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Introduction: Empire in Denial

State-building – constructing or reconstructing institutions of governance capable of providing citizens with physical and economic security – is widely held to be one of the most pressing policy questions facing the international community today. Those concerned with such issues cross the political spectrum. They include political realists who argue that there is more to fear from failing states than from conquering ones. They also embrace activists who see the dysfunction of state institutions as lying at the heart of the global poverty trap. Indeed, it is the intersection of these concerns on the part of the security and development communities that has made state-building a core policy focus across the policy agendas of major Western states, international institutions and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

For some commentators, the focus on capacity-building states and encouraging country ownership of poverty reduction strategies and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is potentially empowering for non-Western states and their citizens, many of whom are currently excluded from the new globalising order. For others, the language of capacity-building and empowerment merely hides the traditional practices of empire or even extends them in new regulatory forms.

This book will challenge both the above positions. It analyses how state-building practices constitute highly invasive forms of external regulation but argues that these therapeutic and empowering practices cannot be fully understood merely as mechanisms designed to enforce the self-interests of Western actors. Instead, state-building forms of regulation are considered, in the context of Empire in Denial, as attempts by Western states and international institutions to deny the power which they wield and to evade accountability for its exercise.

This introductory chapter highlights the centrality of state-building to international relations today and then locates this book in relation to existing debates and discussion on state-building and introduces the framework of Empire in Denial, contrasting the theoretical approach developed in this book with traditional Left and

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Foucauldian approaches to current forms of external international regulatory control. It then provides an overview of the chapters which follow.

STATE-BUILDING

In the discourse of poverty reduction and international development, state-capacity has, over the last decade, become central to international concerns and 'enhancing the capacity of African states has risen to the top of the continent's development agenda' (Léautier and Madavo, 2004: v). These concerns, and policy interventions in response to them, are highlighted in the World Bank's *World Development Report 1997: The State in a Changing World* and in the 2000 follow-up study, *Reforming Public Institutions and Strengthening Governance: A World Bank Strategy* (WB, 1997; 2000). The UK government's 2005 Commission for Africa report argues that failures in state capacity have been the central barrier to development in the continent (CFA, 2005: 14). The UN Millennium Project expert panel, directed by Jeffrey Sachs, suggests that the central problem faced by poor and heavily indebted states is weak governance, caused not so much by 'corrupt' governments but those that 'lack the resources and capacity to manage an efficient public administration' (UNMP, 2005b: 113). The World Bank's perspective has become an international consensus, upheld by all the leading Western governments, including the United States, and the United Nations.

In the current discourses of international security, state-building is seen as central to address the threats posed by weak states, which can harbour terrorists, drug traffickers and international criminal networks and therefore export instability, refugees, crime and terror. The 2002 US National Security Strategy sums up the prevalent fears in its assertion that: 'America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones' (NSS, 2002: Section 1). For US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice:

Today ... the greatest threats to our security are defined more by the dynamics within weak and failing states than by the borders between strong and aggressive ones. Weak and failing states serve as global pathways that facilitate the spread of pandemics, the movement of criminals and terrorists, and the proliferation of the world's most dangerous weapons. Our experience of this new world leads us to conclude that the fundamental character of regimes matters more today than the international distribution of power. (Rice, 2005)

Stephen Krasner and Carlos Pascual argue ominously that state weaknesses 'constitute structural threats akin to dead leaves that accumulate in a forest. No one knows what spark will ignite them, or when. Over the long run, the only real way to create lasting peace is to promote better governance' (Krasner and Pascual, 2005: 155). According to Francis Fukuyama, 'state-building is one of the most important issues for the world community because weak or failed states are the source of many of the world's most serious problems, from poverty to AIDS to drugs to terrorism' (Fukuyama, 2004: ix). Robert Rotberg does not exaggerate in arguing that state-building has 'become one of the critical all-consuming strategic and moral imperatives of our terrorized time' (Rotberg, 2004b: 42).

It seems that no international policy or strategy document can be complete without the focus on state-building as a key objective: in August 2004 the US government established a state-building department, the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (USO CRS, 2005); in February 2005 the UK government's Strategy Unit report *Investing in Prevention – An International Strategy to Manage Risks of Instability and Improve Crisis Response* viewed state-building as a key part of its 'partnerships for stability' agenda (UKSU, 2005); in March 2005, at the High Level Meeting of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Donor Assistance Committee in Paris, the Ministers of Development of OECD countries agreed to a set of 'Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States' with a 'focus on state-building as the central objective' (OECD, 2005: 8); in the same month the Commission for Africa report welcomed the fact that more than a quarter of bilateral aid to Africa was already being channelled directly into state capacity-building (CFA, 2005: 136); in September 2005 the UN world summit agreed on the establishment of a proposed Peace-Building Commission to coordinate international activity in this area (UN, 2005b: §97–105).

The task of international state-building has rapidly assumed a central role in the foreign policy concerns of Western states and in the organisational remits of international institutions. International policy practices in relation to state-building go well beyond the post-conflict transitional processes in places such as Bosnia, Kosovo, East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq. State-building practices of external support for governance capacity now extend to most of the countries in the world. Practically every international engagement between international institutions and non-Western states includes forms of

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conditionality which relate to the internal governance mechanisms of non-Western states. This is especially true of international agreements for development aid and debt relief assistance, for example under programmes of debt reduction under the G8, the UN's Millennium Development Goals and the World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategies.

The United States government under George W. Bush has been keen to stress the importance of the export of state-building assistance, not just to postwar Afghanistan and Iraq but to large regions of the world, including the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe. Since January 2004, US external assistance for state-building poor and indebted countries has taken place under the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) initiative where increased international aid is delivered on the basis of allowing greater external assistance for good governance and state institutional capacity-building. Bush has requested \$3 billion from Congress for the MCA in 2006 and has pledged to increase annual funding to \$5 billion in the future (MCA, 2005). The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have shifted their focus away from traditional approaches to development, which stressed external conditionality, towards state capacity-building and good governance in order to assist in the development of national ownership strategies of poverty reduction. The European Union's central foreign policy focus has been on its enlargement to the East this process has involved state-building through the integration process and the EU has played a crucial role in managing the transitional status of the quasi- and full-protectorates of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo and is leading the process of 'member state-building' with the accession of the Balkan states to the Stabilisation and Association process (SAP) (ICB, 2005: 14). The UN has made the agenda of external state-building its own in the organisational support given to the new, much more interventionist, practices of 'human security' and the merging of the concerns of security and development throughout the 1990s, given focus in the central role of state-building in the delivery of the Millennium Development Goals.

However, despite the focus of attention on the question of external engagement with the domestic governing mechanisms of non-Western states, there has been little theoretical engagement with state-building as a policy framework, either in terms of the state-building actors, with leading Western states and international institutions at the forefront, or in terms of the consequences for the objects of these practices, non-Western states.

Problem-solving and critique

State-building has generally been addressed, in a dry and technical way, as a question of the development of the international expertise necessary to increase the effectiveness of external regulatory intervention into 'failed' post-conflict states or potentially failing or fragile non-Western states. These states are deemed to have 'capacity problems' which are held to prevent them from adequately dealing with the complex problems arising in the economic, social and political management of their societies. It is 'they' who have the problem, but in an interconnected world their problems are seen as increasingly necessary for 'us' to address, either for self-interested security reasons or as a result of our ethical duties and responsibilities towards others. The problematic of state-building is therefore that of how Western governments, policy-makers and civil society activists can resolve the wide-ranging problems facing the citizens and governments of the non-Western world.

This approach could be seen as a problem-solving approach in terms of the critical theory perspective developed by Robert Cox and others (Cox, 1981). The focus on the technical problems facing international administrative assistance has led to a large number of 'lessons learned' reports which repeat generic nostrums of preparedness, early intervention, strategic planning, international coordination, the importance of the rule of law, the integration of military and civic agencies, the problems of relying overly on elections, the need to develop strategies to deal with 'spoilers' and to integrate and encourage more moderate political forces, to support civil society initiatives, establish early gains to win the confidence of people in international assistance, deal with health, education, HIV/AIDS awareness, post-conflict demobilisation, etc. (see, for example, Zartman, 1995; UN, 2000; Cousens and Kumar, 2001; CSDG, 2003; Dobbins et al., 2003; Maley, Sampford and Thakur, 2003; Milliken, 2003; Rotberg, 2004a; Chesterman, Ignatieff and Thakur, 2005a). The bulk of the state-building research has focused on the high-profile cases where there has been direct international administrative control in post-conflict situations. Less empirical work has, so far, been done on the impact of external strategies of capacity-building and good governance linked with EU enlargement or with governance reforms linked with development aid and debt reduction.

One striking aspect of the literature is the highly depoliticised nature of the discussions of state capacity-building, where concerns

of stability and regulation are discussed in a narrow technical and functionalist framework (see Goureritch, 2004; Bøås and Jennings, 2005). The functionalist approach is probably best summed up in Roland Paris' critical view that in post-conflict situations there should be 'Institutionalization before Liberalization' (Paris, 2004). 'Institutionalization', i.e. the focus on institutional capacity-building, such as that of the judiciary, police and the civil service, is considered to be an essential prerequisite for self-government, i.e. 'Liberalization'. The functional capacity of state institutions is privileged over their representational or policy-making autonomy and increasingly understood in technical and administrative terms (see further, Chapter 3).

The understanding of state-building and the external capacity-building of institutions in highly technical and functionalist terms has gone hand in hand with the problematisation of traditional perspectives of sovereignty as self-government and political autonomy. For some commentators, the coexistence of external administrators with elected governments has proved problematic, revealing the limitations to external assistance which cannot assume the controlling powers of past empire. For Fukuyama, the problem of encouraging good governance and strengthening capacity, without direct forms of rule, remains a problematic 'circle to be squared' (Fukuyama, 2004: 164). Michael Ignatieff has condemned 'empire lite' for occupying an untenable middle ground, neither providing the prolonged external assistance and control necessary to transform weak states and societies, nor allowing self-government (Ignatieff, 2003: 126). Other commentators have argued that the internationalisation of sovereign state functional responsibilities is the way forward, and concepts of 'neo-trusteeship', 'guided sovereignty' and 'shared sovereignty' have increasingly been proffered as a way of bridging the gap between the functional demands deemed necessary and the lack of non-Western state capacity (see, for example, Krasner, 1999; 2004; Keohane, 2002; 2003; Fearon and Laitin, 2004).

This book seeks to take a step back from the problem-solving approaches which dominate the publications in this field to consider why state-building approaches have become so central to the agendas of Western states and international institutions. It seeks to consider what state-building discourses and practices reveal about the actors engaged in them and more broadly what they say about our changing perceptions of the importance of political engagement and the political sphere itself. What is it that leads Western states

and international institutions to reinterpret economic, social and political problems in other parts of the world as questions which are largely amenable to technical administrative solutions? How can it be that today it seems that the answer to every problem from security threats to human rights to development is now that of good governance and the export of external advisers and capacity-builders? Can new external forms of regulation which seek to strengthen and empower and capacity-build non-Western states and their citizens achieve their stated aims if they view the state in narrow technical and functional terms?

If these are new forms of the exercise of Western power, of the needs of the market, or of empire, then what is it that drives Western states and international institutions to draw on the language of capacity-building and empowerment rather than the traditional discourses of democracy and the market? This shift in the forms of legitimisation of international regulatory controls seems to call for some explanation when it appears that international institutions have a much freer hand and are under less critical pressure than during the geopolitical divide of the Cold War. If the shifting focus to therapeutic and bureaucratic forms of empowerment and capacity-building is a result of the problems that Western institutions have in establishing their own legitimacy, what is the cause of this?

The questions raised by external state-building initiatives go to the heart of the nature of politics today. The consensus that most people in the world can be governed better with support from external experts and capacity-builders highlights the diminished view of the importance of politics, of the importance of self-government and political autonomy. When it appears that the solutions to the problems of security, development and human rights are amenable to resolution through therapeutic, legal, administrative and bureaucratic means and are not political questions, then the role or necessity of politics is clearly put to question.

There is little doubt that many advocates of current state-building approaches view state sovereignty and representative government to be as much a problem as an asset when it comes to developing the essential mechanisms of administrative management and good governance necessary to ensure 'pro-poor' policies and social inclusion. This book locates the shift away from traditional approaches to international politics and towards post-political regimes of empowerment and capacity-building in the post-Cold War crisis of confidence facing Western political elites – this crisis of

self-belief means that the exercise of power is fraught with denial. For this reason, it is to Empire in Denial which we now turn.

EMPIRE IN DENIAL

Today empire is in denial. Power is exercised in a way which is transforming international relations and the relations between non-Western states and their societies. But the actors who wield this power seek to deny accountability for its exercise. European Commission bureaucrats who negotiate Stabilisation and Association process agreements with prospective EU members in the Balkans argue that they are merely facilitators, encouraging applicant governments to take up the EU *acquis*. The EU is keen to stress that it is working in partnership with potential applicants to the East and is keen to give them 'country ownership' of the state capacity-building process (EC, 2001a: 7). World Bank and IMF advisers who work through the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), necessary as a condition for the extension of international credits, grants and debt relief, argue that the documents are 'country-owned' and that they merely 'endorse' them (Rowden and Irama, 2004: 7). Leading Western governments have joined the international financial institutions (IFIs) in insisting that their role is merely to 'support policy leadership by developing countries without imposing our views' (DFID, 2005: iii).

Even where the power of empire is exercised in a traditional way, through invasion and occupation, there is a denial of power and responsibility. The 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq was marked by bans on the coalition forces raising national flags and the rapid removal of the Stars and Stripes when it was displayed by victorious US forces; victory parades were also banned in New York and London (Grigg, 2003; *New York Times*, 2003; Watt, 2003; White, 2003). If this was a victory it was one which the coalition forces felt uncomfortable celebrating. The Iraqi occupation was also an occupation in denial with the rapid and closely guarded handing back of Iraqi sovereignty in June 2004. Empire is also in denial in the protectorates of Bosnia and Kosovo. In Bosnia there is the pretence that Bosnia is an independent state negotiating with – rather than run by – the EU. In Kosovo there is the pretence that the future status of the province will be decided in internationally mediated talks between Belgrade and Pristina, rather than by agreement between the US and the EU.

Why should empire be so coy about its new found freedoms with the end of the Cold War? Perhaps there is the embarrassment that

so much power has been literally handed to Western states and international institutions with the implosion, rather than the defeat, of the Soviet alternative? The pluralist post-World War II framework of the United Nations Charter has been replaced, literally overnight, by a new hierarchy of Western power. Yet this hierarchy has not been formalised in the way that empire was in the past. In fact, the new framework of domination has been built on the basis of the denial of Western power and responsibility. The new administrators of empire talk about developing relations of 'partnership' with subordinate states, or even of African 'leadership', at the same time as instituting new mechanisms of domination and control. Gone is the language of Western dominance and superiority; replaced by the discourses of 'capacity-building' and 'empowerment' in the cause of the non-Western Other. It seems that Western states are unhappy to bear the responsibilities for power, which the end of the Cold War has opened up. They are eager to deny that they have any interests or deciding influence at the same time as instituting new mechanisms of regulation which artificially seek to play up the authority, rights and interests of those subordinate to them.

This book will suggest that while *Empire in Denial* may sound nicer than the brash hubris and overt racism of the imperial past, it is, in its formulation, no less elitist and patronising and, in its consequences, no less divisive, destabilising and restricting. At the heart of *Empire in Denial* is the post-Cold War project of state-building. Where traditional forms of imperial domination were defined on the basis of their denial of political rights to statehood, *Empire in Denial* makes a fetish of the state form and the formal separation of Western-dominated policy-making processes from the political process within non-Western states. We are witnessing the development of a new set of practices which fill the old forms of state sovereignty with a new political content. In fact, it suggests that the practices of *Empire in Denial* are much more invasive than those of nineteenth-century empire, preventing the establishment of strong links between non-Western states and their societies and resulting in the phenomenon of 'phantom states' whose governing institutions may have extensive external resourcing but lack social or political legitimacy.

Through the transformation of the institution of sovereignty the division between the sphere of domestic government and international governance has been blurred and the external influence of major Western powers and international institutions has been extended at the same time as Western institutions have been formally

distanced from responsibility. Empire in Denial, unlike more direct forms of colonial rule, exercises power without the drawback of overt or transparent mechanisms of political accountability. The traditional rights of state sovereignty, those of self-government and non-intervention, have been increasingly undermined. Yet, at the same time the shell of sovereignty – the state form – especially international legal sovereignty, formal independence in international law, has been emphasised. Not only has sovereignty been extended to the creation of new states, such as in Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union, but the rights and responsibilities of sovereign governments have been increasingly stressed. Non-Western states sign up to international legal agreements and are members of international institutions, such as the United Nations. On the surface, the post-Cold War UN framework of sovereign equality appears to be intact but, underneath the formal trappings of independence, non-Western state governments have been opened up to a wide range of external regulatory controls and direct intervention under the rubric of state capacity-building.

It is clear that Empire in Denial is not the lack of Western intervention and regulation, suggested by historian Niall Ferguson's use of the term in his book *Colossus* (2004: 29) or his *Chronicle Review* article (2003) of the previous year. Here Ferguson is referring to what he sees as America's lack of long-term or sustained interest in the international sphere. He argues that it is punching below its weight considering that: 'Its defense budget is 14 times that of China and 22 times that of Russia', much greater than the more activist Britain ever enjoyed over any potential rivals (2003). In Ferguson's reading, America is an empire but currently lacks the historical, cultural and economic desire to act as one:

the empire that rules the world today is both more and less than its British begetter. It has a much bigger economy, many more people, a much larger arsenal. But it is an empire that lacks the drive to export its capital, its people, and its culture to those backward regions that need them most urgently and that, if they are neglected, will breed the greatest threats to its security. It is an empire, in short, that dare not speak its name. It is an empire in denial. (2003)

In this book, the concept of Empire in Denial attempts to capture the new forms of international regulation of non-Western states and societies: the fact that the new forms of international control attempt to evade responsibility and accountability for the exercise of power. It poses the question of why the exercise of power takes the form of

the abnegation of self-interest in the professed concern to empower and capacity-build others. Empire is not in denial because it is not regulating enough (in fact, there is much more regulatory control attached to aid, trade and institutional relations than ever before) but because the political power of decision-making elites seeks to clothe itself in non-political, therapeutic or purely technical, administrative and bureaucratic forms.

The politics of empire

There are essentially two ways in which power and domination have traditionally been understood to be exercised in the international sphere – those of formal empire and informal empire. Formal empire refers to the denial of the right to self-government – analogous to the denial of formal civil and democratic rights in the domestic sphere. Formal empire is therefore one of hierarchy rather than equality and relies on force and coercion rather than consent. Informal empire refers to the informal relations of domination understood to operate in the socio-economic sphere of market relations, in which underdeveloped ‘peripheral’ and ‘semi-peripheral’ states are dependent on and exploited by the ‘core’ developed industrialised nations (see, for example, Wallerstein, 1974). This relationship is analogous to the inequalities between social classes, i.e. between capitalists who own the means of production and workers who own merely their labour power. These inequalities are not maintained by coercion but through the worker’s freedom. In the words of Karl Marx: ‘This sphere [of exchange] within whose boundaries the sale and purchase of labour-power goes on, is in fact a very Eden of the innate rights of man. There alone rule Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham’ (Marx, 1954: 172). It is the free reproduction of capitalist social relations, which compel and reproduce subordination through market compulsion rather than the direct use of governing power.

Empire was traditionally understood as the direct domination of other territories which were dependent and lacked the right of self-government: the right of sovereignty. Not so long ago this was a respectable form of rule. In Britain, for the first half of the twentieth century (from 1904 onwards) Empire Day was celebrated as a major social event with street parties and school commemorations. Celebrated on the 24 May (Queen Victoria’s birthday), Empire Day was initiated by Edward VII to celebrate ‘the magnificence and power of the Empire’ (BECM, 2003). In the second half of the twentieth century, the British and other European empires were undermined

with around a hundred territories gaining independent sovereign status, for example: India, 1947; Indonesia, 1949; Morocco, 1956; Tunisia, 1956; Ghana, 1957; Congo, 1960; Cyprus, 1960; Burundi, 1962; Rwanda, 1962; Jamaica, 1962; Uganda, 1962; Kenya 1963; Singapore, 1965; Angola, 1975; Mozambique, 1975; Zimbabwe, 1980. When the United Nations was formed in 1945, 750 million people – almost a third of the world's population – lived under empire. There were 51 signatories to the UN's Charter; at the time of writing there are 191 members. The extension of the membership of the UN reflects the universalising of the rights of state sovereignty and the decolonisation process in the second half of the last century.

In formal terms, little has changed with the end of the Cold War. The first post-Cold War decade from 1990 to 2000 was officially declared by the United Nations General Assembly as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. In 2001, the UN proclaimed the Second Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. A small number of non-self-governing territories remain: by far the largest is Western Sahara, followed by the French administered New Caledonia and the British dependency of the Falkland Islands, the remainder being small island territories from US administered Guam with 500 square kilometres to British administered Pitcairn of 5 square kilometres. In 1994 the UN's Trusteeship Council fell into abeyance; its tasks were held to be completed with the independence of the remaining trust territories of the Pacific Islands (Palau) previously administered by the US.

This formal renunciation of empire and the universalising of the state form came under increasing international pressure in the 1990s. By the late 1990s it appeared that a new international hierarchy was overturning the UN framework of state sovereignty. Debates about the failures of humanitarian intervention in Somalia, Bosnia and Rwanda led to greater external engagement in Kosovo and East Timor. State sovereignty was not just under pressure in relation to demands for external military intervention in the cause of humanitarian concerns. In 2001, the declaration of the Global War on Terror after 9/11 seemed to strengthen the legitimacy of international intervention and, as a consequence, US-led wars of 'regime change' followed in Afghanistan and Iraq.

However, high-profile international military interventions in the 1990s and early 2000s in Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq have not resulted in the prolonged denial of the formal rights of state sovereignty. All these territories remained,

became, or are in the process of becoming self-governing with formal recognition by the UN. In the case of Kosovo, formal sovereignty lies with Serbia, despite the de facto administrative control of the UN Mission. In the case of East Timor, the Indonesian government consented to the independence referendum and the presence of UN mandated forces and independence was formally recognised in 2002. In Bosnia, where external administrative control has existed since the Dayton peace agreement in 1995, it should be noted that the territory maintained its sovereign status and that the government formally consented to external administrative regulation. Afghanistan was not formally subject to external rule, while in Iraq the postwar Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) had the retrospective recognition of the UN and formally handed back sovereign authority the following year.

Empire has not returned in formal terms, yet a new hierarchical and interventionist order has led to an upsurge in discussion of empire in recent years. Many of these commentators suggest that we are entering a new age of empire. US military and ideological predominance, since the end of the Cold War, is seen to be enforcing the hegemony of neoliberal ideas and rejecting the international law of the UN Charter era. The US-led war in Iraq and the postwar resistance and instability are argued to lay bare the dynamics of a new era of power politics. The US is held to be the global hegemon, acting on behalf of international capital and instituting a new universal empire, enforcing the power of the market over elites which refuse to cooperate with international financial institutions.

In this framework, it is the informal mechanisms of empire which are stressed and which are bolstered by the use of US power as a coercive force. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2001), David Harvey (2003), Michael Mann (2003) and Ellen Meiksins Wood (2003), among others, have focused on empire based on the power of capital rather than formal territorial control and the denial of sovereignty. The first theorists to do so were John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson in their famous 1953 article, 'The Imperialism of Free Trade', in which they argued that 'informal empire' was much more important to Britain than the power gleaned from colonial rule (Gallagher and Robinson, 1953). Making the comparison between forms of British foreign domination in the mid and late nineteenth century, they argued that there was little difference between domination through formally denying sovereignty and domination through the power of Britain's market strength:

Throughout, British governments worked to establish and maintain British paramountcy by whatever means best suited the circumstances of their diverse regions of interest. The aims of the mid-Victorians were no more anti-imperialist than their successors', though they were more often able to achieve them informally; and the late-Victorians were no more 'imperialist' than their predecessors, even though they were driven to annex more often. British policy followed the principle of extending control informally if possible and formally if necessary. To label the one method 'anti-imperialist' and the other 'imperialist', is to ignore the fact that whatever the method British interests were steadily safeguarded and extended. (Gallagher and Robinson, 1953)

This formulation then understands empire to include relations of domination which do not require the extra-economic compulsion of colonial rule. William Appleman Williams made similar points with regard to the American empire (see, for example, Williams, 1964). Empire, understood as the denial of sovereignty – formal state independence – was seen as the second best option, one only to be pursued if capitalist interests are threatened by rival powers or local resistance. In this reading, the extension of sovereign rights to self-government and the process of decolonisation in the wake of World War II, demonstrated the power of capital and the lack of inter-imperialist rivalry under US domination. Justin Rosenberg, for example, argues that the extension of sovereign rights cannot be understood without taking into account the extension of market relations, and the social power of capital, which made colonial rule unnecessary for the extraction of an economic surplus. He makes the point thus:

it is this formal disjuncture (between public and private political realms) which explains part of the paradox of sovereignty ... It explains how we can see simultaneously an enhanced territorial differentiation between states together with an unprecedented porousness and interdependence ... [I]t becomes increasingly apparent that in realism [international relations theory] reality is standing on its head. Realists tell us that the modern international political system is different because it is a states-system organized by anarchy rather than an empire organized by centralized command. However, ... [i]t means the rise of a new kind of empire: the empire of civil society. (Rosenberg, 1994: 131)

The 'civil society' of equal sovereign states conceals the capitalist social relations that reproduce and reinforce Western hegemony, thereby making empire invisible in formal terms (see also Kiely, 2005: 139). It is the informal mechanisms of market inequality which mean

that non-Western states have little choice but to accept discriminatory trade regulations or to accept the conditions set by the World Bank and the IMF in order to gain access to loans or development aid. What appears formally to be a relationship between two contracting partners is in effect a product of the hierarchy of power. For the critics of informal mechanisms of empire, the formalities of international law and rights of sovereign equality are a sham, in the same way as the freedoms of domestic political and legal equality hide the realities of class power.

Today, relations of hierarchy in the international sphere cannot easily be captured in terms of the formal empire of the coercive denial of sovereign rights to self-government nor by the informal empire of the equal contractual relations of the market. The new regulatory forms of Empire in Denial seek to deny any direct political control and to reinforce the formal legal status of sovereignty. However, these practices are much more interventionist than those based on contractual relations enforced by market dependency. The hierarchy of power and external dependency of states on external aid or debt relief is not concealed, through the equality of legal contract, but emphasised as the premise upon which the empowering and capacity-building exercises of international state-building are legitimised.

In recognition of the more interventionist models of international regulation, which neither rely on market relations nor on the direct usurpation of state sovereignty, some commentators have adapted a Foucauldian framework of governmentality to explain the exercise of Western power (see Foucault, 1991; Dean, 1999). Governmentality is understood as an alternative framework to either the direct coercion of formal empire or the *laissez-faire* of the social power of capital. Here intervention takes forms which appear to be consensual rather than coercive, through which the technologies and practices of domination simultaneously produce or constitute the subjects being dominated through the discursive practices and frameworks of knowledge, meaning, norms and values. This framework appears particularly useful in the attempt to understand why Western power should attempt to construct frameworks of non-Western state policy ownership and seek to engage in what appears to be deeply interventionist strategies of social engineering in the encouragement of civil society participation in the policy process.

Mark Duffield has argued that interventionist programmes of capacity-building demonstrate that 'liberal governance has a radical mission to transform societies as a whole, including the attitudes and

beliefs of the people within them' (Duffield, 2001: 258). He argues that capacity-building tied to development aid and debt relief has become a 'relationship of government: a set of technologies having the power to reorder the relationship between people and things to achieve desired aims' (Duffield, 2003: 292). The apparently self-effacing ethics of empowering and assisting the poor in fact facilitate external interference in non-Western states, positing the need for an external interlocutor and thereby legitimising external regulation; establishing 'a will to govern', a framework and set of practices of intervention (Duffield, 2003: 294). For Duffield, these new forms of external governmentality have opened up non-Western states to 'metropolitan monitoring, intervention and regulation unprecedented since the colonial period' in an attempt to regulate the unrest and resistance generated by the failures of the market (2003: 308). It is the emerging threat to international stability arising from the failure of previous World Bank and IMF structural adjustment policies that has made underdevelopment appear to be a security threat and has driven the merging of the development and security discourses in the desire to control and regulate the peripheral states of the 'borderlands'.

Other commentators, who have focused more narrowly on international regulation in African states, for example, David Craig and Doug Porter (2002), Rita Abrahamsen (2004, 2005) and Alastair Fraser (2005), also argue that state capacity-building and country ownership of development strategies through the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and participatory poverty assessment (PPA) exercises can best be understood as technologies of social control. For Craig and Porter the state-building approach taken by the World Bank's PRSPs and other development funding frameworks attempt to 'generate a level of global to local integration, discipline and technical management of marginal economies, governance and populations unprecedented since colonial times' (2002: 4). The internationalisation of poverty reduction strategies has transformed the mechanisms of international regulation, especially:

in terms of how poverty is linked with global surveillance, subordination and undermining of local governance dynamics, the removal from public scrutiny of key choices and decisions, and the diversion of energies from the pressing task of designing appropriate domestic poverty and growth strategies. (Craig and Porter, 2002: 5)

For Craig and Porter, these new forms of surveillance and control are necessary to legitimise the neoliberal agenda of international

institutions by engaging civil society groups who tend to be 'the primary agents of dissent' (2002: 8). Fraser similarly argues that the IFIs have come to see participatory forms of capacity-building as a potential solution to the crisis of structural adjustment policies and as a way of influencing the values and behaviour of country governments and civil society actors (2005: 322). He argues that the emphasis on giving ownership to states, and particularly on empowering the poor, strengthens external interventionist bureaucratic mechanisms:

"Bottom-up ownership is a paradoxical legitimating device in intervention, and implicitly iscultrng political processes."

(Fraser 2005: 322)

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little opposition from within their own societies to the projects and funding offered by the international donors.

Empire in Denial

The three perspectives of empire outlined above all start from the assumption that the forms which the regulation and enforcement of empire take can only be understood by considering the instrumental interests of the Western actors. For Marxists, these interests are vital geostrategic or economic interests which can be safeguarded informally, through the dictate of the market, and, if necessary, through direct coercive intervention and the negation of sovereign rights. For Foucauldians, these vital interests, of maintaining neoliberal market conditions and social stability, necessitate more complex forms of intervention, aimed at the regulation of societies as well as governments. The thesis outlined in this book is that the state-building practices described well by Foucauldian theorists are those of Empire in Denial. It suggests that these new forms of external regulation are driven less by the desire to extend and enforce Western power than they are by the desire to deny it.

Foreign policy, the projection of power externally, often tells us more about the foreign policy actor than any external object. It is not only power which is projected but a certain framework of ideas and values and political purpose. To this extent, social constructivist theorists in international relations are right to argue that the interests of any actor cannot be separated from their political identities (for example, Wendt, 1992). Social constructivism has become increasingly dominant in the academic literature because it appears to capture the fluidity of interests since the end of the Cold War. There seems to be no clear framework of international ordering to replace that of the geopolitical division which ended in 1989. Despite the US's dominance in military terms, America has not been able to shape a new order comparable to that of the post-World War II institutional order based on the UN and the Bretton Woods institutions (Reus-Smit, 2004: 2; see also Bacevich, 2002; Kupchan, 2002). The dominant discourse is one of powerlessness in the face of globalisation or the threats of global warming or acts of terror.

It would be no exaggeration to say that approaches to the international sphere have never been less future-orientated than today. It seems that the end of superpower competition has left the remaining power exhausted, without a mission or a sense of purpose. There is little doubt that the absence of great power conflict

appears to have removed a framework of meaning in which the international sphere was highly politicised. Niall Ferguson makes the point that the lack of any international project poses the risk that, rather than the choice being between ‘realist’ views of ‘unipolarity’ or ‘multipolarity’, there is a real risk of a ‘generalized impotence – or, if you like, apolarity’ (2004: 296). When those with power lack a clear framework through which to exercise it, then as French theorist Zaki Laïdi writes:

Power – understood in its widest sense – is conceived and experienced less and less as a process of taking over responsibilities, and more as a game of avoidance ... Social actors avoid taking on their own responsibilities or some responsibilities because, in the absence of a framework of meaning, responsibilities are measured only in cost terms. (1998: 13)

Without a cause, a sense of purpose or political meaning it is difficult to engage in the life of society, in political life in its broadest sense. This problem is felt particularly acutely by governments and policy-makers who experience their power more often as an embarrassment or a cost, rather than as an opportunity. It seems to be the lack of perceived legitimacy that drives government policy-making, rather than the confidence of a popular mandate (Bunting, 2006). Rather than claiming the rights of power, most governments seem to be happier when they are disclaiming them, seeking to devolve policy-making responsibilities either to regional and local authorities or to higher bodies such as the European Union or international institutions. The dynamic of politics seems to be one of avoidance of responsibility. This is because taking on responsibility depends upon having a conviction in a political goal. It is only a strong conviction in the political ends of a policy that enables governments and societies to bear the costs of achieving it. Today, Western political elites lack a strong political vision and therefore have a transformed perception of and relationship to political power. They seek to reject, rather than welcome, the responsibilities of power. This book argues that it is this rejection of responsibility which is driving the state-building dynamic and which has taken the therapeutic ethos of empowerment and capacity-building from the margins to the mainstream.

State-building as social inclusion

The clearest example of the avoidance of political responsibility is possibly the politics of social inclusion. The theme of social inclusion, with its security concerns of crime and social concerns of welfare,

is the nearest domestic parallel to the international state-building discourse. In the focus on social inclusion, governments create their own agenda there are no popular movements for social inclusion and there is no clear definition of social inclusion or exclusion. Despite the fact that tackling social exclusion has been a central theme of the UK Blair governments (the social exclusion unit was launched by Tony Blair in 1997) the British government's Communities Minister, David Miliband, set out a definition of social exclusion for the first time in November 2005, defining those adults as socially excluded who experienced five or more or a range of ten problems, ranging from unemployment and the lack of educational requirements to poor mental or physical health (Ward, 2005). Social exclusion is not a political concept and not a self-chosen designation, it is a category created by government advisers and professional experts, in effect creating an artificial political constituency of policy legitimisation and at the same time constituting an object of social regulation through a discourse of empowerment.

The politics of social inclusion are the opposite of traditional politics. Firstly, there are no interests involved; there is no appeal to a particular social or political constituency. Social inclusion is beyond the politics of contestation; social inclusion is based on meeting the needs of the excluded, of empowering them through inclusion. The policy focus is on those without power, there can be no accusation that policy is led by government self-interest or those of its supporters or rich donors. Secondly, there is no ideological or political content, the politics of social inclusion are not about social change or transformation, they are based on pragmatism, on results-based policy-making; policy-making in this area is the task of policy professionals in association with the advocacy groups which represent the needs of the excluded social groups. In many ways the capacity-building of the socially excluded is little different to the state-building practices of international institutions, which are seen to be above politics and led by technical and administrative expertise.

However, the clearest connection with state-building is in the broader rejection of responsibility in the politics of social inclusion. With social inclusion there appears to be an ambitious and radical agenda of tackling poverty, improving access to education, improving mental health facilities, improving housing opportunities, etc., but, in fact, the complex and interdependent nature of the problems alleged to cause social exclusion means that the focus is shifted away from a transformative social agenda to the problems facing a minority

of the population with multiple problems and towards individualised or localised assistance. The focus on the socially excluded like the international state-building focus on the poor is part of an agenda which, in fact, insists that little can be done about social problems on a macro-level. The radical claims are based on making the poor or socially excluded the focus of policy not on any broader social agenda of transformation.

For example, the UN adviser and Millennium Development Project director, central to the 'Making Poverty History' initiative, Jeffrey Sachs, argues that to meet the goal of 'ending poverty' by 2005 would mean nobody having to live on less than \$1 a day. However, with the average American already living on about \$114 per day and the average Briton on \$83 per day, it is clear that the focus is merely on the most extreme levels of poverty, much less ending poverty or overcoming the wealth and income gap between the rich and poor (Ben-Ami, 2005; Sachs, 2005; see also Kiely, 2005: 103–5). This rejection of social transformation puts the focus on technocratic solutions to alleviate the suffering of the poorest sections of society (Ben-Ami, 2005; Kiely, 2005: 104); on the coping strategies of the socially excluded; and on the professional assistance, training and capacity-building necessary to empower them. This is the politics of the evasion of responsibility, a shift from government as policy actor to government as therapeutic empowerer (see, for example, Nolan, 1998).

It is true that policy practices of social inclusion exercise power over those groups designated as excluded and often constitutes, or gives purchase to, group identities on the basis of these needs and provides a basis upon which advocates can give them voice. However, it does not follow that the desire to regulate or to constitute these constituencies of need was the motive or goal of these practices (see also Campbell, 1998a: 8). It could be argued that the practices of the politics of social inclusion are a product of governments' attempts to deny their power and responsibility and that the regulation of the excluded can be seen as a by-product of this, an unintended consequence, rather than the principal aim. This brief analysis of the domestic discourse of social inclusion – highlighting how the capacity-building and empowerment agenda is driven by governments' desire to promote themselves as 'caring' or 'concerned' while avoiding the responsibilities of delivering on any larger or more ambitious social programmes – is intended merely as an analogy. It does, however, reflect the analytical approach that will be taken in the following

chapters which will draw out how the international discourse of state-building reflects the more complex process of the evasion of the responsibilities of power in the international sphere.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

The following chapters draw out the policy drives and the consequences of Empire in Denial as it is expressed in the politics of state-building. The next three chapters focus on the dynamics of Western policy-making. Chapter 2 locates the state-building consensus in policy shifts in response to the 1990s decade of humanitarian intervention and considers the differences and continuities with previous interventionist policies. It then goes on to analyse the changing definition and understanding of state sovereignty, considering how it has been reformulated in terms of capacity rather than rights, illustrating the discussion with a consideration of Stephen Krasner's 'unbundling' of sovereignty and the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) *Responsibility to Protect* report's view of sovereignty as 'responsibility' (ICISS, 2001a). It then introduces the case study of Bosnia as a leading example of the trend towards Empire in Denial, highlighting the EU's evasion of responsibility through the state-building framework.

In 'The Governance of Government', Chapter 3 questions the privileging of governance over government in Western approaches to state-building which tend to assume that economic, social and political problems of non-Western states can be addressed through the external capacity-building agenda. This approach marks a shift in the understanding of state-society relations and is one which places much less emphasis on how societal pressures and demands are constitutive of stable and legitimate institutional mechanisms. This chapter questions this approach and considers how this shift in the understanding of the non-Western state has been shaped by current understandings of war and conflict, and how the prioritisation of governance has fitted with critical and post-positivist trends in academic thinking in international relations and security studies.

Chapter 4 argues that since the end of the 1990s we have witnessed an ethical convergence of concern for the Other, in both national foreign policy and international financial institutional frameworks, which has given ideological coherence to Empire in Denial. Today, it would appear that Western states and international institutions

have taken postmodern ethics to heart in their claims to be acting on the basis of their 'responsibilities to the Other' rather than being guided by self-interest. The chapter then analyses how these discursive ethical practices separate power from political subjects in three ways. Firstly, by casting external policy-makers (Western states and international institutions) as powerless and disinterested actors. Secondly, by internationalising the domestic policy-making mechanisms of non-Western states, thereby undermining the capacity of state sovereignty to demarcate an 'inside' and an 'outside'. Thirdly, by transforming the political sphere of non-Western states through recasting policy in needs-based terms which necessitate a technical consensus, objectifying the Other as the political subject but one without agency.

The following two chapters draw out this process with a particular emphasis on EU enlargement and external regulation in Bosnia, which has been central to experiments in international state-building. Chapter 5 focuses on the EU's attempts to deny its east European empire through experimenting with member state-building through the enlargement process; particularly with regard to the South Eastern European states after the establishment, in 1999, of a range of new state capacity-building frameworks for EU integration, including the Stabilisation and Association process and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (SPSEE). It considers how these mechanisms have operated and the language of empowerment, partnership and pedagogy embedded in them.

Chapter 6 expands the analysis of the EU's denial of its power in the Balkan region, focusing particularly on the informal trusteeship of Bosnia and tracing the changing forms of Empire in Denial. The chapter highlights a shift in the portrayal of empire in 2000, which reflected the experiences of the exposed and increasingly illegitimate nature of international administrative rule as powers accumulated under the Office of the High Representative (OHR) with little sense of purpose or framework for their exercise. Since 2000, the EU has sought to give greater direction to the running of Bosnia through the enlargement process and has sought to downplay the role of the international administration, gradually Europeanising the state structures of Bosnia through the work of the Directorate of European Integration (DEI). Bosnian state-building has since assumed the central characteristics of similar internationalised governance regimes in non-Western states, where there is no longer a line of demarcation between domestic and

external policy-making, leaving the EU able effectively to negotiate with itself on Bosnia's accession programme.

The following two chapters focus more closely on the impact of international state-building practices on the ground, considering how the policy techniques of evading Western accountability – highlighted in the core state-building policy practices of anti-corruption and the rule of law – impact on the subject societies. Chapters 7 and 8 highlight how, rather than strengthening state institutions, capacity-building approaches have the effect of weakening the relationship between state institutions and societies, producing a tendency towards phantom states which exist more on paper than in reality. These chapters analyse how this process works through reorientating state institutions around external agendas while the focus on administrative and technical frameworks severs institutions from the political and social demands emanating from their societies.

These chapters focus on Bosnia as the central case study, where these practices have been pushed further than in other states and therefore reveal more clearly the limitations of anti-corruption initiatives and the rule of law as central levers in the state-building policy armoury of Empire in Denial. Chapter 7 considers the development and implementation of the internationally coordinated anti-corruption strategy. The Bosnian experience allows anti-corruption strategy, and the good governance agenda informing it, to be assessed and analysis to be made regarding the impact of external management programmes, designed to strengthen collective state institutions in post-conflict states, such as Bosnia. The chapter suggests that the focus on corruption acts as an excuse for Western policy failures by blaming government officials and cultural factors for their consequences while anti-corruption initiatives tend to replace political justifications for policy with bureaucratic ones, undermining the political process.

A second technique of Western evasion is considered in Chapter 8: the focus on the rule of law. It is suggested that Empire in Denial seeks to evade the responsibilities of power through the establishment of an independent framework or code of law. The assumption that law can exist independently of political power, that law can provide its own legitimacy, is shown to be a misplaced one. Paradoxically, in seeking to hide behind the law, Empire in Denial gives the law a content which separates it from domestic social processes. In the phantom states, which are the products of these practices, the law takes arbitrary and often irrational forms, freed from the constraints

of the political process. This paradox is drawn out in examples from Iraq and Bosnia which illustrate how this process tends to weaken and discredit the rule of law rather than strengthen it. Chapter 9 concludes the book, briefly drawing out six theses on phantom states and Empire in Denial.

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