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The Crisis of Liberal Peacebuilding and the Future of Statebuilding[1]

Shahar Hameiri

Asia Research Centre, Murdoch University

Abstract

The perception that liberal peacebuilding is in ideological decline has prompted some observers to argue that a reduction in the willingness of the world's major governments and international organisations to engage in statebuilding will follow. It is argued that such arguments are misconceived because they locate statebuilding in the narrow context of peace operations. The nature of, and impetus for, contemporary statebuilding is only explicable when viewed against the backdrop of long-term historical processes emanating from the intervening states, leading to the emergence of regulatory forms of statehood and associated risk management rationalities. Statebuilding interventions further facilitate state transformation within both intervened and intervening states. The future of statebuilding is therefore the future of statehood. As the conditions that have given rise to statebuilding remain in place, it is likely to outlast the apparent decline of liberal peacebuilding.

Introduction

If a growing chorus of influential scholars is to be believed, liberal peacebuilding is in crisis, along with the ideological decline of the hitherto hegemonic 'liberal peace thesis' (Paris 2010;

Cooper 2007; Richmond 2009). But does this mean that statebuilding interventionism is in jeopardy too? According to prevalent opinion, the answer is an emphatic 'yes'. This is because statebuilding interventions (SBIs) are seen essentially as a delivery mechanism for the liberal peace. They are viewed as the latest manifestation of peacekeeping/peacebuilding, born out of trial and error associated with attempts to 'build' the peace in parts of the world experiencing humanitarian and political crises (e.g. Paris 2004; Bellamy et al. 2004).

This article challenges the supposition that statebuilding's days are numbered, by questioning the assumed link between statebuilding interventionism and the 'liberal peace'. The notion that international statebuilding is in crisis because of the decline of the ideological force of the liberal peace thesis is problematic, because it is derived from a narrow reading of statebuilding's historical roots and contemporary drivers, and hence of its form, functions and effects. It is only by locating statebuilding in its full context that we can assess what its challenges and possibilities (or impossibilities) are – now, and in the future.

I argue that the emergence of SBIs is in fact linked to the development in recent decades of regulatory forms of statehood, initially in the West. This link has two interrelated dimensions, pertaining respectively to the form of, and impetus for, these interventions. First, the diffuse – multilevel and/or networked – form that SBIs assume is typical of regulatory states and reflects a prior disaggregation of governance. Indeed, statebuilding cannot be equated with large-scale military interventions, the appetite for which appears to have declined in recent years. Rather it involves a wide range of programs and projects, usually delivered in the form of international aid, and implemented by a variety of public and private actors, jointly aimed at building or rebuilding the capacity of the intervened state to perform the functions of modern statehood. The

2

aim is to ensure the adequate provision of particular state functions, by quarantining policymaking from popular and political pressure from above and below.

Second, the impetus for statebuilding interventionism, as well as the importance of managerial, technical and scientific expertise in the implementation of SBIs, manifests the centrality of risk management for regulatory states and their apparatuses (see Hood et al. 2001: 4; Hagmann and Dunn Cavelty 2012). Rather than driven by a liberal-humanitarian impulse, or even by conventional 'national interest' calculations, SBIs are for the most part concerned with reducing the likelihood of non-traditional security problems – crime, irregular migration, terrorism, infectious disease and even environmental disasters – emerging within the borders of badly governed states and spilling over to other parts of the world. As such, contemporary SBIs extend well beyond post-conflict or crisis situations (Bickerton 2007: 93). Placed in the context of the regulatory state's emergence, it is clear that the ideological decline of the liberal peace thesis is not of great consequence to the future of statebuilding, as the modes of governance associated with these interventions are deeply embedded in the way that many states currently function.

Crucially, the rise of the regulatory state reflects the broader crisis of the nation-state, or, more precisely, of the national scale of governance and politics. This crisis originated in the world's advanced capitalist states, not in the postcolonial periphery and is associated with shifts in the global political economy in recent decades and the socio-political struggles these shifts have engendered. This is not to say that states are becoming less significant. Rather, we are witnessing a contested and uneven process of state transformation, whereby the national scale of governance, particularly the institutions of representative democracy, is becoming weaker

relative to other transnational, regional or global modes of regulatory governance opening up within the state (Jessop 2009: 99; Hameiri and Jayasuriya 2011).

Viewing statebuilding against the long-term crisis of the national state allows us to comprehend its challenges and possibilities. Although the disjuncture between the scope of state power and the national territory is growing, the idea of national sovereignty retains an important place in popular imagination, is enshrined in international law, and there is currently no substitute to the political accountability and representation provided through national institutions. Therefore, the tension between the diffusion of state power to non-majoritarian parts of the state and popular demands for political expression and accountability, as represented by major developments like the Arab Spring, is unlikely to dissipate. How this tension plays out and is resolved in particular instances is crucial to the future of statebuilding and statehood more broadly.

The article begins with a critical evaluation of the idea that the liberal peace thesis' ideological decline means that statebuilding is in crisis too. I then proceed to examine the significance of the emergence of the regulatory state and risk management rationalities for statebuilding, concluding with an assessment of the implications for the future of statebuilding, and statehood.

The crisis of liberal peacebuilding – is statebuilding endangered?
This section examines the assumption that the ideological decline of the liberal peace thesis would lead to the demise of statebuilding and identifies its limitations as rooted in the inaccurate supposition that statebuilding is merely the latest delivery device for the liberal peace. I am not the first to contend that the assumption contemporary international interventionism is 'liberal' is

4

tenuous, even a 'myth' (e.g. Selby 2013; Chandler 2012; Zaum 2012). Zaum (2012: 122), for instance, argues that the label 'liberal peacebuilding' should be dropped altogether as it offers 'little analytical purchase, its main purpose today is as an effigy for the pyre of critical peacebuilding scholarship, distracting attention from many of the highly problematic consequences of contemporary peacebuilding practices that much of this literature touches on but leaves unexplored.' This article goes beyond such observations to concretely locate contemporary practices of statebuilding within deep-seated processes of *state transformation* occurring principally within the developed countries from which the dominant doctrines and ideologies of liberal peacebuilding have originated. As we shall see in subsequent sections, placing statebuilding within its actual context allows us to fully account for its drivers, form and effects and hence for its potential future trajectories.

The liberal peace thesis – the idea that liberal-democratic societies are inherently more peaceful than other kinds of societies (see van Leeuwen et al. 2012) – became accepted wisdom in important policy circles at the end of the Cold War as the perceived solution to problems of violent conflict in parts of the developing world.[1] There are signs, however, that its hegemony is in crisis, not so much because policymakers in powerful states and international organisations question the underlying premise (e.g. World Bank 2011), but mainly because interveners have struggled to promote the emergence of liberal democracies in practice and so the capacity of outsiders to make the liberal peace a reality is now often questioned. The perceived crisis of the liberal peace thesis has prompted calls to save liberal peacebuilding to ensure that powerful states and international organisations continue to intervene in humanitarian crisis situations (Paris 2010). It has also, however, been seen by critics as an opportunity for other forms of

peacebuilding to emerge that take greater consideration of indigenous socio-cultural institutions (Cooper 2007; Richmond 2009; Kappler and Richmond 2011; Jarstad and Belloni 2012).

The sense that liberal peacebuilding is in crisis has been forming for some time (Paris and Sisk 2009; Newman et al. 2009), but the current spate is mostly attributable to the massive problems experienced by interveners in Iraq and Afghanistan, where earlier attempts to establish liberal-democracies and market economies had failed miserably, leading to widespread brutal violence (Dodge 2009; Suhrke 2007). In Iraq, the relative reduction in violence from 2007 is often attributed to a shift to counterinsurgency, which far from promoting the liberal peace empowered local strongmen (Kilcullen 2009). Kilcullen (2009), one of the architects of the 'surge' in Iraq, explicitly argues that insurgencies only truly take off when inciters like al-Qaeda manage to credibly convince other 'accidental guerrillas' that interventions threaten their communities. Liberal peacebuilding could be counterproductive then in that it challenges existing power structures and social values. Illustrating liberal peacebuilding's declining currency, the bestselling 2006 *US Army/Marine Corps Field Manual 3-24* states: 'Cultural knowledge is essential to waging a successful counterinsurgency. American ideas of what is "normal" or "rational" are not universal' (Department of the Army 2006: par. 1-15). Contrast this cautious cultural relativism with George W. Bush's strident statement just a few years earlier: 'I have a set of beliefs that are inviolate: faith in the transformative power of freedom and belief that people, if just given a chance, will choose free societies' (in Woodward 2008: 433). Similarly, at the time of writing the US Obama administration was applying considerable pressure on Afghanistan's President Karzai to enter into peace negotiations with the extremely illiberal Taliban insurgents, ahead of the announced pull-out of most coalition forces by the end of 2014.

The sense of crisis around liberal peacebuilding is often seen, at least implicitly, to extend to statebuilding. The prevailing prognosis seems to be that should liberal peacebuilding's normative force erode, the overall willingness to intervene across borders will also decline, with dire consequences. Paris (2010: 338), for example, argues:

> …such denunciations of liberal peacebuilding are both unwarranted and imprudent. They are unwarranted because such missions, in spite of their many flaws, have done more good than harm; and they are imprudent because the failure of the existing peacebuilding project would be tantamount to abandoning tens of millions of people to lawlessness, predation, disease and fear.

The idea, reflected in the quote above, that current interventionism is an implementation device for liberal peacebuilding – 'a means of consolidating, or "locking in" postwar political and economic reforms' (Paris 2010: 342) – appears to be entrenched among many proponents and critics of liberal peacebuilding. Zaum (2012: 126), thus, argues:

> Statebuilding, the support of external actors for the establishment of legitimate state institutions to provide security, public goods, and a regulatory framework for social and economic development, is a central part of both peacebuilding practice and the peacebuilding literature.

Specifically, proponents and critics of liberal peacebuilding alike tend to see contemporary statebuilding as resulting from the historical development and morphing of peacekeeping/peacebuilding practices. For Bellamy et al. (2004), for example, the story of statebuilding begins with the shift to more robust forms of peace enforcement initially indicated by then UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali's 1992 report *An Agenda for Peace*. Whereas during the Cold War peacekeeping was restricted to monitoring ceasefire agreements between

states, in the post-Cold War era peacekeepers have had to operate in complex 'post-Westphalian' environments where this order has broken down. Rather than presupposing a state-based international order, the cornerstone of 'Westphalian' peacekeeping, peacebuilding is currently driven by state failure and a reality in which the frequency and severity of intrastate conflicts far outweighs that of interstate ones. The UN-led interventions in Cambodia, the former Yugoslavia, and to a lesser extent Somalia, are typically seen as the ones in which 'mission creep', caused by mounting difficulties on the ground, led to the development of more robust forms of peacebuilding, combining coercive enforcement, aid and governance (Mayall 1996).

Perhaps more than any other scholarly work, Paris' (2004) *At War's End* provides the most systematic justification for implementing the liberal peace through statebuilding. His call for 'institutionalization before liberalization' sums up the principles underpinning statebuilding – that the right governance institutions must be put in place to secure desired outcomes in post-conflict environments, before more difficult, but ultimately desirable, market and democratic reforms are attempted. For Paris, statebuilding emerges out of the ashes of an earlier and less successful form of liberal interventionism, pursuing rapid democratisation and marketisation. As such, statebuilding remains work in progress. His riposte to liberal peacebuilding's detractors is thus not simply that these interventions have done more good than harm, but that it is possible to refine statebuilding's modalities and it is there that critical energies should be expended (Paris 2010).

Likewise, many critics essentially concur that statebuilding is a delivery device for the liberal peace; although they tend to disagree that the latter is attainable or desirable in non-Western societies. Richmond (2005: 51), for example, argues that what is unique about current interventions is that the scientific expertise of outsiders has been inserted as a crucial variable for

the creation of peace. This transformation of the liberal peace, he says, has made it 'technically plausible' in theory, though not in practice. Richmond and likeminded scholars have thus focused on articulating alternative notions of 'hybrid' peace and commensurate institutions, which incorporate indigenous cultures and beliefs, so as to engage local voices in the pursuit of more sustainable and peaceful arrangements (Kappler and Richmond 2011; Mac Ginty 2011; Jarstad and Belloni 2012). Even Sabaratnam (2013), who is scathing of these critiques for reproducing the 'Eurocentric' assumptions of the liberal peace, and is careful to point out the multiple intellectual roots of the 'liberal peace thesis' in the context of peacebuilding interventions (Sabaratnam 2011; also Heathershaw 2008), nevertheless accepts that statebuilding's emergence is a response to the failure of UN-led peacebuilding missions in the early 1990s.

This widely held assumption that statebuilding is a delivery device for the liberal peace has led most scholars to neglect the significance of other historical sources for SBIs, whose influence is crucial for any assessment of these interventions' form, objectives and effects, as well as for their potential future transmutations. The consensus position could only lead one to assume, as Paris (2010) does, that the weakening of the ideological pull of the liberal peace would lead to the decline of statebuilding interventionism, or alternatively to debates over whether the rise of the 'responsibility to protect' (R2P) doctrine means a shift from 'broad' human security approaches to a 'narrow' military-focused one (see Martin and Owen 2010).

Beyond the 'Liberal Peace': Statebuilding and the regulatory state

In this section, I go beyond this unhelpful debate on liberal peacebuilding to discuss the actual historical origins of contemporary forms of statebuilding. As mentioned, not everybody is

comfortable with the assumption that liberal peacebuilding and statebuilding are two sides of the same coin. Selby (2013: 59), for example, argues for the 'enduring importance of strategy, states and geopolitics in the making of peace.' Chandler (2012) contends that international interventionism increasingly functions within a post-liberal paradigm of promoting 'resilience', or 'self-securing' by vulnerable populations, a point reinforced by Zaum (2012: 126), who mentions the apparent shift to 'stabilization' as an objective of intervention that does away with earlier social transformation objectives. Finally, Sabaratnam (2011: 26) observes that the word 'peace' has completely disappeared from dominant statebuilding discourses.

While all are valuable observations, I argue that the form, function, effects, and future possibilities (or impossibilities) of contemporary statebuilding could only be fully explained by linking it with the emergence, initially in the West, of regulatory statehood. The relationship between statebuilding and the regulatory state has two interrelated dimensions. These pertain respectively to the particular form that these interventions assume and the centrality of the notion of risk management to their rationalisation. Indeed, contemporary SBIs represent the extension of pre-existing modes of regulatory governance and risk rationalities into the increasingly intertwined spheres of security and development (see Duffield 2001). Below I examine, in turn, the emergence of the regulatory state and risk management rationalities in the West, and the implications for SBIs.

The regulatory state and statebuilding

Perhaps the most significant influence on contemporary statebuilding is the long-term process of state transformation that has taken place in Western states, albeit with very uneven consequences, since the late 1970s. The main characteristic of the emergent regulatory state is

the growing disjuncture between the actual locus of state power and the established idea of the state as a territorialised 'power container' (Agnew 2009). This occurs through the disaggregation of state power on to 'non-majoritarian' parts of the state (Sbragia 2000), which are dominated by various experts and networked transnationally with other regulatory actors in states, multilateral organisations and even the private sector. Regulatory forms of statehood also typically involve an increasing concentration of 'meta-governance' capacities – rule-making, standard-setting, coordination, market design – within the core executive, in tandem with the relative marginalisation of the institutions of representative democracy (Jayasuriya 2004). The rise of various forms of regulatory statehood explains the particular, diffuse form statebuilding assumes, and the emphasis within SBIs on evaluating and intervening to improve performance in specific areas of the domestic governance of the intervened states. The link with the regulatory state also explains the arrival of new kinds of actors, private and public – such as consultants, private security companies, and transnational police forces – now so important to the design, implementation and evaluation of SBIs.

This process of transformation we are currently witnessing, through which regulatory modes of statehood and governance are emerging, is a historically specific transition shaped by shifts in the global political economy in recent decades and the transnationalisation of production and financial flows in particular. Less permeable forms of national sovereignty and control within national territorial borders, including for postcolonial states, were more common in the 'golden age' of Western capitalism, post-World War II. These were shored up by domestic political-economic structures in Western states and the global ideological struggle between capitalism and communism, characterising the 'short twentieth century' (Hobsbawm 1994). The Keynesian-welfare state manifested the socialisation of politics with the major political parties

11

and state institutions organised around the main social cleavage of industrial-capitalist societies (Jayasuriya 2006). Maintaining this compromise required national controls over the movement of capital and the centralisation of economic policymaking. In turn, this domestic compromise was reflected in an international order of 'embedded liberalism', including the Bretton Woods institutions (Ruggie 1982).

From the late 1970s, this 'embedded liberalism' began to weaken, both domestically and internationally, as a result of the stagflation crisis afflicting Western capitalism. This crisis led to the ascension of neoliberal ideology, based on the precepts of neoclassical economics, and policies inspired by neoliberalism in many Western democracies, initially in the United States and the United Kingdom. These policies were concerned, at least rhetorically, with creating more competitive national economies, by dismantling some of the protections for domestic labour and capital and reorienting the state's role from sheltering citizens from capitalism's vagaries to promoting greater exposure to market pressures. These reforms were supported in the US and the UK primarily by relatively mobile sections of capital, such as finance, as well as by sections of industrial capitalism looking to reduce costs at home and expand internationally (see Harvey 2005). Although highly contested everywhere and not as far-reaching in other Western democracies, the historical importance of this transition should not be underestimated. This is because many Western states have gone from a situation in which industrial society's class cleavages, and associated material inequalities, were central to the state and its institutional apparatus, to one in which these cleavages are increasingly politically marginalised.

Granted, some socially progressive agendas could be advanced through regulatory governance, but there is little doubt that the latter tends to militate against popular mobilisation and social solidarity (Mabbett 2010). This bias is not surprising if we locate the emergence of the

regulatory state against the above-mentioned backdrop of the crisis of Western capitalism in the 1970s. In this sense, the growing significance of regulatory governance is not entirely coincidental, nor simply functional. Since the agency of left-wing movements, organised labour in particular, was crucial to the expansion of the democratic franchise in Western Europe and the adoption of wealth redistribution and welfare measures in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Eley 2002), it is not surprising that the weakening of the Left is associated with a narrowing down of democracy's scope (see Streeck 2011).

This process has been partly facilitated by the emergence of more diffuse forms of governance and regulation and a relocation of state power away from the institutions of representative democracy into the hands of state and non-state regulatory actors, who are not popularly or politically accountable. These regulators are often linked across borders with peers in the management of transnational issues of various kinds (Slaughter 2004). In many states central banks are now mostly insulated from political controls, while numerous unelected public and quasi-public regulatory bodies have emerged to govern vast swathes of public and private life, from food standards, to aviation safety, financial regulation and anti-money laundering activities (Vibert 2007: 18). The upshot is that the national scale of governance has been 'relativised'. It no longer has a 'taken-for-granted' quality as the best level at which political, economic or security issues should be governed, though no other scale has acquired a similar dominance.

As such, the regulatory state is related to contemporary SBIs in two ways. First, the design and implementation of SBIs reflect prior the transformation of intervening states along these lines. SBIs now take the form of highly diffuse interventions, not necessarily requiring military force, across different areas of government and governance in the intervened states, by a

range of actors – public and private (see Holm 2001) – with specific forms of expertise, in law, policing and economic policy for example. These disparate actors and interventions are coordinated through various forms of network and multilevel governance. Unsurprisingly, coordination has come to be seen as one of the key challenges for statebuilding's effective implementation (see Paris 2009), just as much as it is for regulatory states (Jayasuriya 2001).

But SBIs also facilitate state transformation in the intervening states. Through SBIs, parts of the domestic state apparatus of the intervening state come to operate in a transnational space and acquire new capacities that transform their relations with other parts of the state and with other states' apparatuses. For example, the Australian Federal Police (AFP), until recently a domestic law enforcement agency, has for the past decade been involved in police capacity-building interventions across the Southwest Pacific and parts of Southeast Asia, as well as in active policing in countries such as Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste. To carve out a bigger role in offshore interventions, the AFP has developed new capacities to provide policy advice to the Australian government on statebuilding, as well as new intelligence-gathering and analysis functions. It has become involved in interdepartmental committees relating to SBIs, along with other Australian government departments and agencies, thus taking on an active foreign policymaking role – an inconceivable situation only a few years earlier. All the while, its accountability requirements have remained very limited and essentially unchanged (Hameiri 2010: Ch 5).

Second, SBIs constitute an attempt to bring about similar processes of state transformation in the intervened states, whereby policymaking authority is shifted onto new spaces of regulatory governance, dominated by experts and insulated from the influence of domestic political leaders and populations (Hameiri 2010). For example, in Solomon Islands, the

Australian-led intervention since 2003 has placed particular emphasis on dominating the Economic Reform Unit (ERU) within the Ministry of Finance and Treasury. This unit's control over budgeting processes has meant that elected prime ministers in Solomon Islands could not implement policy requiring funds reallocation without it being de facto sanctioned by ERU staff.

Statebuilding as risk management: Explaining the impetus for statebuilding

The emergence of the regulatory state is related to statebuilding not just in terms of these interventions' form, but also in terms of providing the impetus and rationalisation for intervention, through the notion of risk management. While earlier post-Cold War interventions were often motivated, at least rhetorically, by a concern with humanitarian relief, statebuilding is marked by a preoccupation with managing security risks potentially emanating from zones of perceived poor governance. The linking of statebuilding and risk management also did not emerge out of developments in peacekeeping/peacebuilding, or indeed in relation to the 'liberal peace', but has rather been shaped by long-term processes occurring within the intervening states and their societies; processes also associated with the rise of the regulatory state. In line with my broader argument in this article, the current attention accorded by states to transnational risk reflects the broader crisis of the national scale of government. This is because depictions of potentially catastrophic transnational risk are typically attached to claims about the inherent incapacity of individual governments to deal with these issues effectively within national territorial borders, which rationalise deeper forms of intervention and regulation on a regional or global scale (Hameiri and Jayasuriya 2011).

Risk and risk management are nothing new. Yet, it has been argued that a new category of risk has emerged that undermines earlier forms of risk management through private and social

insurance. According to Beck (1999), industrialisation, while highly successful at growing wealth and improving living standards, has accidentally produced spatially and temporally 'de-bounded' risks. Such risks are unconstrained by political borders and their long-term impact is difficult to predict through existing means of calculation. They are low probability, but potentially catastrophic. Climate change, for example, results from the actions and inactions of countless individuals, governments and businesses over many decades. Its exact effects remain very difficult to predict, but according to the worst predictions could even threaten the survival of the species.

A crucial tenet of Beck's thesis is that as people become increasingly aware of the existence of low-probability, high-consequence transnational risks, society changes. First, because of the inherent uncertainty associated with these risks, it is argued that risk awareness leads to the emergence of new 'reflexive' modes of thinking, ceaselessly seeking to anticipate risky situations and likely outcomes, in order to intervene before it is too late. The rise of the 'risk society' also changes politics because risk and risk management become central to the state and to political conflict. Second, the 'de-bounded' nature of these risks, in Beck's terminology, is said to lead to the creation of a 'world risk society', in which people from different parts of the globe come to see themselves as linked through risks that respect no political borders nor class and ethnic divisions. Globalisation is seen to play a dual role in this process. On the one hand, the spread of industrialisation creates or exacerbates risk. On the other hand, better communication and transportation technologies bring people closer and help the emergence of shared risk awareness.

Though initially the risk society thesis referred to the unintended externalities of industrialisation and new technologies, it was later expanded by Beck and other scholars to

include intentional actions. Specifically, Beck (2002) has argued that the response to September 11 demonstrates the degree to which ideas of de-bounded risk and the reflexive modes of thinking and governance associated with these have become pervasive. But the rise of risk management as a dominant security policy paradigm undoubtedly predates George W. Bush's 'war on terror'. The 1998 National Security Strategy (NSS) of the Clinton administration already focused on non-traditional security risks – the 'dark side' of globalisation – as the main sources of insecurity to the US (White House 1998).

After the September 11 attacks in particular, however, several commentators have observed that strategic policy and security practice in the world's most powerful states and international organisations have become considerably focused on identifying and managing transnational risks of the kind referred to by Beck (see Coker 2009; Rasmussen 2007; Heng 2006; Williams 2008). This is clearly illustrated in the 2002 US NSS. This NSS was controversial because of its association with the Bush doctrine of coercive regime-change and the 'war on terror' but its analysis of the global strategic environment was remarkably consistent with the 2003 European Security Strategy (EU 2003), and an important UN report (High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change 2004). Upturning conventional security thinking, the NSS stated that the US was 'threatened less by conquering states than…by failing ones' (White House 2002: 1). But what made failing states dangerous was not their capacity to inflict harm on directly, but the *potential* proliferation of various NTS problems from within their borders. In this sense, statebuilding – the proposed antidote to the risk presented by state fragility – constitutes a form of risk management, designed to prevent the potential emergence, proliferation and eventual migration of such security problems beyond their presumed places of origination.

This risk management rationality has two important implications for statebuilding. First, though Beck's notion of the world risk society as a harbinger of cosmopolitanism seems overly optimistic, the goings-on in remote, impoverished parts of the world are now seen as potentially dangerous to societies in the advanced capitalist states and to global security at large (Duffield 2007). Second, a crucial dimension of risk identification and management is the increasing use of specialised forms of expertise and the related shrinking of the sphere of governance controlled by politically and popularly accountable actors. In fact many risks, like climate change, cannot even be known, let alone managed, in the absence of scientific expertise (although the validity of this science is itself the subject of political controversy). Therefore, as security is increasingly defined in terms of risks rather than threats, and since risks are seen as predominantly transnational, it becomes difficult for those subject to risk management, in the form of SBIs, to hold to account those implementing the modes of risk regulation they are subjected to.

Crucially, ideas of what is 'risky' and how to go about mitigating risk always have particular, if implicit, ideological and political underpinnings and they tend to privilege particular interests and normative agendas in society over others. In the case of SBIs, risk management is mainly seen as dependent upon the construction of states capable of managing the spread of non-traditional security problems. But the kind of state capacities viewed as crucial by most contemporary statebuilders are heavily influenced by the dominant neoliberal development paradigm of the past 15 years, the post-Washington consensus (PWC). The PWC accepts that the state is not external to the development process, but a preference for liberal market-led development remains a basic tenet of this framework, along with new fundamentals pertaining to the institutional environments seen to make liberal markets function better (Carroll 2010). Hence, development experts are urged to focus on institution- and capacity-building, as

economic liberalisation would only succeed when the necessary institutions are in place to produce market competition. Since economic development is viewed as underpinned by strong state capacity, the assumption herein is that statebuilding would also have security benefits in that a strong state would also control unruly societal forces (e.g. World Bank 2011).

One of the most problematic aspects of this approach to development is that though it purports to bring politics and ideology into the development process, by maintaining the normative preference for liberal market-led development it works to delegitimise and depoliticise opposition to reform, as political agendas are viewed primarily in terms of whether they promote or hinder market 'efficiency'. In this sense, despite having some corollaries with particular strands of liberalism, the promotion of market-supportive institutions does not equate with the promotion of liberal democracy, or the 'liberal peace', as it could easily cohabitate with authoritarian forms of rule. Democracy here, to the extent it is promoted, is seen as a means to an end of promoting 'effective' states through citizens holding corrupt elites to account, not as a good in its own right.

It is not essential, however, for ideas of riskiness to be shaped by neoliberal ideology. Powerful neo-Weberian ideas of state capacity also exist in which state coherence and its ability to control recalcitrant social elements are seen as more important than the provision of market-supporting institutions. Risk mitigation in this sense would involve supporting the state's capacity to crush its political and societal opponents, in a way more reminiscent of Huntington's (1968) Cold War prescriptions. Alternatively, interventions could attempt to support social control from the ground-up, through the promotion of apparently more organic and 'traditional' social orders. Of course, social control is very much part of the neoliberal ideal of statehood as well, though the range of 'permissible' public policy options is circumscribed in favour of

promoting liberal market-based social relations. What all of these approaches have in common where statebuilding is concerned is a built-in disdain for political pluralism and a conservative preference for social and political order of a particular kind (though there may be disagreements on what it should precisely be and how to get there). All equate risk management with limiting the spectrum of political choices available to domestic leaders and populations. It is therefore possible that the particular content of risk management will change, while statebuilding will persist, as well as retain its anti-pluralistic nature.

In sum, whether ideas of riskiness shift away from neoliberal statebuilding precepts or not, it is likely that the governments of powerful states will remain interested in regulating the outputs of domestic governance in other states. This is because the perception of vulnerability wrought by global interconnectedness, whereby societies are threatened by governance dysfunction elsewhere, is now so well-established in the popular imagination and in security and development practice that it is unlikely to dissipate in the foreseeable future. This is not to say that intervention will inevitably occur in all states exhibiting similar governance pathologies – indeed, this is not the case today – but that the risk management rationale for intervention is likely to remain robust. If statebuilding is eventually challenged, though the possibility seems distant at the moment, this will not be caused by a crisis of the liberal peace but by changing geopolitical circumstances. For example, if China became a hostile military power, the minds of Western policymakers might reconcentrate on dealing with threats rather than risks.

Conclusion: The future of statebuilding and the future of statehood

A number of notable commentators have in recent years argued that liberal peacebuilding is in crisis resulting from the ideological decline of the liberal peace thesis. Similarly, proponents of

R2P have lamented the weakening of the liberal norms underpinning this convention in the face of sovereignty and narrow assertions of the 'national interest' (Evans 2008). This article has sought to examine the implications of this perceived decline for statebuilding interventionism, a pertinent question considering that statebuilding is often seen as the latest delivery mechanism for the liberal peace.

In linking contemporary SBIs to the rise of the regulatory state and to the emergence of transnational risk management as one of the regulatory state's main activities, I have shown that the origins of statebuilding lay far beyond the field of peace operations and associated evolutions within peacebuilding, in processes that have initially taken place in the intervening states and societies in the West. It also follows that evaluating the challenges and possibilities of statebuilding, now and in the future, must be based on an understanding of the nature of these processes, their potential trajectories, and their implications for statebuilding.

I have argued that one of the main consequences of statebuilding, associated with the shift to regulatory statehood more generally, is a growing discrepancy between the actual locus of state power, now often beyond the scope of politically accountable national and subnational institutions, and commonly held perceptions of states as governing particular territories on behalf of their citizens. Despite the narrowing down of the range of issues shaped by political competition, both in the intervening and intervened states, the idea of national sovereignty retains an important place in popular imagination and there is currently no substitute to the political accountability and representation provided by national political institutions. Furthermore, the ideal of national sovereignty is still used regularly by political elites to gain popular legitimacy. The rhetoric of 'national development' coming out of the Chinese and Indian governments, for example, belies a reality of highly skewed growth associated with uneven

integration of people and regions into global economic flows. In North Africa and the Middle East, the Arab Spring revolutions were also inspired by the notion of reclaiming state power from autocratic elites to benefit the majority of citizens. There is, in other words, a genuine tension between the processes of state transformation I describe and popular demand for state power to serve the interests of the majority. The picture that emerges is one of a profound crisis of the national scale of government and governance. The current deep economic crisis affecting mainly the US and Europe has only served to accentuate this tension, because governmental responses are often seen to be disproportionately advantageous to the same groups in society responsible for the crisis in the first place.

Whatever the future of the state may be under these circumstances, it is difficult to envisage a return to a world of 'hard' sovereignty and non-interference, if one had ever truly existed. This is because 'embedded liberalism' had emerged in a particular geopolitical and political-economic context. The social forces underpinning the postwar order of 'national' states are currently much weaker, with the result being a crisis of both the national scale and multilateralism (see Jayasuriya 2010).

The current prevalence of SBIs is a clear reflection of this crisis. And as SBIs constitute attempts to denationalise ever-greater areas of public policy, these interventions also trigger new conflicts and tensions over the locus of state power. These conflicts of statebuilding – over the scale at which particular issues are to be governed – constitute one of the key arenas currently shaping state transformation processes in both intervened and intervening states. As the drivers of statebuilding interventionism identified in this article are unlikely to dissipate in the foreseeable future, focusing our attention on this politics of scale provides a framework through which to interrogate the potential futures of both statebuilding and statehood in general.

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[1] Although linked, the 'liberal peace thesis' is distinct to the so-called 'democratic peace theory'. The latter is principally focused on the foreign policies of states and their propensity to engage in war (see Doyle 1983a, 1983b). The former, on the other hand, primarily concerns the relationship between liberalism and internally peaceful societies. The literature on the democratic peace theory is vast, often employing large-n methods to confirm or disconfirm its assumptions (e.g. Gartzke and Weisinger 2013), and engaging it is well beyond the scope of this article.