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Conflict Resolution in War-Torn Societies?: Delineating the Post-Conflict State-Building Dispositif

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Ramon BLANCO[*]

Abstract

In our time, very much attention and intellectual effort are being directed to conflict-resolution activities in war-torn societies throughout the world. In this aspect, the centrality of the UN in terms of post-conflict reconstruction activities is notorious. Notoriously, state-building is a key enterprise in regard of addressing the international conflicts throughout the globe, being deployed as a key conflict-resolution tool applied globally. Although such activities are represented as mere techniques aiming to build peace, this peace is intimately associated with the institutionalization of liberal ideas in structuring realms such as the political, the economical and the social spheres. Here lays the objective of this paper. It aims, from a critical position, to discuss and deconstruct this UN model regarding the transformation of the international violent conflicts. Departing from Foucauldian concepts such as dispositif, government, discipline and biopolitics, it aims to critically analyze the post-conflict state-building practice. In a first moment, the paper delineates the conflict resolution mindset which state-building is commonly associated with and immersed. In a second moment, it seeks to (re)problematize the state-building practice as a post-conflict dispositif, rather than merely a conflict-resolution tool, and to interrogate whether (and how) this notion can be related with other Foucauldian concepts such as government, discipline and biopolitics.

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A   Introduction

There is no absurd in saying that it is already common-sense that peacekeeping, peacebuilding and state-building constitute the very core of the international political policies in regard of international peace in our time. Their centrality can be sensitively perceived observing the increasing efforts, both intellectually and materially, dedicated to them, especially in the 1990s onwards. Nevertheless, despite all these great material and reflexive efforts and the fact that "build[ing a] sustainable peace is a major challenge facing the international community" in our time[1], the reflection about such important and crucial theme, such as peace, still remains oddly marginal inside the discipline of International Relations (IR).[2]

Certainly there is an impressive number of studies regarding peacebuilding, peacekeeping or state-building. However, their problematizations are often shallow

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[1]   UNSC, UN Security Council 5895th Meeting SC/9333, 20th May 2008, http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/sc9333.doc.htm, (All websites hereinafter were last accessed on 1 July 2011), at 3.

[2]   Oliver Richmond, Peace in International Relations, Abingdon 2008; Oliver Richmond, Reclaiming Peace in International Relations, Millennium - Journal of International Studies, (36, 3), 2008, 439-470.

and most of them are underpinning by a 'problem-solving'[3] understanding of the world and consequently, in regard of the construction of international peace. In this way, much of the debates in the mainstream literature relate with, for example, how to classify the United Nation's (UN) missions[4], relevant factors for their effectiveness[5], or even how this effectiveness might be measured.[6] Although this kind of study is important and needed, they are often "under-theorized"[7], frequently "idiosyncratic and atheoretical"[8], engaging in enclosed discussions usually distant, or having no relationship at all, with IR[9] or Political Science theories as a whole[10], and generally having their inquiring narrowly limited by their policy relevance.[11] It is precisely the critical analysis that evinces that this kind of reflection and epistemology regarding the international political policies in regard of peace are not neutral or impartial, quite the contrary, "[they] attempt to create and recreate a particular type of international order, (…) [where] the type of order sustained is a distinctly liberal one".[12]

In this context, this paper aims, from a critical position, to discuss this UN model regarding the transformations of the international violent conflicts. Departing from a Foucauldian standpoint, it is herein argued that the construction of peace in our time is an instrument of international normalization of 'post-conflict' states and their populations. This normalization operates through the government of 'post-conflict' states, through their discipline, and of their populations' lives, through biopolitics, at a global scale. In order to elucidate such argument, the paper will, in a first moment, delineate the conflict-resolution mindset which state-building is commonly associated with and immersed. In a second moment, it will present the Foucauldian conceptual

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3   For more in regard of the characteristics of problem-solving and critical reflections, see Robert Cox, Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory, Millennium – Journal of International Studies, (10, 2), 1981, 126-155.

4   Virginia Page Fortna/Lise Morje Howard, Pitfalls and Prospects in the Peacekeeping Literature, Annual Review of Political Science, (11, 2), 2008, 283-301.

5   Darya Pushkina, A Recipe for Success? Ingredients of a Successful Peacekeeping Mission, International Peacekeeping, (13, 2), 2006, 133-149.

6   Daniel Druckman/Paul C. Stern/Paul Diehl/A. Betts Fetherston/Robert Johansen/William Durch/Steven Ratner, Forum: Evaluating Peacekeeping Missions, Mershon International Studies Review, (41, 1), 1997, 151-165.

7   Alex J. Bellamy, The 'next stage' in peace operations theory?, International Peacekeeping, (11, 1), 2004, 17-38 at 1.

8   Oldrich Bures, Wanted: A Mid-Range Theory of International Peacekeeping, International Studies Review, (9) 2007, 407-436 at 1.

9   Bellamy, The 'next stage' in peace operations theory?, 2.

10   Roland Paris, Broadening the Study of Peace Operations, International Studies Review, (2, 3), 2000, 27-44 at 1; 7.

11   Paris, Broadening the Study of Peace Operations, 1.

12   Alex Bellamy/Paul Williams, Introduction: Thinking anew about peace operations, International Peacekeeping, (11, 1), 2004, 1-15 at 8.

tools that enables the (re)problematization of the state-building practice as a post-conflict dispositif, rather than merely a conflict-resolution tool.

B   Peace in the Post-Cold War Scenario

Right after the World War II and during the whole period of the Cold War, the main UN activity in violent-conflict scenarios was peacekeeping, which usually meant the deployment of a small military force aiming just to monitor the ceasefire, or patrol, a neutral territory between former combatants.[13] There were three important reasons for this aspect. The first one rests in the UN Charter. Even though peacekeeping operations are not mentioned anywhere in the Charter, the simple fact of being an UN action places its legal support inevitably in the UN Charter. There, any further action than the feature aforementioned is clearly prevented. Not only the refrain from the use of force is clear, but also the prevention of interference in matters, which are essentially domestic affairs of the states.[14] Secondly, a general lack of agreement of the contending parts inhibited actions further than the monitoring or patrolling, since it would imply a greater intromission than what they would normally be willing to accept. Thirdly, the international scenario was pervasive with a bipolar mindset. This had, at least, three consequences: (1) the Soviet Union and the United States (US) were opposed to a more active UN in the domestic matter of their allies, or those under their area of influence; (2) in case of instability, both the Soviet Union and the US would deal directly with the matter, rather than allowing a third-party interference; and (3) with the intense ideological difference, there was little space for agreement regarding a model for the domestic governance in the 'peacekept' states.[15]

For a long time, much of the reflection about peacekeeping was limited to diplomats and practitioners in the field.[16] Hence, peacekeeping was initially reflected as simply a dispositive of "conflict management, conflict containment or conflict suppression, dealing within symptoms and not concerned with fundamental resolution".[17] Later,

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13   Roland Paris/Timothy Sisk, Introduction: Understanding the Contradictions of Postwar Statebuilding, in Roland Paris/Timothy Sisk, (eds.), The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations, New York 2009, 1-20 at 4.

14   UN, United Nations "Charter of the United Nations" 24th October 1945, http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml, at Article 2, Paragraphs 4 and 7.

15   Paris/Sisk, Introduction: Understanding the Contradictions of Postwar Statebuilding, 4.

16   A.B. Fetherston, Peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peacebuilding: A reconsideration of theoretical frameworks, International Peacekeeping, (7, 1), 2000, 190-218 at 191.

17   Oliver Ramsbotham/Tom Woodhouse, Introduction, International Peacekeeping, (7, 1), 2000, 1-7 at 5.

mainly after the end of the Cold War, more fundamental questions of the conflicts started to be the main concern: its root causes. At this point, the reflection of the Peace Studies[18], discipline which advocated the exercise of other activities beyond the simple cessation of violent hostilities between states, was recovered, incorporating the concern with the overcome of economic, political and social structures that prevent the satisfaction of the basic needs of the individuals in question. The main concern turned to the resolution of the conflicts and not their mere management.[19] It is at this point that peacebuilding enters the UN's vocabulary.

Due to the high, and ever-growing, number of deployments on the one hand, and the enlargement and deepening of the activities performed over time on the other, two instruments have become particularly relevant to the UN's engagement with violent conflicts throughout the globe: peacekeeping and peacebuilding. They are thought to respond to previous theoretical formulations, specifically to direct and structural violence[20], but on a global scale. Having their primary focus on distinct, but complementary, temporal dimensions – the former focusing primarily on the short-term and the latter on the long-term – they aim to overcome both forms of violence, moving from the accomplishment of a negative peace to the construction of a positive peace. It is precisely aiming to achieve a long-term positive peace that peacebuilding is employed by the UN as a key instrument. It is at the consolidation of this peace – usually thought as the (re)creation of political institutions, enhancing state capacity, and the functioning of the state-society relations – that state-building becomes a key activity regarding peacebuilding.[21]

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18   For more regarding the Peace Studies see, for instance, Paul Rogers and Oliver Ramsbotham, Then and Now: Peace Research – Past and Future, Political Studies, (47, 4), 1999, 740-754; José Manuel Pureza/Teresa Cravo, Margem crítica e legitimação nos estudos para a paz, Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais, (71, June), 2005, 5-19; Håkan Wiberg, Investigação para a Paz: Passado, Presente e Futuro, Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais, (71, Junho), 2005, 21-42.

19   Bures, Wanted: A Mid-Range Theory of International Peacekeeping, 9-10.

20   Johan Galtung, Violence, Peace, and Peach Research, Journal of Peace Research, (6, 3), 1969, 167-191.

21   Carrie Manning, Local Level Challenges to post-Conflict Peacebuilding, International Peacekeeping, (10, 3), 2003, 25-43; Lakhadar Brahimi, State Building in Crisis and Post-Conflict Countries, Presented at Global Forum on Reinventing Government, Building Trust in Government Vienna - Austria, 26-29 June 2007, http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UN/UNPAN026305.pdf, Roland Paris/Timothy Sisk (eds.), The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations. Routledge, New York 2009 at Chapter 1.

1   Post-Conflict State-building

State-building has become a crucial activity and one of the most pressing issues regarding peace in contemporary international relations. In nowadays' international scenario, state-building is a pivotal instrument used to address issues regarding both the international security and development advancements. Despite the apparent distance between both discourses[22], they are much closer than the inattentive look might perceive. It is their underlying rationale and the centrality of the question of 'fragility' that bind them together. Both discourses have as their primary concern and, consequently, target, the 'fragility' of the states. This 'fragility', understood as "weak institutions and governance systems, and a fundamental lack of leadership, political will and/or capacity to deliver on key public goods, especially in terms of protecting the poor"[23] is at the very heart of the state-building debate. Indeed, the whole state-building agenda emerges as "a direct policy response to these conditions".[24]

According to an UNDP/World Bank's[25] policy paper delineating the role of state-building on the world, it is the state's 'fragility' that "directly threatens the security and wellbeing of populations within the territory of the state and wider regional and global security, and seriously retards progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals". Additionally, 'fragility' is also often associated with violent conflicts, being their cause and consequence.[26] Moreover, according to this notion, the states are the very bedrock of the international system. Therefore, the state 'fragility' threatens the very foundation of this system.[27] Not by coincidence, the state-building, under this line of thought, is "one of the most important issues for the world community"[28]; it is one of the critical, moral and strategic imperatives of our time.[29] According to Ghani and Lockhart, the "solutions to our current problems of

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22   Distance very much shortened by the elucidations, for instance, of Mark Duffield , Global Governance and the New Wars, Zed Books, London, 2001; Mark Duffield, Development, Security and Unending War - Governing the World of Peoples, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2007.
23   Sue Ingram, Key Concepts and Operational Implications in Two Fragile States: The Case of Sierra Leone and Liberia, The World Bank - UNDP, 2010 at 4.
24   *Ibid.*, at 5
25   *Ibid.*, at 4.
26   *Ibid.*, at 5.
27   Robert Rotberg, Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators, in Robert Rotberg (ed.) State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror, Washington D.C 2003, 1-28 at 1.
28   Francis Fukuyama, State-building: Governance and World Order in the Twenty-first Century, Profile Book, London 2004 at ix.
29   Robert Rotberg, The Failure and Collapse of Nation-States: Breakdown, Prevention and Repair, in Robert Rotberg (ed.) When States Fail: Causes and Consequences, Princeton 2004, 1-50 at 42.

insecurity, poverty, and lack of growth all converge on the need for a state-building project".[30] Therefore, state-building, according to this rationale, is not only important for the security, wellbeing, and peace of the populations of the state under this activity; it is a crucial instrument also for the security, wellbeing and peace of the whole globe. As such, state-building is perceived as a fundamental practice to the very maintenance of the international system.

As a practice performed at the international scene in 'post-conflict' scenarios, state-building[31] has more than one understanding. A more loose view, assumes state-building as "the process through which states enhance their ability to function".[32] Other understandings are much more specific than this. At its narrower perspective, state-building deals specifically with its immediate meaning; it focuses on the (re)construction of states through the strengthening and/or the (re)creation of its institutional apparatuses. In this understanding, 'post-conflict' state-building is a distinct phase of the reconstruction efforts which primary objective is the (re)construction of political institutions.[33] This phase would be a part of the peacebuilding activity and would seek to create effective and legitimate governmental institutions[34], which could be endowed with governance instruments and are therefore capable of providing physical and economic security to the citizens in question.[35] In this understanding, state-building is intimately connected with state capacity[36] and its internal governance.[37] In this view, state-building "refers to efforts to reconstruct, or in some cases to establish for the first time, effective and autonomous structures of governance in a state or territory where no such capacity exists or where it has been seriously

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30   Ashraf Ghani/Clare Lockhart, Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World, Oxford 2008 at 4.
31   For other contexts where 'state-building' might take place, see for example Verena Fritz/Alina Rocha Menocal, Understanding State-Building from a Political Economy Perspective - An Analytical and Conceptual Paper on Processes, Embedded Tensions and Lessons for International Engagement, Report for DFID's Effective and Fragile States Teams September 2007, http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/1340.pdf, 17.
32   Alan Whaites, States in Development: Understanding State-building, DFID Working Paper, 2008, at 4.
33   Christopher Bickerton, State-Building: exporting State-Failure, in Bickerton/Cunliffe/Gourevitch (eds.) Politics without Sovereignty: a critique of Contemporary International Relations, London 2007, 93-111 at 96.
34   Roland Paris/Timothy Sisk, Managing Contradictions: the Inherant Dilemmas of Postwar Statebuilding, http://www.ipacademy.org/asset/file/211/iparpps.pdf, at 1.
35   Simon Chesterman, You, The People - The United Nations, Transitional Administration, and State-building, Oxford 2004, at 5.
36   Fukuyama, State-building: Governance and World Order in the Twenty-first Century.
37   Rotberg, The Failure and Collapse of Nation-States: Breakdown, Prevention and Repair.

eroded".[38] Paris and Sisk's definition of 'post-conflict' state-building as "the strengthening or construction of legitimate governmental institutions in countries that are emerging from conflicts"[39] best sums up this understanding.

In a much wider sense, state-building is analyzed well beyond this primary institutional understanding. It is analyzed as an international engagement with the domestic governing mechanisms of other states and their respective societies. This understanding includes much more than the (re)construction and strengthening of state institutions, it also reflects upon the whole set of practices on which internationals focus on the management and regulation of state-society relations. Those practices might vary as international assistance to strengthening the regulatory capacity of the state, to conditionalities, debt relief, international loans, poverty reduction strategies, and many others.[40] This is a more comprehensive understanding of state-building and allows the problematization of its practices not only during reconstruction periods, but also in a different set of engagement among states and international organizations. In a 'post-conflict' peacebuilding setting, for instance, this would require the analyst to observe not only the 'post-conflict' state institutions that are being (re)constructed/strengthened, but also the whole set of practices that seek to shape and direct the relations between 'post-conflict' states and their populations.

In both senses, the state-building can be seen as a social (re)engineering based on the transposition of values and ideas of the western world to war-torn societies. Either institutionally or through conditionalities, it can be said that the final objective is very much the same: the construction of liberal democracies. As already said, more often than not, the reflection about the construction of peace is centered on a 'problem-solving' understanding of the world. Nevertheless, this way of seeing things tends to miss much of the picture. It tends to portray the state-building activity as a neutral conflict-resolution instrument and neglects the power relations entrenched in such process. Through a Foucauldian problematic though, one is enabled to see that the state-building activity might be problematized as an instrument of maintaining and promoting a certain international order, a liberal one. As such, it that this paper now turns to the elucidation of some Foucauldian conceptual tools.

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38   Richard Caplan, International Governance of War-Torn Territories: Rule and Reconstruction, Oxford 2005, 3.
39   Paris/Sisk (eds.), The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations, at 14.
40   David Chandler, The Empire in Denial - The Politics of State-building, London 2006.

C   Foucauldian Analytical Tools

This paper aims to critically reflect about the construction of peace at the international level. It proposes the problematization of the state-building process through a Foucauldian problematic arguing that the construction of peace in our time is an instrument of international normalization of 'post-conflict' states and their populations. This normalization is argued to operate through the government of 'post-conflict' states and their populations' lives at a global scale. The whole rhetoric, mechanisms and instruments of the state-building processes are portrayed as directed to the prevention and transformation of violent conflicts. Nevertheless, the state-building dispositif[41] is a normalizing technology that ends up disciplining the 'post-conflict' states and biopolitically governing their populations. At the international level, this government operates through discipline, which works through instruments of knowing, assessing, monitoring, individualizing, ranking, rewarding and punishing individual 'post-conflict' states. These include standardized data collection, performance benchmarking, auditing techniques, access to credit lines, funding of projects, conditionalities, sanctions, and so on. At the national level, government operates through biopolitics, which functions through the administration and control of life-supporting processes of the mass population, such as health, education, sanitation, movement, life, death, jobs, food, and so on, in these 'post-conflict' states. As a normalizing technology, the state-building dispositif has a norm underpinning its activities which is the ultimate aim of its conducts. This norm is that the states should resemble liberal democracies.

Usually, state-building is considered by problematizing each aspect of it or the performance of specific actors performing determined activities, and not the process as a whole. Consequently, what is usually visible is the observation of the constitution-building efforts, the processes of money lending by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), feeding by World Food Program (WFP), security sector reforms, housing construction by the HABITAT, electoral processes assistance, development activities by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the financing of reconstruction efforts by World Bank (WB) and so on, individually. It is seeking precisely to avoid this discrete and partial observation of the state-building processes that this paper uses the notion of state-building dispositif.

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41   Usually the word dispositif used by Foucault is translated as 'apparatus' to English. Nevertheless, in order to avoid translation discussions or misperceptions Mark G. E. Kelly, The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault, New York 2009, 174, FN 12, this paper uses the original word 'dispositif'.

1   Dispositif

Although not offering a complete definition, Foucault comes close to it while delineating what a dispositif is in an interview.[42] He said:

> *"What I'm trying to pick out with this term is, firstly, a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions - in short, the said as much as the unsaid . Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements.*
>
> *(…) I understand by the term 'apparatus' a sort of - shall we say - formation which has as its major function at a given historical moment that of responding to an urgent need. The apparatus thus has a dominant strategic function.*
>
> *(…) I said that the apparatus is essentially of a strategic nature, which means assuming that it is a matter of a certain manipulation of relations of forces, either developing them in a particular direction, blocking them, stabilizing them, utilizing them, etc. (…) This is what the apparatus consists in: strategies of relations of forces supporting, and supported by, types of knowledge."*[43]

Stretching even further the already loose Foucauldian understanding of dispositif, Agamben[44] understands the dispositif as "anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings". With this in mind, to conceptualize the state-building as a dispositif brings a more comprehensive appreciation of the whole process than understanding it merely as a conflict-resolution tool. The elements of this state-building dispositif would be all the actors, theories, discourses, concepts, practices, instruments, institutions and so on, that are deployed to the shaping and conducting of 'post-conflict' states and their populations. This notion facilitates the understanding of distinct series of actions, experts, practices, procedures, concepts that may not be interrelated at all, and in fact could be very much conflicting, as part of one comprehensive and coherent whole.

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42   Giorgio Agamben, What is an Apparatus? - And Other Essays, Stanford 2009, at 2.
43   Michel Foucault, in Colin Gordon (ed.), Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977, New York 1980, 194-196.
44   Agamben, What is an Apparatus? - And Other Essays, at 14.

a   Operating Actors and Concepts

Regarding the actors one might think of many agents that are part of this state-building dispositif. Those might be major organizations like the UN and its specialized agencies, the OSCE, the EU, the NATO, the OECD, other regional organizations, international financial institutions such as the IMF and WB, and national development agencies/departments like the USAID, AUSAID or the DFIF. Additionally, one might also think about the international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) that operate in 'post-conflict' scenarios, the consultants and experts hired for specific tasks, and also the local people and NGOs of the countries under state-building. Surely, all these actors operate different tasks, through diverse mechanisms and most often with distinct and, not rarely, conflicting objectives. Nevertheless, they all operate within this state-building dispositif.

In order to operate smoothly, this state-building dispositif must make use of a set of theories and concepts. Perhaps the first operating concept used is the notion of 'failed state'. This concept is at the heart of the very existence and need of the state-building dispositif. State-building emerges in the international scene in order to address the question of 'fragility' and this question is operationalized through the conceptualization of 'failed states'. The concept emerges when the orthodox thinking, observing the international scene, problematizes the 'fragility' and the 'lack of capacity' of some state structures, or the 'bad governance' of them[45] as source of both insecurity and underdevelopment. These states are 'failed' because they "no longer perform the [basic] functions required for them to pass as states".[46] These functions range from the provision of welfare and security to the border patrol and the rule-of-law enforcement. The state capacity to provide these functions is, therefore, central to this notion.[47] According to the state-builders rationale, with these states unwilling[48], or even unable[49], to perform such critical tasks, space is wide open for them to become

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45   Martin Doornbos, Fragile States or Failing Models? Accounting for the Incidence of State Collapse, in Martin Doornbos/Susan Woodward/Silvia Roque (eds.), Failing States or Failed States? The Role of Development Models: Collected Works, FRIDE Working Paper n° 19, Madrid 2006, 1-13 at 2.
46   William Zartman, Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse, in William Zartman (ed.), Collapsed States: The Disintegration and the Restoration of Legitimate Authority, London and Boulder 1995, 1-11 at 5.
47   Jonathan Hill, Beyond the Other? A postcolonial critique of the failed state thesis, African Identities, (3, 2), 2005, 139-154 at 45.
48   Jean-Germain Gros, Towards a taxonomy of failed states in the new world order: decaying Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda and Haiti, Third World Quarterly, (17, 3), 1996, 455-471.
49   Robert Jackson, The Global Covenant: Human Conduct in a World of States, Oxford 2000.

"source of many of the world's most serious problems, from poverty to AIDS to drugs to terrorism".[50]

   This 'failed sated' notion is very much connected with another operating concept of this state-building dispositif which is the reinterpretation of the concept of sovereignty. The idea of sovereignty always was the very bedrock of international relations. Nevertheless, a problematization focused on the state (in)capacity could hardly be developed without a differentiation and (re)categorization of the concept of sovereignty. One might think, for instance, of positive and negative sovereignty.[51] The positive sovereignty is the possession of state characteristics de facto and de jure whereas the negative one is the absence of the de facto characteristics, even though possessing the de jure ones.[52] In this rationale, it is precisely this "gap between de jure sovereignty and de facto sovereignty [that] is the key obstacle to ensuring global security and prosperity".[53]

   These two operating concepts work together constructing the urgent need which the state-building dispositif must address. Connecting these two concepts, on the one hand, the state-building dispositif, while designed to address 'fragility', becomes urgently needed in order to enhance international security and wellbeing of global populations. On the other hand, while being portrayed as closing the 'post-conflict' states' 'sovereignty gap', the state-building is not viewed as an external intervention. In fact, it is viewed as enhancing 'post-conflict' states capacity. Indeed, the state-building dispositif is presented as a beneficial relationship between the state-builders and state-built actors, in the sense that the former are 'reinforcing' the sovereignty and independence of the latter.

   Another notion that is important to the operation of the state-building dispositif is 'good governance'. The idea of 'governance' frames the area of intervention. For the World Bank, governance means "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development".[54] Despite the importance of the term 'governance', what is the key operative word on the

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50   Fukuyama, State-building: Governance and World Order in the Twenty-first Century, at ix.
51   Robert Jackson, Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World, Cambridge 1990.
52   Hill, Beyond the Other? A postcolonial critique of the failed state thesis, 146.
53   Ashraf Ghani, Clare Lockhart and Michael Carnahan, Closing the Sovereignty Gap: an Approach to State-Building, Overseas Development Institute Working Paper n° 253, http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/odi-publications/working-papers/253-sovereignty-gap-state-building.pdf, at 4.
54   WB, World Bank, Governance and Development, World Bank, Washington, D.C, 1992 at 92.

notion is the adjective 'good'. Here, it is perceptible that whereas the financial institutions emphasize specific macro-economic reforms, the political ones place more attention to democratic principles, human rights and rule of law.[55] The implicit idea of this 'good governance' notion is that there is 'bad' governance. While there is a 'good' and 'correct' governance, the other side of the coin is that 'bad' and 'inappropriate' governance must be corrected. This correction would come through economic, political and social reforms such as the reduction of trading barriers and tariffs, privatization of state-owned properties, deregulation and liberalization of the economy, marketization of public services, budgetary discipline, respect for human rights, NGO engagement, rule of law and so on.[56] This is a key element of the 'normalization' process performed by the state-building dispositif on 'post-conflict' states and their populations.

2   Normalization

Problematizing the construction of the international peace as an instrument of normalization of the 'post-conflict' states and their populations and the state-building dispositif as a normalizing technology surely needs a delineation of what is meant by 'technology' and 'normalization'. The word 'technology' is herein used to capture the very essence of state-building processes. The pivotal element about technologies, in a Foucauldian sense, is that "they are technologies, not merely structures or discourses of power, though there are certainly discourses and structures involved". This means that "they are, like other technologies, a body of technical knowledge and practices, a raft of techniques, which once developed and understood can be applied to various situations". Additionally, they "are not socially or politically neutral but rather profoundly alter the way things operate in society".[57] Hence, the word 'technology' is used to place emphasis in the, already common-sense, standardized character of the state-building processes and their indiscriminately application in different 'post-conflict' scenarios across the world.

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55   Jan Wouters/Cedric Ryngaert, Good Governance: Lessons From International Organizations, in Deirdre Curtin and Ramses A. Wessel (eds.), Good Governance and the European Union - Reflections on Concepts, Institutions and Substance, New York 2005, 69-102 at 69-77.

56   Wouters/Ryngaert, Good Governance: Lessons From International Organizations, 73; Laura Zanotti, Governmentalizing the Post-Cold War International Regime: The UN Debate on Democratization and Good Governance, Alternatives: Global, Local, Political, (30, 4), 2005, 461-487 at 468.

57   Kelly, The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault, 43-44.

Regarding 'normalization', from the start, this notion operates through an underpinning 'normal' and 'abnormal' condition. In the 'normalization' process, one has "different curves of normality, and the operation of normalization consists in establishing an interplay between these different distributions of normality and [in] acting to bring the most unfavorable in line with the more favorable".[58] In a few words, the 'abnormal' ones must be intervened to become more like the 'normal' ones.[59] Hence, in a normalization process, the 'normal' is the primary element and the norm which the others must follow is deduced from it. In the international sphere, it is clear who the 'normal' and 'abnormal' are. The 'normal' would be the Western-liberal-democratic states while the 'abnormal' would be the other states. The 'norm', according to which the states should resemble liberal democracies, is deduced from this notion. This 'norm' rests in the notion advanced by "Kant, Schumpeter, and many other contemporary authors, [that] have argued that liberalism has a pacifying effect through liberal, democratic principles which are the basis for state institutions, and through its adherence to free trade and capitalism".[60]

It is at this normalization process that the 'failed state' notion works perfectly. This is an a contrario concept, that is, it encompasses a subliminal, unspoken, dichotomy of what is a 'successful'/'normal' state[61], which is the liberal-democratic one. The 'failed states' are thus portrayed as 'abnormal' states through analogies like "degenerative disease"[62], "serious mental or physical illness"[63], or even "dead leaves that accumulate in a forest".[64] Hence, to normalize these 'abnormal' states is to find instruments to implement this liberal-democracy 'norm' there. Therefore, the state-building dispositif emerges as a fit instrument to intervene in these states in order to normalize them and their populations, to make them resemble more like liberal democracies.

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58   Michel Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, Basingstoke [1978] 2007, at 91.
59   Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, at 91.
60   Richmond, Peace in International Relations, at 89-90. For a critique of this pacifying effect of liberalism see for instance Michael Doyle, Liberal Internationalism: Peace, War and Democracy, Nobelprize. org, 22nd June 2004, http://nobelprize.org/nobel_ prizes/peace/articles/doyle/.
61   José Manuel Pureza/Silvia Roque/Mónica Rafael/Teresa Cravo, Do States Fail or Are They Pushed? Lessons Learned from Three Fomer Portuguese Colonies, Oficina do CES, (April, 273), 2007, 1-24 at 3.
62   Zartman, Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse, 8.
63   Gerald B. Helman/Steven R. Rather, Saving Failed States, Foreign Policy, (89, Winter), 1992, 3-20 at 12.
64   Stephen D. Krasner/Carlos Pascual, Addressing State Failure, Foreign Affairs, (84, 4), 2005, 153-163 at 155.

Understanding that this normalization process carried out by the state-building dispositif occurs through the government of 'post-conflict' states, operated through discipline, and their populations' lives, operated through biopolitics, these conceptual tools must also be better elucidated.

3   Government

Reading the word government one of the very first things that might come to mind is, quite understandably, the state and the wide range of institutions it involves. A mental picture of large buildings, with wide corridors filled with public officials might even emerge. Within this understanding, the study of government eventually entails differentiating its systems as parliamentary or presidential, scrutinizing the distribution of power among the various levels and observing whether it is a federal or unitary state, and possibly classifying it as totalitarian, democratic, monarchic or anarchic.[65] Ultimately, questions may arise about all of this, i.e. 'who holds the power?', 'how is this power legitimized?', 'is it representative?', 'what is the source of this power?'.[66]

The Foucauldian understanding of government seeks exactly to develop an analytical framework that enables reflection on the political power exercised precisely outside, above, permeating, across and beyond the state.[67] Briefly defining government as the 'conduct of conduct'[68], Foucault enlarges its meaning to cover the scope adopted here, viz. "mechanisms and procedures destined to conduct men, to drive the conduct of men, to conduct the conduct of men".[69] Understanding government as the 'conduct of conduct', Foucault notoriously plays with the double meaning of the word 'conduct' and consciously sees it as "one of the best aids for coming to terms with the specificity

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65   J. Blondel, Governments, in Neil J. Smelser/Paul B. Baltes (eds.), International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 26 Volumes, Oxford 2001, 6321-6323; John Curtice, Government, in Adam Kuper/Jessica Kuper (eds.), The Social Science Encyclopedia, Routledge, London and New York, 2003, 597-599.

66   Nikolas Rose, Powers of Freedom - Reframing Political Thought, Cambridge 1999, at 1; Mitchell Dean, Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society, London 2010, at 16.

67   Nikolas Rose/Peter Miller, Political Power Beyond the State: Problematics of Government, British Journal of Sociology, (43, 2), 1992, 172-205; Wendy Larner/William Walters (eds.), Global Governmentality: Governing International Spaces, London 2004, at 2.

68   Michel Foucault, The Subject and Power, in James D. Faubion (ed.), The Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984. Volume 3, Power, New York [1982] 2000, 326-348 at 341.

69   Michel Foucault, Do Governo dos Vivos - Curso no Collège de France, 1979-1980 (aulas de 09 e 30 de janeiro de 1980), Centro de Cultura Social, São Paulo, [1980] 2009, at 18. Translation by the author. In the original: "mecanismos e procedimentos destinados a conduzir os homens, a dirigir a conduta dos homens, a conduzir a conduta dos homens" Foucault, Do Governo dos Vivos - Curso no Collège de France, 1979-1980 (aulas de 09 e 30 de janeiro de 1980), 18.

of power relations".[70] Whereas as a verb, 'to conduct', means to lead, to guide or to direct, as a noun, 'conduct' refers to the human actions and behaviours.[71] Connecting these two meanings, government as 'conduct of conduct' "entails any attempt to shape with some degree of deliberation aspects of our behaviour according to particular sets of norms and for a variety of ends".[72].

Understanding government as the 'conduct of conduct' frees the reflection about it from the common sense. Government in the Foucauldian sense is much more than the bureaucratic image that might emerge once reading the word, and consequentially, to govern becomes more than the mere management of the state structures. In fact, to govern, in this sense, means "to structure the possible field of action of others".[73] Hence, government becomes an activity that does not operates solely at the state level, but indeed turns out to be apparent in the every-day aspects and places of an ordinary life such as at schools, factories, hospitals, business enterprises, religious sites, families and so on. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that government works simultaneously and complementarily with other Foucauldian technologies of power such as discipline and biopolitics. To clarify this, Foucault alludes to the image of a triangle composed by these technologies which has the population as its target.[74] As such, power can be exercised at the conduction of behaviors, of individuals and populations at once, ensuring the life improvement of each and all of them.[75]

The activity of government is "inextricably bound up with the activity of thought [and] (…) made possible by and constrained by what can be thought and what cannot be thought".[76] It is precisely this exercise of thinking when one governs the other that leads to the idea of governmentality.[77] Foucault understood governmentality, more than anything, as an "analytical grip" to analyze the relations of power, a framework to analyze distinct means whereby one tries to shape and direct the behavior of the other and oneself on various scales and different fields, such as delinquents of a society, the economic policy of a state, the management of a whole social body, and so on.[78]

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70   Foucault, The Subject and Power, 341.
71   Dean, Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society, at 17.
72   Dean, Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society, at 18.
73   Foucault, The Subject and Power, at 341.
74   Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, at 143.
75   Rose, Powers of Freedom - Reframing Political Thought, at 23.
76   Rose, Powers of Freedom - Reframing Political Thought, at 8
77   Dean, Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society, at 24.
78   Michel Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics - Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979, Basingstoke [1979] 2008, at 186.

Through this notion, it is possible to "explore the regularities of everyday existence that structure the 'conduct of conduct'"[79] of individuals and whole populations. Hence, it stands for a "range of forms of actions and fields of practice aimed in a complex way at steering individuals and collectivities".[80]

4   Discipline and Biopolitics

During the modern period Foucault observes the emergence of two technologies of power that supplemented the sovereign power. They are the 'discipline' and the 'biopower'. Whereas the sovereign power was exercised through killing, the discipline and biopower are exercised through correcting and enhancing life respectively. The key understanding of those techniques of power visualized by Foucault is that they operate in different levels and scales; they operate through different instruments. This fact is what allows one technique to exist without the extinction of the other. Indeed, it allows that these techniques can function simultaneously.

Discipline is a technology of power that is essentially exercised on individuals and mainly concerned with the production of their behaviors. Therefore, it can be understood as a micro-political power.[81] Discipline is a type of power that is very much connected to the notion, previously presented, of normalization. Indeed, the ultimate aim of discipline is to normalize. It is in essence a process that seeks to correct the behaviors of deviant individuals. The operative word here is certainly the adjective deviant. In this sense, the disciplinary mechanism visualizes what should be the correct behavior and mold the incorrect ones toward this model.

Underpinning this disciplinary mechanism there are the processes of individualization and ranking. The individualization process is the one that makes sure that, for example, a mass of subjects can be treated individually. Nevertheless, through ranking, these individuals are always problematized in relation to other individuals. Hence, rank definition is a key element of the process.[82] In fact, "discipline is the ark of

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79   Majia Holmer Nadesan, Governmentality, Biopower and Everyday Life, New York 2008, at 1.
80   Ulrich Bröckling/Susanne Krasmann/Thomas Lemke, From Foucault's Lectures at the Collège de France to Studies of Governmentality: An Introduction, in Ulrich Bröckling/Susanne Krasmann/Thomas Lemke (eds.), Governmentality: Current Issues and Future Challenges, 2011, 1-33 at 1.
81   Kelly, The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault, at 43.
82   Laura Zanotti, Imagining Democracy, Building Unsustainable Institutions: The UN Peacekeeping Operation in Haiti, Security Dialogue, (39, 5), 2008, 539–561 at 552.

rank"[83]; it is through ranking that discipline can hierarchizes the 'good' and 'bad' or 'normal' and 'abnormal' individuals in relation to one another.[84] The closest the individual is from the adopted 'norm', the better ranked he/she is. Hence, those with low ranks must be intervened in order to resemble more like those better ranked. The ranking "has a double role: it marks the gaps, hierarchizes qualities, skills and aptitudes, but it also punishes and rewards".[85] It is through the punishing and rewarding technique that 'abnormal' behaviors are molded and corrected, and the 'normal' ones invested and stimulated. Through this process, the individuals are "situated in a network of relations and defined by their position within it. (…) [R]anks reinforces discipline through mechanisms of reward/punishment such as promotion/demotion; [it] establishes systems of performance assessment and comparison linked to measurable criteria".[86] Hence, discipline constantly "compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it normalizes".[87]

On the opposite pole of discipline, biopower operates on another level; biopower is a macro-political power. It is exercised on the collectivity having the population as its target.88 It is a power concerned with men as a living-being[89]; hence it is fundamentally exercised on the population's life. Therefore, rather than an "anatomo-politics of the human body" what is perceived is a "'biopolitics' of the human race".[90] Biopolitics thus aims to "the management and regulation of the population, the species body and its demographic characteristics".[91] It is a power that seeks the management and the administration of the processes of life at the level of the population.

Hence, biopolitics starts to problematize a whole set of phenomena that bind the population together, that makes it a whole. It problematizes all the "the mechanisms of life and serving as the basis of the biological processes".[92] Biopolitics is concerned thus with phenomena like birth, death, production, illness, fertility, health, life expectancy,

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83   Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish, New York [1975] 1995, at 146.
84   Foucault, Discipline and Punish, at 181.
85   Foucault, Discipline and Punish, at 181.
86   Zanotti, Imagining Democracy, Building Unsustainable Institutions: The UN Peacekeeping Operation in Haiti, at 552.
87   Foucault, Discipline and Punish, at 183.
88   Kelly, The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault, at 43.
89   Michel Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, New York [1976] 2003, at 242.
90   Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, at 243.
91   Barry Smart, Key Sociologists - Michel Foucault, New York 2002, at 99.
92   Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality - Volume I: An Introduction, New York [1976] 1978, at 139.

housing, education and so on, and with all the conditions that might influence them.[93] Hence, biopolitics acts in two directions: not only at the life-supporting processes per se, but also at theirs surrounding conditions, at the environment that influences those processes. Ultimately, biopolitics acts where the population's lives might be sustained or retarded.[94] Hence, the emergence of such power designates precisely "the moment at which the complex phenomena of human existence were submitted to the calculation and order of knowledge and power".[95]

Whereas discipline had as its ultimate goal to correct the deviant individual, biopolitics targets the life-supporting processes in order to invest and foster life. Its ultimate goal is to enhance life quality and its conditions. Hence, the objective is not to kill or correct the individual, but to intervene at the level of the generality of the life-supporting phenomena. To intervene in such a way, biopolitics makes use of instruments, techniques and institutions different from sovereignty's and discipline's. This happens through the implementation of a whole set of instruments and institutions that ensure the enhancement of vital processes of the population. Regarding the instruments, one might think of all the instruments directed to mass populations like "forecasts, statistical estimates, and overall measures"[96] and "techniques of mass surveillance, such as the census, and of mass control, such as health campaigns".[97] Regarding the institutions, one might think, for instance, of health, education, welfare, employment, sanitation or feeding systems.[98]

Apart from those instruments and institutions, biopolitics makes also use of the notion of average. Through the establishment of averages, what biopolitics seeks is to preserve an equilibrium intervening on the deviations. It is with this in mind that one can think that "the mortality rate has to be modified or lowered; life expectancy has to be increased; [or] the birth rate has to be stimulated".[99] In doing so, biopolitics takes control of the vital processes of 'man-as-species' and as a result life can be fostered and consequently managed, so life ends up being regularized[100] and normalized. Here, the norm also plays a key role, since it circulates between both discipline and

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93   Duffield, Development, Security and Unending War - Governing the World of Peoples, at 6; Foucault, The History of Sexuality - Volume I, An Introduction.
94   Dean, Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society, at 119.
95   Smart, Key Sociologists - Michel Foucault, at 99.
96   Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, at 246.
97   Kelly, The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault, at 43.
98   Dean, Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society, at 29.
99   Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, at 246.
100   Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, at 247.

biopolitics.[101] As Foucault properly remembers, "[t]he norm is something that can be applied to both a body one wishes to discipline and a population one wishes to regularize".[102]

Hence, in a normalization processes happening in the international scenario through the construction of peace, not only the 'post-conflict' states are intervened in sense to normalize them, to make them to behave in accordance to the established 'norm', but also their relationship with their own populations and how the populations itself should behave are intervened. As such, the 'post-conflict' state is not only disciplined through rewards and punishments in order to correct its deviant behavior, its population is also target of a biopolitical power which seeks to control and manage all aspects surrounding its life.

D   Concluding Remarks

With all this in mind, it is possible to start to problematize the state-building as a normalization technology at a global scale, as a government process that occurs at both the state and the population levels of 'post-conflict' states. At the state level, the discipline would be perceived mapping out instruments of knowing, assessing, monitoring, individualizing, codifying, ranking, rewarding and punishing individual 'post-conflict' states. Those might be majorly elements like maps, standardized data collection/reporting, statistics benchmarks, performance indicators, auditing techniques, accesses to lines of credit, project funding, conditionalities, even sanctions. This entails elucidating aspects such as: through what mechanisms the UN engagement is monitored; how 'progress'/'regression' is assessed; what sort of projects are more likely to be financed/rejected, or initiatives to be encouraged/discredited. It aims at clarifying the kinds of conduct that the 'post-conflict' state is subject to rewards/punishments, elucidating how, when, and through what instruments the incentives/corrections occur.

At the population's level, whereas sovereignty might be mapped out through instruments like the writing of constitutions, passing of laws or the construction of parliaments, biopolitics might be examined focusing on the dynamics fostering the 'post-conflict' populations' life, managing and controlling life-supporting processes of

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101 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, at 253.
102 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, at 253.

the mass population of the 'post-conflict' intervened state. Evincing biopolitics entails elucidating the processes performed in areas aimed at the population, such as health, education, jobs, movement, feeding and so on.

Instead of observing distinct spheres of state-building activities, it would be more clarifying problematizing all these practices as part of a state-building dispositif. In this way it would be clearer that these activities often end up disciplining the 'post-conflict' states and biopolitically governing their populations. Rather than disparate, and sometimes conflicting activities, they all aim to normalize the 'post-conflict' states and their populations. Ultimately, they are all part of a normalization process which aims to implement a non-written 'norm' in the international scenario, which is that the states should resemble liberal democracies.