at the heart of what she called 'transformational diplomacy'. In Rice's words, the objective of transformational diplomacy is 'to work with our many partners around the world, to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system'.[6]

The state-building agenda has transformed foreign policy bureaucracies and the agencies of government throughout the world. In August 2004, former US Secretary of State Colin Powell announced the creation of the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, designed to enhance America's 'institutional capacity to respond to crises involving failing, failed, and post-conflict states and complex emergencies'.[7] In the same year, the UK government set up the interdepartmental Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit, a body with a very similar mandate to the Office of the CRS.[8] The state-building agenda is also central to the concerns of key international organizations. The 2004 United Nations Report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change envisaged the establishment of a new 'Peacebuilding Commission' – a body with the responsibility to advise the UN in its various 'peacebuilding missions', and to better coordinate information and funding for such operations.[9] This move was a response to both the proliferation of UN state-building activities, and the coordination problems this has thrown up between various international bodies. The Commission was duly brought into being at the sixtieth meeting of the UN General Assembly in late 2005, the text of the resolution being adopted without a vote.[10]

From the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to the European Union (EU), other organizations have also heavily invested in the state-building agenda (see further John Pender's chapter in this volume). Fukuyama gives an indication of the diversity of actors involved in state-building when he writes that for 'weak' non-Western states today,

> 'stateness' has to be begged, borrowed, or stolen from other sources, ranging from multilateral agencies like the UN or the World Bank in such places as East Timor or Sierra Leone, to the European powers running the Office of the High Representative [in Bosnia Herzegovina], to the United States as occupying power in Iraq.[11]

The EU's recent enlargement, which extended membership to eight former Soviet bloc states in 2004, has been hailed as 'member state-building'.[12] Stanford

political scientist and director of Policy Planning at the US State Department Stephen Krasner, has argued that the EU has been one of the few international actors able to design a coherent state-building policy:

> Only in Europe – where the European Union has both held out a set of policy tools and held up a beacon of principles for leaders and citizens in the fledgling post-communist democracies . . . – has it proved possible to limn a future that is not only bright but also likely to materialize.[13]

The London-based Foreign Policy Centre echoes Krasner's enthusiasm, arguing that state-building is integral to Europe's political identity: 'if Europe has begun to develop a strategic identity, it is rooted in state-building'.[14] Casting the expansion of the EU in terms of state-building gives us some idea of the extent to which state-building has travelled from humble beginnings in a handful of peripheral, *ad hoc* and over-burdened UN peacekeeping operations in the early 1990s (some of which will be discussed later), to being at the core of international peace and progressive social change today.

State-building as state failure: the task of Sisyphus

Yet, even as state-building has been sanctified and concretized in policy, it has also been bedevilled with problems in implementation. As indicated earlier in this chapter, such problems should be understood largely as a result of the Sisyphean task state-building sets itself. State-building tries to construct political institutions by bringing in a constellation of external agencies and forces. Yet, bringing external power to bear necessarily restricts the political space available for the people whom these institutions are (at least nominally) destined to serve, and limits the exercise of the people's own political creativity. The creation of sovereign, coherent political institutions depends upon engaging the subjectivity of the individuals within the society in question. If people's hopes, interests and desires are mediated through so many external forces, the resulting institutions will be that many more steps removed from the individuals for whom they are established. These institutions, as a consequence, will be less the creations of the people in question, and more products of external interests. Michael Ignatieff points to this when he describes the 'spectacle of disgruntled locals, sitting in cafés, watching earnest young internationals speeding around to important meetings in Toyota Land Cruisers [a spectacle that] has been repeated in every nation-building experiment in the 1990s'.[15] If domestic actors are blocked from exercising power directly, external powers, meanwhile, claim not to be pursuing their own projects, but to be creating institutions for others. Many problems of state-building flow from this basic contradiction between the exercise of external power and the necessity of domestic foundations.

There are many examples of this. For example, since it began in 1999, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has explicitly separated the political question of independence for the province from the technical job of institution-building.

In 2003, the UN governor-general of the province, Michael Steiner, launched a policy of 'standards before status', that is, institutional development before resolving Kosovo's ultimate political status, which everyone nonetheless assumes will involve independence from Serbia, where sovereignty still nominally resides. In practice, this political stalemate has been impossible to sever from the task of institution-building. This is reflected in the growing delegitimation of the province's embryonic political institutions, and in Kosovars' alienation from the work of the UN and the EU.[16] Voter turnout in Kosovo has steadily declined. Turnout in the 2000 elections was 79 per cent; but by 2004 it had fallen by over 20 points to 54 per cent.[17] The UN Development Programme has noted that this fall in voter turnout has occurred alongside a shift of electoral support to fringe political parties more openly hostile to UNMIK.[18] The clearest sign of UNMIK failure is the lethal ethnic conflict that has continued since North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) forces occupied the province in 1999, vividly expressed in the violence of March 2004. This was an example of what Jarat Chopra has termed 'building state failure' through international administration. Evidence of such failure continues in East Timor, until recently a country widely seen as having benefited from a successful UN state-building mission. For Timor, ensuring stability and social peace without international aid has proven elusive. Only a year after UN peacekeepers left, the UN Security Council has backed a new deployment of foreign troops and police from Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal, in response to violence that broke out in spring 2006.[19]

Such examples are not restricted to the populations of small territories, such as Kosovo and East Timor, nor to UN administered operations. The EU's absorption of 73 million new citizens in 2004 has come up against similar problems in implementing the *Acquis Communautaire* in new member states (i.e. the corpus of EU rules and regulations that have to be incorporated into the domestic legal systems of member states). In many cases, citizens have repeatedly failed to recognize themselves in the newly imported EU law. In response to the *Acquis* package crafted in Brussels, many citizens of the former Soviet Republic of Estonia have revived what Kristi Raik calls 'Soviet double-think' – the apathetic, sullen response once displayed towards regulations from Moscow. 'When it comes to bureaucracy and over-regulation', writes Raik, 'the image of the EU among Estonians does not differ much from that of the Soviet Union.'[20] In the words of one Estonian columnist quoted by Raik,

> Now, being close, that Europe of a dream rather appears as a boring administrative machinery that produces restrictions and bureaucracy. We must close many more countryside shops and pubs, install thousands of steel basins in school refectories, in order to pass the strict sanitary tests. It's like the army! First delouse the sauna, and only after that you get to wear the gold-starred uniform. First tidiness, then – administrative capacity.[21]

Similar problems were experienced in other candidate countries. In their study of local and regional elites in Hungary, Slovenia and Estonia, Hughes *et al.* have

pointed out the shortfall between the incorporation of the *Acquis* into national legislation and people's willingness to actually implement the new regulations. In their view, '[local elites] are highly adept at window-dressing and paying lip-service while also doing the opposite or at the very least doing the minimum'. Non-fulfilment, or poor fulfilment, is, they argue, 'a classic "weapon of the weak," as well as a sign of alienation from the decision-making process elsewhere'.[22] However grudgingly the *Acquis* is observed, it would be wrong to think that it has had no impact on East European countries beyond better sanitation. A prominent feature of the recently completed eastern enlargement was a pronounced strengthening of the executive arm of government in the candidate countries, and a concomitant downgrading of national parliaments to simply rubber stamping EU legislation. Candidate state governments often introduced 'fast-tracking' measures to ensure that laws were pushed through in time to meet EU deadlines.[23] This sidelining of national parliaments belittled the political process of debating and reflecting upon legislation – that is, the very process by which laws become laws, by winning the support of elected representatives in debates. Policy implementation replaces public legislation.

The problems of state-building are so rife that they are impossible not to acknowledge, even among its proponents. Fukuyama, for example, recognizes that a relationship of some kind exists between political processes of accountability and representation, and the development of political institutions. He concedes that 'before you can have democracy, you must have a state, but to have a legitimate and therefore durable state you eventually must have democracy'. He stops here however, concluding with the banal observation that '[democratization and state-building] are intertwined, but the precise sequencing of how and when to build the distinct but interlocking institutions needs very careful thought'.[24] Roland Paris comes to a more determined conclusion in his claim that 'institutionalization' should occur before the introduction of self-government and party political competition.[25] Like Paris, Simon Chesterman argues that 'local ownership' should be introduced at the end of the process of 'capacity-building', after which power can be 'transferred' back to the local population. Chesterman's argument is distinctive in that he locates the difficulties of state-building in the unwillingness of the 'internationals' to fully accept the burden of absolute power. In his words, 'either the international presence exercises quasi-sovereign powers on a temporary basis or it does not... in either case, the abiding need is for clarity as to who is in charge'.[26] The problem today is that military occupation and preponderant power are 'now sometimes seen as politically unpalatable, and therefore masked behind the language of ownership'.[27]

But the problem is more than a sentimental attachment to self-determination. If anything, the existence of state-building indicates how weak political belief in the principle of self-determination has become. Nor is the problem a liberal squeamishness about the exercise of power. Jarat Chopra, for example, scathingly speaks of the 'UN's kingdom in East Timor' during the 1999–2002 UN administration over that nation: 'The organizational and juridical status of the UN in East Timor is comparable with that of a pre-constitutional monarch in a sovereign

kingdom.'[28] In Bosnia, the High Representative, the appointed official who represents both the international community and the EU, has enjoyed extensive powers and has had few reservations about using them. These powers range from enforcing binding decisions, to taking 'actions against persons holding public office'. Chesterman recounts that, in the years since the Peace Implementation Council agreed to grant the High Representative these so-called Bonn powers, different High Representatives have routinely sacked, suspended or banned over 100 elected officials.[29] Paddy Ashdown used these powers so extensively as to have Bosnia branded a 'European Raj'.[30] Shrugging off these criticisms, Paddy Ashdown claimed that the '*droit de seigneur* was the only thing I didn't have in Bosnia, but if I'd have asked for it, I'd have probably got it...'.[31] Despite the sweeping panoply of powers that the international community has granted to its viceroys in Bosnia, the international presence continues. The extent of this failure has been obscured by subsuming Bosnia within the EU accession process, thereby allowing responsibility for the dependent Bosnian state to be transferred from the Peace Implementation Council to Brussels, buried under the framework of EU incentives and conditionalities. As David Chandler observes, in the shift 'from Dayton to Europe' little has changed. Bosnians remain 'excluded from the transition process and while there is general support for EU membership there has been little discussion of the costs and benefits involved'.[32]

Thus while there is widespread consciousness of these problems, there is little real self-reflection about their origins. The recurring problems, when they are recognized at all, are muted through managerial terms such as calls for 'local ownership', 'bottom-up' approaches and recognizing the dangers of 'capacity sucking-out' and 'crowding-out', whereby domestic institutions may be eroded by the activities of the international administrative apparatus. But this arid analysis transforms a political problem, located in the prevailing understanding of sovereignty, into a technical problem that appears amenable to technical solutions. In response to the practical demands of state-building, analysts have responded by conceptually dismembering sovereignty into smaller, more manageable chunks. Stephen Krasner distinguishes between what he terms 'Westphalian/Vattelian' sovereignty and 'domestic' sovereignty, the former referring to the principle of formal independence and non-intervention, the latter to the capacity to effectively administer a given territory. Krasner advocates the abrogation of the former, in order that state-builders can do their job in restoring 'domestic' sovereignty to weak or 'collapsed' states.[33]

The problem with such approaches is that they advance an understanding of sovereignty as a theory of rule that can be mechanistically isolated from society. Sovereignty is seen as an attribute of the rulers, which can be temporarily waived until domestic 'capacity' is restored. As the first chapter in this book indicates, however, sovereignty is always 'of society'. It is the institution that mediates between individuals and state institutions, between popular will and public power. Part of the confusion arises from the fact that sovereignty is something that necessarily takes the form of being a step removed from society, represented as an independent legal power. But despite the 'detached' form that sovereignty takes,

it is still internally related to society. It is only by being abstracted from society that the concept of sovereignty enables people to rise above their immediate interests, and to consider these in relation to the interests of other members of society. In other words, sovereignty is what gives these interests their political, as opposed to purely individuated, character. The process is described by Rousseau as the act of 'transforming each individual, who by himself is a perfect and solitary whole, into a part of a larger whole from which this individual in some way receives his life and his being'.[34]

The fact, therefore, that sovereignty is something abstracted from society does not mean that it can be mechanically severed from society by an external agency, and then grafted back on. To reconstitute sovereignty in this way is to vitiate the entire process by which political will is formed within society. With the intervention of external forces and agencies into the process of shaping state institutions, politics and sovereignty become ever more mediated, more abstract and more distant from the immediate concerns of the members of the society in question. The institution of sovereignty is replaced by an alternative network of internationalized relations in which the liberties and interests of citizens are no longer the essential foundation of political order. One of the most explicit examples of this is the 'Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government' in Kosovo, a document that outlined political arrangements in the province after the 2001 elections. What is remarkable about the 'Framework' is that it is among the first constitutional documents (though tellingly in itself, not a constitution) in modern political history, whose preamble explicitly relegates the 'will of the people' to only one among a number of factors that will be taken into consideration by the UN officials administering the province.[35] To relativize the will of the people in such a way denudes the end products of state-building of their political content; namely, the people as sovereign. It is this external mediation of the process of political creation that gives state-building its fragile and contingent character. State-building is erecting institutions with few social or political foundations. It is unsurprising therefore, that state-building constantly recreates politically dependent administrations, in need of international support to survive. This is the meaning of 'state-building as state failure'.

Having outlined the internal contradictions of contemporary state-building, we must now turn to the historical process through which external support came to be seen as a vital prop to domestic order. A critical examination of the concept of 'state failure' will act as the bridge to cross from the logical analysis of the contradictions of state-building to grasping the historical emergence of state-building in international politics. State-building has emerged as a specific response to a concrete historical phenomenon, namely the exhaustion of post-colonial independence in many developing countries – an issue addressed in the theory of 'state failure'.

Post-colonial states and 'state failure'

The influential idea of 'state failure' is the theoretical epitaph of the progressive, developmental Third World state, written following the defeat of anti-colonial

nationalism in the closing decades of the twentieth century. The occasion of political defeat was used by many as retroactive confirmation that there had never been much political substance or progressive force behind anti-imperialist struggles, especially when it came to creating self-sufficient modern states. Philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah captured this mood of pessimism and disenchantment, observing that 'When the post-colonial rulers inherited the apparatus of the colonial state, they inherited the reins of power; few noticed, at first, that they were not attached to a bit.'[36]

Jackson and Rosberg, in their 1982 analysis of African states, argued that post-colonial African states have been characterized by profound weaknesses in their ability to coerce and tax their populations. These administrative weaknesses, however, were obscured by the legal form of state sovereignty. Anticipating Krasner's taxonomy of different types of sovereignty, this characterization of post-colonial states dissected statehood into 'juridical' and 'empirical' aspects. These African states had 'juridical statehood' – that is, the pomp and circumstance of sovereignty, such as flags, national anthems, membership of the UN, the right to make international treaties and so on – but lacked the 'content' of statehood; in Jackson's words 'the political will, institutional authority and organized power to protect human rights or to provide socio-economic welfare'.[37]

Jackson and Rosberg concluded that weak African states had been allowed to survive by virtue of the legitimacy they were accorded by the benign, indeed misguided, ideals of the post-1945 international order. Whereas in previous periods such weak and fractious communities would have been devoured by their stronger neighbours, the indulgent culture of entitlement and dependence fostered by the ideals of anti-colonialism, equality and self-determination provided external support structures, such as diplomatic recognition and foreign aid, to prop up these hollow shells of sovereign states. These were 'quasi-states', a category popularized by Jackson in his 1990 book *Quasi-States*. Here Jackson conceptually shifted from statehood to sovereignty by characterizing the post-1945 international liberal order as a regime of 'negative sovereignty' embodied in the idea of 'freedom from outside interference'.[38]

Jackson's explicit linkage of sovereignty with the civil strife and continued poverty of many post-colonial states in Africa did much to erode the moral authority traditionally associated with sovereignty and self-determination. Jackson argued that the nominal virtues of sovereignty – independence, dignity and so on – had, in the crucible of anti-colonialism, been twisted into their opposite: 'the same institution [i.e. sovereignty] which provided international recognition, dignity, and independence to all colonized populations could be exploited to deny domestic civility, liberty and welfare to [them]... International liberation could therefore be followed by domestic subjugation'.[39] In the end, '[negative sovereignty] usually works in favour of sovereigns against their citizens'.[40] National liberation, in other words, was meaningless.

The influence of Jackson's reading of 'state failure' is difficult to understate; it inaugurated the enormous literature on state failure and state-building. For example, Helman and Ratner, who in 1993 published a seminal article in

Foreign Policy entitled 'Saving failed states', reproduce Jackson's argument in their analysis. In their view, 'the current collapse [of states such as Haiti and Somalia] has its roots in the vast proliferation of nation-states, especially in Africa and Asia, since the end of World War Two'. In particular, in the post-war period, 'self-determination . . . was given more attention than long-term survivability', and they observe that the principal barrier to more extensive inter- ventions prior to the post-Cold War period was the 'talisman of sovereignty'.[41] This idea that states can fail is obviously the precursor to the idea that states need to be rebuilt. Only after the idea that states could fail had been established was it possible for internationalized state-building to be mooted as an acceptable solution.

But the importance of failed state theory is more than merely being the intellectual precursor to state-building.[42] Jackson's argument also prefigures much of the intellectual and political disdain for sovereignty that is taken for granted today. For example, Jackson used conflict in Africa to give life to the link between sovereignty and barbarism. Moreover, by envisaging sovereignty as an institution that could act *against* society, Jackson laid the ground for seeing sov- ereignty as something that could be detached *from* society.[43] As we saw in rela- tion to state-building, a crucial presupposition of failed state theory is that the local capacity for political self-creation is regarded as insufficient, potentially even destructive. Hence the necessity of external support to consolidate the process of institution-building; in Jeffrey Herbst's words, we must now 'acknowl- edge that state consolidation has failed and that external intervention is neces- sary'.[44] The roots of this idea of political insufficiency can be analysed by interrogating Jackson's analysis of anti-colonialism.

Jackson's disaggregation of sovereignty into 'positive' and 'negative' facets poses a two-fold problem. The first problem is the putative absence of 'positive sovereignty', that is, insufficient administrative capacity to effectively govern a given territory. But Jackson, like many others,[45] reads the historic failure of anti- colonialism backwards into history. In Jackson's reading, the exhaustion of so many post-colonial states is taken as evidence to deny that there was any process of political self-creation involved in the struggle against colonialism. By denying that there was any political weight behind anti-colonial nationalism, Jackson can take the *absence* of highly developed administrative machinery as *evidence* of the absence of any political basis for such institutions. But politics creates institutions, not vice versa. Since Jackson fails to see any political life in these societies, he is logically forced to pose the problem not in political terms, but in technical ones, of the absence of administrative capacity. As we saw from the earlier discussion, this separation of institutional creation from political life has hobbled state-building operations.

Having focused on the domestic side of the theory, dealing with the absence of positive sovereignty, let us now focus on the international dimension of the theory. The second element of this theory put forward the *presence* of negative sovereignty; that is, the rights accorded to states by the liberal international order. For Jackson, colonialism was not destroyed through the efforts of oppressed

colonial peoples, but through the simple-minded benevolence of imperial powers, who extended rights of independence to peoples whose political cohesion was so tenuous that they were incapable of exercising these rights. But anti-colonialism did not spring fully formed from the heads of feeble-minded, benevolent colonial administrators. It emerged through a historical process of violent political strug- gles, from Ireland to Algeria to India and China. These struggles mutually rein- forced each other's claims to equality and emancipation throughout the world. The subsequent defeat and demise of anti-colonial nationalism is beyond the scope of this chapter; suffice to say that the prospects of independent statehood were limited by an international economic order still dominated by the metropol- itan economies. The main point here is that, by centring the problem on the inter- national regime of 'negative sovereignty', failed state theory implies that the solution can also be found at the international level.

By pointing to the conflicts that raged in nominally self-contained states, and contrasting this with the relative harmony of the international realm, the theory of state failure inverses the traditional concern of IR theory. In their 1982 article, Jackson and Rosberg concluded that 'insofar as our theoretical images follow rather than precede concrete historical change, it is evident that the recent national and international history of Black Africa challenges more than it sup- ports some of the major postulates of international theory'.[46] In a later work, Jackson generalized the conclusions he had earlier drawn about Africa, arguing that 'quasi-states turn Hobbes inside out: the state of nature is domestic, and civil society is international'.[47] Turning international relations theory 'inside-out' was taken forward by the 'state failure' literature, where the single most important international threat is no longer from other states, but from disorder within weak states, as pithily expressed by Ignatieff: 'Chaos has replaced tyranny as the new challenge to human rights in the twenty-first century.'[48]

In counterposing international peace to the putative chaos of domestic society in the developing world, the theory of state failure reflects its historical origins in the waning period of the Cold War. The eclipse of ideological and geopolitical struggle between the USA and USSR had several effects. First, it removed the political and ideological rationale for many struggles in the developing world. Second, the peaceful transition to a post-Cold War world endowed the interna- tional order with the patina of world-historic success and progress. Third, it gave international organizations such as the UN a mandate to pursue an expanded agenda, as neutral, benevolent vessels of this very same international progress. The convergence of these three factors can be seen in the proliferation of peace accords in the immediate post-Cold War era, several of which laid the basis for the first UN state-building operations in the post-Cold War period. The end of the Cold War directly undermined the rationale for wars in South East Asia and South West Africa, leading to troop withdrawals, peace agreements and new, 'multidi- mensional' peacekeeping operations: the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) and the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia. Most UN field operations had hitherto been restricted to patrolling pre-agreed ceasefire lines; they had no political task, as the political

work of agreeing a ceasefire had already been done. In Cambodia and Namibia, however, UN officials found themselves wielding extraordinary powers. Chesterman observes that UNTAG was 'one of the first occasions in which the UN was called upon to exercise quasi-governmental powers'.[49] In fact, while the

> administrative powers exercised by the international actors [in Cambodia] were explicitly limited to ensuring a neutral political environment for the elections – nevertheless they exceeded anything seen since the colonial era and the Allied occupations of Germany and Japan following the Second World War.[50]

One of the most intriguing early case studies in the evolution of state-building is that of Haiti. The significance of this tiny island nation lay, in the words of former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in how far it had fallen from its revolutionary struggle for liberty:

> the first independent republic in Latin America and the first independent black republic anywhere [c]reated by the... revolt of slaves against Napoleon... Ostracised and prey to big powers, Haiti depicted its turbulent history on its flag, which bristles with cannons and banners.[51]

The extremes of Haiti's history, veering between the heroic achievement on which it was founded, and its calamitous post-independence history of international isolation, made Haiti a potent 'symbol of the suffering and the struggle of the third world'.[52] The end of the Cold War gave a glimmer of hope with the election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1990, under the auspices of the United Nations Observer Group for the Verification of the Elections in Haiti (ONUVEH). The presence of ONUVEH produced widespread unease among Haiti's neighbours, who feared establishing a precedent for UN interference in their internal affairs. Haiti's neighbours ensured, therefore, that the presence of ONUVEH was softened by being packaged under the formal aegis of the regional organization, the Organization of American States (OAS).[53]

Aristide was ousted and exiled in a military putsch later that same year, and turned to the UN for aid in restoring democracy to Haiti. In his memoirs, Boutros-Ghali recounts how he 'explained [to Aristide] that UN involvement was limited because the General Assembly... had placed the OAS in charge of the Haitian problem. I advised Aristide to try to gain greater support among the United Nations' member states.' Boutros-Ghali notes how Aristide took his 'recommendation to heart', and describes the effect of the Haitian leader's renowned rhetorical skills when he gave a speech to the General Assembly:

> before a packed hall and in an electric atmosphere, Aristide displayed his dazzling talents... The former seminarian had become a poet-orator: 'I found Haiti, where the roots of liberty set down by Toussaint l'Ouverture endured... diminished, sometimes battered, but never finished'.[54]

A few months later, the speech had its desired effect when the UN adopted a resolution passing effective control of the Haitian question from the OAS to the UN. Boutros-Ghali writes, 'Aristide had won the first round of *his* fight to relegate the OAS to a lesser role' (emphasis added).[55]

Aristide's actions, and the consequences for Haiti, are instructive. The history of intervention in Haiti provides a yardstick by which to measure the evolution of state-building. Today, Aristide is in exile once again, removed this time not by a reactionary putsch, but by a UN-authorized Franco-American military campaign. The latest UN operation in the country, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), has more than electoral observers in its ranks. At the time of writing, MINUSTAH includes roughly 7,000 troops and 1,000 police officers. Meanwhile, Haiti's Latin American neighbours have cast off their principled objection to interference in each others' affairs, with Latin American states taking the lead in the operation, including Brazil's leftist government under Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.[56] The operation has been dogged with controversy for mounting counter-insurgency operations against pro-Aristide districts of Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, with some MINUSTAH officials' talk of 'collateral damage' making them sound 'more like US generals than UN officials'.[57]

The fate of Haiti under MINUSTAH illustrates the dangers of relying on the caprice of external powers to effect political change within your own society. It is worth re-emphasizing that it was only under the specific conditions of the post-Cold War world that the 'UN solution' could seem to have both legitimacy and efficacy for Aristide's dilemma. More importantly, Aristide's diplomacy illustrates the abandonment of the will to self-determination. Aristide was no petty stooge, isolated in his palace. Yet, despite his immense popularity among Haiti's masses, Aristide decided to rely not on the social power of the Haitian people, but on the international community to restore democracy.

According to Boutros-Ghali, it was of his own free will that Aristide set in motion the relegation of the OAS, which laid the ground for vastly expanded UN intervention in Haitian politics. Aristide's dramatic speech before the General Assembly marked the moment of the involution of the will to self-determination, and with it the demise of a tradition of independence born in slave revolt.

The Haitian experience illustrates historically what we discovered in the theoretical examination of Jackson's work. It also demonstrates how the theory of state failure was born of specific historical circumstances that raised the novel possibility of harnessing the power and moral authority of international organizations to tackle civil conflicts. We have seen that the theory of state failure is not only the precursor to state-building, but also contains, in embryo, the preconceptions and limitations of state-building concepts. Jackson's theory of state failure dismissed anti-colonial nationalism; then it portrayed internal problems as essentially a technical matter of administrative incapacity; and finally it posited the international order as the immanent bearer of peace. This squeezed politics out of the picture, while laying the basic components of bureaucratic state-building theory.

To be sure, in his more recent writings Jackson has retreated from some of the more paternalistic implications of his earlier work. Writing on the return of trusteeship to world politics, Jackson writes, 'Sovereignty is not a political arrangement only for fair weather and good times. It is an arrangement for all political seasons and all kinds of political weather.'[58] Certainly, the value accorded to self-determination has declined in international politics. But this is not just expressed in the revival of outright trusteeship in places like Kosovo. As we have seen, state-building embraces a panoply of intrusive regulatory practices, many of which fall short of trusteeship. Yet at the same time, state-building promotes the form of the independent state as a central feature of international order. To defend self-determination and sovereignty against trusteeship thus misses the extent to which state-building interventions, and the undermining of political autonomy, occur *within* the formal structures of sovereign independence. Ignatieff captures this wider devaluation of autonomy. On the one hand, he claims that 'unlike the empires of the past, the UN administrations are designed to serve and enhance the idea of self-determination, rather than suppress it'.[59] On the other hand, Ignatieff qualifies what he means by sovereignty and self-determination. He describes the aspiration 'for Westphalian sovereignty' as 'a snare and a delusion'.[60] Instead, he urges weak states to build 'partnerships with neighbours and ex-colonial countries in order to strengthen, not their sovereign independence, but their capacities as systems of governance to deliver services and decent economic prospects for their people'. Thus, while invoking the language of self-determination and independence, Ignatieff argues for greater integration of weak states into international structures of regulation and control: 'the more implicated a state is in trade and border agreements and security pacts with other states…the stronger and more efficient as an instrument of governance it becomes.'[61] State-building thus takes the form of 'internationalizing states' – integrating them into the international system of regulation and oversight so as to pacify internal strife.

Stephen Krasner shares Ignatieff's desire for more permanent international systems of political oversight. According to Krasner, missions that are explicitly temporary distort the incentives of local actors to support state-building. In Bosnia, for instance, the transitional administration is failing because 'it is not in the interests of Bosnian political leaders to make it work'.[62] In Krasner's view, it is the finite nature of the transitional administration in Sarajevo that keeps domestic politicians wedded to their ethnic constituents.[63] Note here that the problem for Krasner is what one would normally presume to be the fundamental strength of representative democracy, namely, Bosnian politicians' closeness to their constituents. Krasner's solution is 'shared sovereignty' which 'involve[s] the engagement of external actors in some of the domestic authority structures of the target states for an indefinite period of time'.[64] With more candour than Ignatieff, Krasner recognizes that 'shared sovereignty' is unlikely to appeal to the masses. He suggests that 'for policy purposes', 'it would be best to refer to shared sovereignty as "partnerships"', as this would allow political leaders to pay lip-service to self-determination while signing it away in various international agreements.[65]

'Shared sovereignty' is what existing state-building interventions effectively introduce. For instance, Krasner recommends that in 'badly governed illiberal democracies', political candidates or parties should enter into contracts with the international community as a way of demonstrating their commitment to certain reform strategies. 'Such a political platform could win votes by signalling to the electorate that a politician would make a decisive break with the past by engaging external actors in domestic decision-making.'[66] In fact, this idea of domestic politicians 'binding their hands' through agreements with international agencies has already been practiced for some years in Eastern Europe. In the states of former Yugoslavia, the EU's flagship policy, the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP), formally outlaws authoritarian governments as a condition of signing the agreement. Governments participating in the SAP therefore commit themselves, as parties to a contract, to maintain a plural party political system.[67] But it would be unwise to take this formal commitment to liberal politics at face value. Contracting with an external agency to retain a liberal party system means that the limits on these political systems are now fixed by agreement with parties external to the polity, rather than grounded in a contract between the state and its own society. The polity has renounced its ability to determine, but also its responsibility for maintaining its own institutions. Liberalism in these states is no longer guaranteed by the people, holding their representatives and state institutions to account. Far from strengthening political liberalism, this undermines it, as the institutions of the state are oriented not inwards to their peoples, but outwards to the EU. Again, the factor relegated in this seeming consolidation and extension of liberal democracy is that crucial animus of political life, the 'will of the people'. Understood in this way, we can see that state-building has become the norm in international policy circles: states are to be built not as 'self-standing structures', to use Jackson's phrase, but as nodes integrated into the international system of 'governance'.

Conclusion

This chapter has drawn out the internal inconsistencies of state-building, has situated these within concrete historical developments since the end of the Cold War, and has pointed to the broader implications of state-building interventions for international politics in the twenty-first century. While state-building may aim, at least rhetorically, to rebuild independent states, in practice it is more likely to weaken state institutions, or at the very least to build political structures that are dependent upon international support for their continued existence. The reason for this is that state-building cleaves institution-building from the political life of the society in question.

We have seen how this separation of institution-building from politics is achieved through a reinterpretation of the idea of sovereignty. The relation to which sovereignty normally refers is an organic, internal relation between the state and its own society. Insofar as state-building necessarily involves the partial, and sometimes even the total, assumption of sovereign power by international

administration, power relations are reconstituted between international agencies and state institutions, thus bypassing domestic populations. Owing to their integration into global governance networks, target states become increasingly dependent on international patronage rather than relying on the will and passions of their own people, thereby fostering popular withdrawal and disengagement from politics. Instead of representing the centralized authority of a population, internationalized states embody the decentralized power of multiple external agents, making the exercise of power that much less accountable.

The theoretical roots of this vision of state-building lie in the concept of 'state failure'. While denying the capacity of developing countries for self-government was hardly original – it was an argument as old as imperialism itself – Robert Jackson's theory shows what is distinctive about state failure. It portrays sovereignty as something that can be wielded against the interests of its own society. The idea of the 'failed state' has thereby facilitated the dissociation of sovereignty from developing societies, and transformed the political problem of popular politics into a technical one of administrative weakness. Reading the failure of anti-colonial nationalism back into history, Jackson saw no political movement in these societies, and could point to only technical, and not political, problems. In turning states into vectors of international experts and products of external regulation, state-building takes forward this technocratic view of politics. As a consequence, it creates brittle institutions and fragile political regimes, forced to rely on the international arena for moral authority and material sustenance. As we have seen, it was the specific conditions of the post-Cold War world that made international solutions to domestic problems both possible and attractive.

State-building is usually seen as applicable only to the unstable periphery, which reflects its ideological roots in theories of state failure. The theory of state failure has been integral to rolling back the international egalitarianism that was achieved after the destruction of colonial empires. The largely undisputed theory of state failure has succeeded in inverting power relations, suggesting that the greatest threats to humanity emanate not from the strong, but from the 'poorest regions in the world, with limited access to technology and other resources and the least power'. In the words of Frank Füredi, more often than not

> [b]anal commentary regarding the sheer weight of population and the unpredictable character of Eastern fanaticism exhausts the argument. The idea that population and fanaticism cannot pose a formidable challenge to the hi-tech weaponry and industry . . . of the West is simply not considered.[68]

However exaggerated the problems posed by 'failed states' may be, it would be a mistake to see them as purely external, 'over there'. Lenin famously characterized the social problems of the developing, colonial world as indicative of the fact that they were the 'weakest links' in the 'chain' of worldwide imperialism.[69] In other words, the turmoil in the periphery expressed in a concentrated form political problems that confronted states the world over, including the metropolitan countries.

A similar point could be made about 'failed states' today. The crisis of government is not restricted to poor and weak countries. The political exhaustion of many post-colonial states, and their subsequent institutional implosion, demonstrates in an acute form a problem that is, to a greater or lesser degree, common to many societies throughout the world, including the industrialized states – as is discussed in Alexander Gourevitch's and James Heartfield's chapters in this volume. Internationalizing state-building is strengthening and consolidating these trends, by replacing the politics of self-determination with bureaucratic rule that is dependent on external power for its survival.

Notes

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12 G. Knaus and M. Cox, 'The "Helsinki Moment" in South-Eastern Europe', *Journal for Democracy* 16:1, 2005, pp.39–53. These new members of the European Union as of 2004 are the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Poland, Latvia and Lithuania.
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