

***Governing security, governing through security:
US police assistance and liberal governmentality***

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Introduction¹

The raft of Western interventions in the post-Cold War world has starkly brought to the fore a host of new security concerns, demanding novel ways of understanding the tense and intricate relationship between security and sovereignty.

Within this framework, a particular field of growth has been that of international police assistance, that is, of the international uses of the police as a tool of both security governance in post-conflict scenarios, and as a tool of foreign policy of (mostly) Western liberal states, the US most notably. Earlier academic works from the 1990's opened the door and established some key themes in this area of study, but the growing body of literature making its mark today attests to the mounting interest in such pressing issues as post-conflict security sector reform (SSR) and rule of law programs as key components of the peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions which have come to characterize the majority of Western engagements with the developing world since the mid- to late-nineties. However, much is still to be done in this budding field. While there has been some work on the use of civilian police (CivPol) contingents by the UN, and recently some work has also emerged on the crucial uses of the police and police assistance programs in terms of European peacebuilding efforts, to date, booklength treatments of policebuilding as a key component of American foreign policy remain few and far between. It is within this context that this paper seeks to make a modest contribution to a better understanding of US police assistance as a crucial tool of American foreign and security policies.

In order to do this, this paper will analyse, in the first section, first and foremost the intellectual and institutional context in which policebuilding has come to the fore, i.e. what security is thought to mean, who it is for, and a host of other debates which have shaped both security studies as an academic

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enterprise and security policy of Western states more generally, effectively transforming it in the last two decades or so. This initial section highlights, on the one hand, how there has occurred a blurring of the divide between internal and external security, and, on the other hand, how globalization has opened up the question of agency in security studies by pointing out the need to refocus critical security studies towards security practice. Section two, taking cue from this initial realization, summarily surveys some of the key contributions made by the work of Didier Bigo and the “Paris school” as an interesting way of conceptualizing the role of agency in contemporary security practices. It then introduces “security governance” as an important complement to the analysis of the Paris school, and it critiques and builds upon Elke Krahmman’s dominant conception of security governance by offering a more Foucauldian reading of that concept. Such a reading, it is argued, pays close attention not only to the institutions and networks which govern security, but also to the liberal rationalities and attending assemblages which seek to govern distant populations through security.

Taking cue from Foucault’s conception of governing as a problematising activity, the third section then purports to describe how state frailty and state failure are increasingly conceptualized as a security problem. Lack of governance, or lack of governmental presence translated in security forces, is thus problematised as a catalyst for criminal security threats, flows of which would endanger the global interests of Western states. This framing of lack of governance as a security issue, this section argues, pervades current discourses and practices of US foreign policy. Moreover, it is not a “natural” linkage, but must be historicized and investigated. Having established the backdrop against which US international police assistance efforts occur, section four then briefly sketches a synoptic history of US policebuilding efforts. As it tries to highlight the gradual changes of paradigm which differentiate the rationales and instruments employed from the earliest American attempts in the Caribbean, through the post 2nd World-War scenarios in Germany and Japan, to the Cold War years and beyond, foregrounding major lines of both continuity and rupture in US police assistance which continue to echo in today’s efforts in such places as Afghanistan and Iraq.

Contestations of security

Recent years have seen an ever increasing debate on the shifting nature of security. Approaches within both security studies and policy-making circles which were traditionally focused on securing the survival of the state, and on protecting its borders and territorial integrity in (almost exclusively)

military terms, have increasingly come under attack since the end of the Cold War. The decline – or at least loss of hegemonic position - of this orthodox view, often dubbed “strategic studies” or “national security studies”, has been evident and widely acknowledged in the debates of at least the last decade, leading to what Steve Smith has amusingly dubbed “the increasing insecurity of security studies” (Smith 2000).

Moreover, this growing dissatisfaction with traditional approaches to security resulted not only in much soul-searching and greater theoretical innovation in the academic sub-field of security studies throughout the 1990’s, but affected also the way security institutions conducted their business. As Michael Sheehan puts it in a recent overview of the field, “[i]nternational organizations such as the United Nations and NATO now also operate with a definition of security that is multisectoral and embraces the broader agenda, and not just the military dimension” (Sheehan 2005: 3). The very introduction by the United Nations of the concept of “human security” in its 1993 and 1994 UNDP reports shows precisely this trend (UNDP 1993, 1994). Similarly, a review of U.S. policy debates and documents will reveal that American institutions have been at pains to adapt to the new security paradigm, and that American security practices themselves have been undergoing severe transformations, as evinced for instance by the latest National Security Strategy papers of the Bush Administration. (White House 2002, 2006).

One usual way of scrutinizing the shifts of the 80’s and 90’s that have brought about this new security agenda, both in theoretical and empirical terms, is to identify and survey several strands of literature or “debates” between alternative “schools” of thought. In a sense, however, all these debates have circled around the notion of “widening” the security agenda, be it in terms of widening what is meant by security, what counts as a threat, or what institutions and agents are implicated in the practice of security. However, if on the one hand these academic debates have effectively moved the field of security studies into more fertile ground (Huysmans et al. 2006), on the other hand they are not without danger, as Keith Krause and Michael Williams perceptively pointed out a full decade ago:

[a] result of this disciplinary turmoil is that reconceptualizing security has often come to resemble a grab bag of different issue areas (...). Simply articulating a broad range of newly emerging or newly recognized threats to human survival or well-being will not in itself move security studies away from its traditional concerns. (Krause and Williams 1997: 35)

Apparently missing was a coherent framework to understand the historical shifts in the definition of threats and the provision of security², as well as an awareness of the changes taking place at the very mundane but absolutely germane level of security *practices*, and the associated *institutions* of social life involved in the field of security. In other words, rather than just focusing on concepts and how one should go about studying them, the key point in moving the security studies agenda forward is to focus on the *relationship* between shifting concepts and shifting practices – what Foucault would call regimes of power/knowledge (cf. e.g. C.A.S.E. collective 2006). Indeed, regardless of how one maps the emergent issues and debates that have been transforming the face of security studies as a disciplinary field, the defining feature that seems common to all strands of literature is a growing awareness, a growing recognition, that what is commonly referred to as “globalization” has been changing the way security is instantiated (and thought about). Indeed, critical approaches have been slowly but steadily unhinging security, in word and in deed, from its hitherto monogamous relationship with the State – a quasi-mythical beast, much described but seldom observed, understood domestically in Weberian terms, and facing an anarchical international scene dominated by the inter-state security dilemma of markedly Hobbesian features³.

As can be gleaned from the synoptic picture presented above, there are two main ways in which one can perhaps best make sense of this process of the contestation and transformation of “security”: (i) by seeing it as the erosion of the inside/outside debate that has been so constitutive of both International Relations and Security Studies as disciplines (cf. e.g. Walker 1993), and (ii) by following Huysmans in his perceptive suggestion that “the widening of the security agenda to non-military threats and the growing interest in including non-state referents *opened up the issue of political agency*” (Huysmans 2006: 5, emphasis added). Regarding this apparent erosion of the classical dichotomy of “foreign/domestic” or “internal/international”, it is important to highlight two further points. On the one hand, the emergence – real or merely perceived - of “new threats” is paralleled by the emergence of new forms of *agency* in providing security beyond the state. On the other hand, the context of a globalised world has brought about the specific linking of security to liberal problematics of governing populations (cf. e.g. Larner and Walters 2004, Dillon 2004). Globalisation has been conceived of in a bewildering variety of ways, but for the summary purposes of this paper it is especially useful to see it as a form of spatio-temporal compression, which in turn has gradually led to a “closure” of social

² But for an early attempt, cf. (Mabee 2003)

³ At least in terms of the dominant reading of Hobbes which pervades mainstream IR, to which this section refers whenever using the adjective Hobbesian. For a thought-provoking critique of such a reading of Hobbes, and an alternative interpretation of his significance, see the work of Michael C. Williams on Hobbes (Williams 1996, 2005: 19-51).

space worldwide. In other words, processes such as the rise of complex interdependence, new regionalism, and the growing empowerment of non-state actors – to name but a few - have helped bring about a picture of world politics as a single, (relatively) integrated, global social space in need of management, largely in analogy with the provision of rule of law and welfare for populations at the domestic level, but writ large – a theme which is prevalent in the now vast literature on global governance. One way in which this trend can be understood is to see it as resulting in the increasing internationalization of “police power” – understood not commonsensically as what police officers do, but rather more broadly as the power of states to effect government over the health and wealth of a population, to effectively administer (civil) society⁴. This last point, as shall be discussed below, forms the central argument of this paper.

Security, in this “globalised” or “transnationalised” sense, is thus seen less and less as the task of dealing through military means with international anarchy and its consequences – namely the classical security dilemma – in a Hobbesian way, and more and more as the task of dealing in novel ways with a host of increasingly transnational/stateless threats to populations and their well-being. Concurrently, the provision and governance of security, within this contemporary framework, has been increasingly conceived of in terms of criminalization of threats (e.g. Nadelmann 1993, Raine and Cilluffo 1994, Berdal and Serrano 2002) , and along the logic of risk⁵, a process which seems to be a “spill-over” effect from the domestic level to the global of the logics which have already gained primacy (for decades and in some cases for centuries) at the internal level of states, at least those of the Western liberal matrix. In a topical essay, Peter Andreas and Richard Price have posited that within such a context of a growing shift in the conceptions and practices of security, most Western liberal states are now “(...) increasingly defining their security interests more in terms of crimefighting than in terms of warfighting, and more in terms of deterring law evasions than in terms of deterring military invasions.” (Andreas and Price 2001: 31)

Given the parameters of this emerging paradigm, an examination of contemporary practices of security provision and governance that inform U.S. foreign policy is called for, and an analysis of policing

⁴ The literature on the history and theory of the “police” function/power in society, beyond the purely institutional understanding so prevalent today, is voluminous. For the most comprehensive historical treatment to date, cf. (Knemeyer 1990). See also the work of Pasquale Pasquino (Pasquino 1991) and Marc Raeff (Raeff 1975). For a more developed approach see (Neocleous 2000) and a recent edited volume by Markus Dubber and Mariana Valverde (Dubber and Valverde 2006)

⁵ For an interesting treatment on the implications of the logic of risk for an understanding of contemporary security practices, see the work of Rens van Munster (van Munster 2005a, 2005b, Aradau and van Munster 2007)

rationalities and practices therein is absolutely central. However, accounts as those of Andreas and Price (cf. also Hippler 2006) focus essentially on the “spill over” of such policing logics and technologies that characterizes the contemporary practices of the *military* apparatuses of Western states, the U.S. most prominently. Conversely, little or no attention has been paid to how the police *itself* is being employed in this changing paradigm, a gap which this paper modestly aims to fill. In order to do so, one must first introduce the concept of security governance.

Security governance – governing security, governing through security

Keeping the above remarks in mind, it is a little surprising that one of the best ways of understanding this change in regimes of security knowledges and practices - to trace the shifts in the nature and uses of policing, particularly as a tool of foreign and security policies of Western states - has been conspicuously absent in the IR literature. Indeed, the nature and uses of the police as an *institution*, and the *practices* of policing undertaken by a multiplicity of security *agents*, have been undergoing significant changes in the direction of greater “globalization” (e.g. McDonald 1997, Sheptycki 2000, 2002). This paper seeks to contribute to a better understanding of precisely the situation described above and does so by focusing attention on an area of hitherto little concern: the global uses of policing. The reason it may have received so little attention by the academic fields most likely to examine it is not clear, but it seems plausible that this is simply the result of the disciplinary divide itself: with International Relations scholars largely unconcerned with such a seemingly domestic institution as the police, and criminologists averse to looking beyond the borders of state jurisdiction (except to make comparisons between discrete units), it may well be that this central issue just “fell through the cracks” of disciplinary fragmentation.

In fact, any survey of contemporary security practices will show that the police are no longer strictly bound by the classical logic of the “inside/outside” dichotomy, and are therefore doing a lot more these days than simply enforcing criminal law at the purely domestic level. (Whether this is really an emergent reality or simply a growing recognition of something as old as the word “police” itself is also something worthy of much more attention by critically minded security students than has so far been conceded.) Grasping this move of internationalization, transnationalisation, or multilateralization (Bayley and Shearing 2001) of policing and its implications brings up a number of challenges, and it also brings us squarely and neatly to our second issue, that of agency within security practices and

attending institutions within a context in which the fields of internal and external “become one” (Bigo 2000) or rather are re-articulated as a Möebius’ ribbon (Bigo 1997, 2001).

Perhaps the most compelling and useful work on the subject has been done within the academic framework of what is sometimes referred to as the “Paris school” of critical security studies, and especially the work of Didier Bigo. Using a conceptual framework heavily informed by a blend of Bourdieusian and Foucauldian concepts, Bigo investigates how, through the crucially important practices of security experts or professionals - what he calls “professional managers of unease” (Bigo 2005, 2006) – we are gradually witnessing a de-differentiation of the fields of internal and external security, thus re-inscribing security practices in a continuum which defies orthodox assumptions about the strict separation between military and police functions. His suggestion for a better understanding of these changes in the security agenda, what he has recently termed the “globalisation of (in)security” (Bigo 2005), is to pay close attention to workings of myriads of these security professionals, as it is they who, by and large, (re-)define the fields of security. The increased networking of security professionals beyond borders, their inter- and intra-institutional politics of competition and collaboration, and their innovative deployment of specific techniques for understanding and managing security are, for the Paris School, the central focus of analysis.

Bigo’s framework is compelling because it allows us to understand in a sociologically cogent way, both the blurring of the inside/outside divide that has characterized the new security agenda and the (crucial) role of police therein. However, bound as it is to his long empirical work on the European case (especially in terms of the agencies competing in the sub-fields of border police and counter-terrorism, cf. Bigo 1996), Bigo’s framework is somewhat blind to non-European realities, which are starkly different but also crucial to understanding the new practices of security, since most Western experimentation with the police and security governance is taking place in post-conflict scenarios in the developing world. Additionally, while his approach is useful in bringing agency to the fore in security analysis, Bigo’s approach seems to suggest that security experts and their interactions drive the securitization process, and could thus benefit from a greater engagement with the liberal logics of governance (what Foucault would call the governmental rationalities) which are important in shaping such processes, and the choices of experts themselves. A good way of doing this is to engage with the idea of security governance.

Security governance is a relatively new concept in IR. It has only been around since the beginning of the current decade, and it seems to reflect the growing dissatisfaction with traditional statist frameworks of analysis when it comes to analysing contemporary shifts in security practices and institutions. Generally speaking, security governance is a concept that has been employed by two quite different bundles of authors, and has therefore been conceptualized differently by them, with differing implications for an analysis of security practices in the post-Cold War world. On the one hand we have those people working within the broadly defined field of international relations, most prominently Elke Krahmman (Krahmann 2001, 2003a, 2003b, 2005a, 2005b 2005c).

For Krahmman, security governance needs to be understood in terms of a movement in the provision of security “from government to governance” (Krahmann 2003: 9-13), in which government represents the centralized provision and management of security, understood in orthodox terms, by the state, whereas governance (...) denotes the structures and processes which enable a set of public and private actors to coordinate their interdependent needs and interests through the making and implementation of binding policy decisions in the absence of a central political authority. (*ibid.*: 11) This is apparently a response to the emergence of both new security threats and new security actors, which creates a new security environment, a characterization that broadly resonates with the suggestions of most of the literature reviewed at the beginning of this paper. This, in turn, has caused an increasing “fragmentation” of the sovereign *status quo* which can be observed along seven distinct dimensions (Krahmann 2005a).⁶ The result has been the rise of new security governance networks, which are seen seemingly as an inherently positive things, as they are more effective in countering transnational threats (given their own transnational character) and also promote subsidiarity and tailored solutions to local political needs – unless, of course, one refers to the “dark networks” that develop in the fields “transnational crime, terrorism and the proliferation of small arms” (*ibid.*: 14-15).

While Elke Krahmman must surely be commended by largely introducing and developing the concept of security governance into the IR and security literatures, thus offering a new and potentially sophisticated way to deal with recent and important shifts in the nature of security, her approach suffers from important drawbacks – apparent at least in terms of its ready usability in a study such as the present one. Firstly, it rests on a fairly artificial and, this analysis contends, largely needless dichotomy between government and governance, almost as if it portraying “government” in unrealistically

⁶ The seven dimensions are: geography, function, distribution of resources, interests, norms decision making, and policy implementation (*ibid.*: 12-14, cf. Krahmann 2003: 14-19).

centralized and statist terms – ignoring important developments on the subject in fields such as political science, but especially sociology – only to set up the appearance of governance as panacea. One would not need to look any further than to Michel Foucault’s conception of government to find a much more sophisticated notion which easily does away with the shaky dichotomy⁷. In this view, government is a set of dispositional practices which seek to “structure the possible fields of action of others” and is thus an activity preoccupied with the conduct of conduct, of oneself and others. Not only does this definition effortlessly straddle both government and governance in Krahnmann’s definition, effectively going beyond the state without doing away with it, it also shows how this mode of rule has been developing and expanding since at least the 18th century, and – more to the point – draws out important links between shifts in regimes of government rationality and practice and other important dimensions such as liberalization, marketization, and the role of police.

Second and lastly, Krahnmann’s formulation fails to problematise in an adequate way the heavily normative dimension of governance – governance can be good or bad, and often discussions of security governance tend to conceptualize it as a move toward good governance in the security field.⁸ This is, of course, a valid understanding of security governance, but one that hampers, more than helps, a deeper and more sociological understanding of the relationship between governance and security, and begs the questions: “whose criteria of good governance?” and “what about governance which does not meet such criteria but nonetheless effects government, and security?”

From another vantage point on “security governance”, we have the work of Les Johnston and Clifford Shearing, as that of Mariana Valverde, both of which comfortably straddle criminology and social theory, and propose a framework for conceptualizing security governance that is informed by much recent Foucauldian scholarship and thus call our attention to the mechanisms of security through which liberal systems rule (Johnston and Shearing 2003, Valverde 2001, Valverde and Mopas 2006). Apart from the fact that both shift attention away from the state as the sole or central referent (and indeed agent) of security practices, a move coherent with our early characterization of the changes taking place in security studies over the past two decades, these bodies of literature don’t have much else in

⁷ From a prolific nature on this subject, the best way to start remains Foucault’s seminal essay on “governmentality” (Foucault 1991). For a schematic application of his paradigm to an analytics of contemporary government, see the short but eminently useful article by Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller (Rose and Miller 1992). For a much fuller discussion of governmentality and its usefulness, see (Dean 1999, Rose 1999).

⁸ For a related discussion of the differences between analyses of governance and governmentality as monikers of governing, and how they differ in sociological and normative dimensions *cf.* Rose (1999: 15-20). For a useful critique of good governance and the disciplinary forms of power operating in tandem with its normative dimensions, see for instance the work of Rita Abrahamsen (Abrahamsen 1999, 2005).

common. In any case, the central point they make is that security governance thus has two, closely interrelated, meanings. On the one hand, it refers to the governance *of* security – that is, all the agents, institutions, processes and networks that are involved in the provision and management of security. On the other hand, it denotes the practice of effecting government *through* security, that is to say, structuring the possible field of actions of others by bringing to bear upon their conduct a multiplicity of security technologies and, at a deeper level, by constituting their subjectivities as agent, subjects of objects of security.

State failure as problem, security governance as governmental solution

As the previous pages, have highlighted, the post-Cold War world saw the development of a new security environment, trends of which have intensified in the post 9-11 period. Within this framework, both security students and security experts have come to conceptualize threats - and the adequate responses to these - increasingly in terms of criminal flows such as drug trafficking, terrorism, money-laundering, and a host of other illegal activities constituting varying patterns of risk. Implicitly or explicitly, most literature tends to make the connection between these new transnational security threats and the places whence they originate or pass through unconstrained, characterizing these as ungoverned (or sometimes misgoverned) spaces. This perception of ***insecurity as a function of poor or non-existent governance*** has spawned a prolific response: at the academic level, a host of related issues under the collective heading of security governance has come to the fore, whereas policy-making circles have similarly highlighted the nexus between development and governance (or their lack) and (in)security.

Given this security-development nexus, whereby security is seen as a condition best achieved through the practices of good/strong governance, the security apparatuses of Western states have become heavily intertwined with development efforts, in an effort to promote effective liberal (security) governance in developing nations (see, e.g. Duffield 2007, 2006, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2002, 2001a, 2001b). As this section seeks to demonstrate, nowhere is this linkage more apparent, or stronger, than in the budding field of post-conflict state-building. Indeed state-weakness and state-failure have emphatically been identified as key vectors of international security by most Western liberal states, most prominently in the United States of America. As the National Security Strategy of the United States of America succinctly puts it, “America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are

by failing ones” (USG 2002). Consequently, the US government agencies dealing in both security and foreign policy have been gradually shifting paradigm since the 1990’s in order to do more and better state-building –especially state-building understood as development policy - as a means to enhancing their security, as recent policy pronouncements and especially recent interventions neatly demonstrate.

Within the new topography of security, then, insecurity no longer emanates primarily from strong states and their armed forces but rather from weak, failing, failed or collapsed states. Attesting to the impact of this shift in perceptions are both policy pronouncements, such as the National Security Strategy quoted above, and the birth and extraordinary growth of a veritable cottage industry of academic literature on state-failure – especially the ever-expanding number of studies, reflections and recommendations emanating from the American pool of think-tanks and policy-oriented research centres at universities dealing with “the evolving U.S. government response”⁹ to the issue of state frailty and/or state-failure. Given the sheer volume of literature on state-failure in the last ten years, it is firmly outside the bounds of this short paper to provide a comprehensive survey of theoretical and policy approaches to the problems of state-failure, let alone engage in critical fashion with all the arguments raised. Rather, the objective of this section is to sketch some of the main lines of argumentation emerging from the literature, especially as it seeks to link state-failure and the problem of “ungoverned spaces” as *security problems*, thereby opening such areas up to international governmental technologies such as policing. This provides a useful backdrop against which to analyse changes and continuities in American regimes of security assistance, particularly since the end of the Cold War.

David Bayley, in the most recent survey of US efforts on international police assistance (Bayley 2006), summarizes the trend neatly: the end of the Cold War, as has been highlighted above, brought about momentous shifts in the security environment making to deal with it. Concurrently, the collapse of the Soviet Union (and, one should add, the deepening of the globalisation process) was perceived as having left liberal, market-oriented democracy as the sole victor model. In the somewhat triumphalist consensus that emerged in the early 90’s¹⁰, democracy promotion became an overarching (some, including Bayley, would say *the* overarching) goal in US foreign policy. Additionally, a third change

⁹ This is the title of a conference, organized by Johns Hopkins School of Advances International Studies, in which Francis Fukuyama took pride of place in floating his recent ideas about state-building.

¹⁰ One cannot but mention the hugely influential and endlessly debated “end of history” thesis by Francis Fukuyama (Fukuyama 1989, 1992), as well as the slogan – attributed to Margaret Thatcher – of “there is no alternative” (TINA) [to market-oriented, liberal democracy and global capitalism].

took place, in that the perceptions of the role of police in political order went gradually from obstacle to enabler, with the result that “(...) assistance to security institutions abroad (...) was no longer viewed as dangerous, unsavoury, diversionary and politically retrograde, but as a key component of social stability and economic development.” (Bayley 2006: 10). This was then progressively coupled in the 1990’s with a concern about failed states, leading to the view that “security sector reform” (SSR), as it would be later termed - and particularly the reform or reconstruction of police, - were in fact vital means to achieve democracy promotion abroad:

For a variety of reasons, then, criminal justice reform, in particular that of the police, became an important element in the foreign policy of the developed world during the last decade of the 20th century. (...) [I]n the 1990’s the international community rediscovered a lesson that had been marginalized during the Cold War, namely the importance for peace and prosperity of creating effective law-enforcement institutions that operate under the rule of law and with respect for human rights . The 1990’s were unique in the scope and explicitness of attention given by the international community to police reform of a democratic character. (Bayley 2006: 10-11)

This section is therefore intent on surveying some post-Cold War, and post-9-11, developments in US foreign policy, in particular the broad governmental rationalities and programmes which have dealt with the issue of state-failure, and the attending technologies of state-building, chiefly in the area of security governance. On the one hand, (in)security policies are increasingly linked to state-failure – as hinted above –, which in turn highlights the assumptions made by Western liberalism about statehood and security provision. On the other hand, there is a need for critique of the (perhaps trite) tendency to assume, in policy and in practice, that state-building – particularly the reform of the security sector, and building strong institutions of coercive power (armed forces and police) that function along Western liberal standards – is a neutral, “technical”, solution, *before politics* as it were. Instead, the fieldwork which underpins this paper, conducted in both Washington DC and Afghanistan in 2006-2007, underlines that even such seemingly “technical” issues as police reforms and programs to build up or strengthen rule of law in war-torn countries are based on essentially liberal views of statehood, security, law, and ultimately politics itself. Additionally, this section hopes to demonstrate that these liberal rationalities and practices become legitimated not only by presenting themselves in the technical, “neutral” language of institution-building in the benevolent context of promoting good governance and democracy, but also, in large measure, by de-legitimizing (or precluding altogether) other, competing approaches.

Framing state failure as a domain of security

The literature on state frailty and state building mentioned above seems, on the whole, to emphasize the functional failure of states, i.e. the weakness or failure of a state's institutions to provide its citizens with three major bundles of public goods: security, first and foremost; representation, as a channel do address their needs and grievances in a non-violent way; and welfare (Rotberg 2003). The failure of states to (i) assert their institutional presence, visibly and/or effectively, and (ii) met out their obligations to citizens in this liberal, social-contractarian view of statehood, is what causes the breakdown of social and political order (*ibid.*). The analogy can be – and is often - made with the influential “broken windows” theory of crime control proposed by prominent neo-conservative author James Q. Wilson and criminologist George L Kelling in the early 1980's (Wilson and Kelling 1982). According to them, the inability or unwillingness of the authorities (at the local or national level) to respond to exterior signs of urban decay (“broken windows” or “litter on the sidewalk”), and to tackle petty crime (especially vandalism) send a signal to criminals in the area – emboldening them to escalate their activities. Thus, failure of public order and public safety at the most basic level which becomes tolerated apparently empowers “criminals” of all sorts, and encourages unlawful behaviour, opening up opportunities for criminal threats to emerge in these ungoverned spaces, which might spill over. In this view, spaces which are not subject to governmental gaze, governmental presence, or any sort of regulation, represent a security threat. Although the theory was originally offered in response to debates about criminal justice within the U.S., and has since come under heavy criticism, one can see the parallels that have been – implicitly and explicitly – drawn from this domestic analogy for the politics of international security governance¹¹.

In this way, areas at the international level which are deemed ungovernable or ungoverned – for instance, in cases where a state is unable (or unwilling) to extend the rule of law and the monopoly of the legitimate means of violence to the whole of its territory - warrant intervention, lest these “black holes” become sanctuaries for terrorists¹², or thoroughfares for drugs and other contraband. This linking of state frailty, ungoverned spaces, criminal threats and international security is often found in the

¹¹ During fieldwork, at least three individuals made explicit reference during the interview process to the “broken windows” theory as a paradigm for US international police assistance efforts, and recent US interventions more generally. These individuals included both a (mid-level) policymaker, and implementers (a former consultant with the DoJ's ICITAP, and a current consultant for the Department of State's Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, INL). Moreover, the pointman for police reconstruction in Iraq under Paul Bremmer, Bernard Kerik, had cut his teeth in police reform advising a decade earlier, working as a top aide for NY Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and applying principles of the “broken windows” theory in order to clean the streets and subways of New York.

¹² For a somewhat crude but illustrative statement of this see (Korteweg and Ehrhardt 2006)

literature on state-failure, but also, tellingly, in axial policy documents of US foreign policy. Consider, for instance, the rationale for National Security Presidential Directive number forty-four (NSPD-44), which clearly states that the US has a “significant stake” in stabilization and reconstruction operations in order to “enable governments abroad to exercise sovereignty over their own territories and to prevent those territories from being used as a base of operations or safe haven for extremists, terrorists, organized crime groups, or others who pose a threat to US foreign policy, security, or economic interests.” (USG 2005: 2)¹³. Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice, in an article in *The Washington Post*, concurs, stating that “(...) the greatest threats to our security are defined more by the dynamics within weak and failing states than by the borders between strong and aggressive ones” (Rice 2005). And Marcia Wong, Deputy Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization at the State Department, recently put it in stark, unequivocal terms:

Where there is a failure of governance, and the state is too weak to control its territory and provide for its people, it can become a haven for terrorism. (...) A vacuum of good governance and rule of law can lead to a host of dangers – organized crime, drug trade, human trafficking, weapons proliferation, terrorist safe havens. (...) So, this is not a small problem in far-flung places. State collapse has wide repercussions – creating a ripple effect through a region, and affecting the international community. This focus on state weakness is not new. (...) What is different today is that we understand better the interaction between state failure, humanitarian crises, and our own security. It's not enough to focus only on strong states, when our security is so closely tied to the success or failure of societies in weak ones. Addressing state weakness is consistent with our national values. And as we have come to understand, it is also in our national interest. (Wong 2006)

In this vein, the linking of such “ungoverned spaces” to security threats to the US has begun cropping up more and more, particularly in the ever-changing Department of Defense internal vocabulary. As early back as 2003, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was discussing the difficulties of the war on terror thus: “The second thing I would say is that there are *ungoverned areas* in the world, as the general said, and that is a problem. That makes it easier for people who are trying to evade attention and capture to continue to function, because -- literally *areas that no one is governing* (...)” (Rumsfeld 2003, emphasis added). When queried by the press about other global concerns in the war on terror, besides the high profile interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Director for Strategic Plans and Policy, Lt. Gen. Victor Renuart described the problem thus: “Well, we spent a lot of time talking about a term that may have been mentioned by the secretary and chairman in the past, and that is, ungoverned

¹³ The directive, signed by President George W. Bush, supersedes previous Directives by the Clinton Administration.

spaces (...) [A]nd in that kind of environment it's easy for illicit trade -- smuggling, piracy, narcotics trafficking, as well as terrorists, all move through that kind of environment.” (Renuart 2006) Apparently, the DoD now possesses an “Ungoverned Spaces” initiative (cf. Wong 2006), presumably prompted by Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for African Affairs Theresa Whelan’s recent presentation on “Africa’s ungoverned space – a new threat paradigm” in Washington DC.

Whether in the parlance of state failure (Department of State), fragile states (United States Agency for International Development) or ungoverned spaces (Department of Defense), the fact is that US security practices in post-conflict intervention scenarios have changed substantively, so that “(...) [i]t now extended to the penetration of the state, the socialization of its polity and the administration of rule of law to groups and individuals within it” (Freeman 2007). In a security environment characterized essentially by a concern about criminal threats emanating from, or passing unhindered through, fragile states, the solution presented rings loud and clear: intervention in order to create or restore, quickly and visibly, public order and security – much like the recommendations the original “broken windows” article mentioned above made to chiefs of police about their poorly governed neighbourhood with high crime rates. It is in this context that assistance to security governance becomes paramount, especially in terms of (re)building internal security institutions.¹⁴

This is because state failure, at least as it is generally used in the literature, usually refers to *functional failure*, rather than actual *institutional collapse*, as mentioned earlier on. That is to say, state weakness or failure in these instances refers to the inability or unwillingness of state apparatuses to “function properly”, as Western dominant conceptions would expect them to, and provide the public goods mentioned at the outset of this section (security, representation, welfare)¹⁵. Only in rare cases does this refer to actual state collapse – i.e. the extinction of state-apparatuses altogether within national territories. In other words, state failure does not refer lack of government, but rather to not effecting government (in the Foucauldian sense) in liberal ways which reflect the Western experience of statehood.

¹⁴ This paper focuses on US efforts in policebuilding – i.e. programs and techniques of government aimed at assisting third countries to (re)build or (re)develop their internal security apparatuses, mostly within the framework of the rule of law, and criminal justice reform. However, it seems quite telling that the other main arm of international security assistance – that of training armed forces in pos-conflict environments such as Afghanistan or Iraq – is disproportionately focused on internal security as well.

¹⁵ The useful distinction between functional failure and institutional collapse is introduced by Jennifer Milliken and Keith Krause (Milliken and Krause 2002).

It is worth pointing out that this relationship between state failure and international (in)security is neither obvious nor long-standing. While problematising international security has always revolved around questions of statehood (even when the referent is emphatically not the state, as in the case of human security), one would be hard pressed to find more than a handful of references to state-failure, or its links to transnational criminal threats before the mid-1990's. In the steady flow of qualifiers attached to statehood, the greatest concerns – in particular the concerns of Washington DC - have changed over time: aggressive/expansionist and overly strong states (such as Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union), dysfunctional post-colonial states following the wave of decolonization, rent-seeking and corrupt states in the – then – Third World during the 80's, followed by rogue states during the early 1990's (most notably Iraq), and now fragile and/or failed states. This is not to deny either the existence of important challenges and obstacles to the dominant, Western liberal conception of statehood in many areas of the world, nor is it to suggest that such discursive inflections are simply linguistic fads. Instead, one would simply suggest that – as Adam Morton and Pinar Bilgin, among others, have noticed – problematizations of statehood and their links to international (in)security must be carefully historicized and contextualized, as they are inextricably linked to Western (mostly Weberian) standards on coercive ability, and regimes of political economy (Morton and Bilgin 2002). Or, as Foucault would have us notice, that regimes of power – such as the international liberal regimes that currently govern relations between the developing and the developed world – are always dependent upon, and constitutive of, specific knowledges, as the literatures on state-failure readily attest.

This linkage of criminal security threats to the issue of state-failure betrays the Western liberal bias in terms of what (i) is understood as (effective) statehood, (ii) the centrality of state-export within the context of globalization and liberal governance, and (iii) the predominantly statist understanding of security this continues to evince. In particular, it is the Weberian definition of the state that is here at stake – once one can determine that the state no longer holds the monopoly of the legitimate means of coercion, one declares it a failing or collapsed state, and one of the first measures is to rebuild these security institutions. In particular, assistance to police forces gains salience, since they are seen as the most ubiquitous and most immediate line of security provision, and assurance of public order¹⁶.

The US and police assistance

¹⁶ Although bolstering other security institutions such as the armed forces is also seen as a top priority, particularly in post-conflict scenarios where battlefield operations proper may be over, but “stabilization” has to occur.

Having just discussed the use of internal security assistance as prime tools of state-building on the part of the US, this section attempts to address an underlying tension in how policebuilding is perceived both in US foreign and security policy documents, and in some of the literature on state-building. The tension this section highlights and critiques can be briefly summarized thus: whereas policebuilding is readily and amply acknowledged within policy circles as “(...) a vital tool of U.S. foreign policy” (DoS-INL 2005) in transforming states in ways conducive to both standards of liberal security governance and US vital interests, at the same time the same efforts are usually presented in a highly “technical”, a-political manner – as the simple exporting of expertise in the field of security reform. However, as highlighted previously, nothing could be further from the truth: policebuilding is predicated upon inherently political definitions of statehood (or failures thereof), as well as modernist, Western, and liberal conceptions of the role of the state in the provision of security, the means through which such security is provided, and the relationship between state (as purveyor of security) and citizens. Beyond the most immediate objectives of establishing law and order in the aftermath of complex political emergencies, international police assistance on the part of the US seeks to promote particular ways of thinking security, particular ways of doing security, and particular ways of being secure – often more in synch with American standards than the actual needs of afflicted populations¹⁷.

The internationalization of policing is a complex process that has a wide range of manifestations: the expansion of institutional cooperation between police forces (Bigo 1996, Deflem 2000), the creation and deepening of international policing bodies (Deflem 2002), the (by and large) unilateral expansion of policing jurisdictions by the US (Nadelmann 1993, Andreas and Nadelmann 2006), the increased use of civilian police (CivPol) contingents in peacekeeping operations (Azimi 1996, Call and Barnett 1999, Hills 1998), the use of “executive policing” in the latter context (Dwan 2002), and the growing operationalization – at a more abstract level – of an international police power (Dubber and Valverde 2006). However, what is meant throughout this paper by US “international police assistance” (or simply policebuilding) is a set of *bilateral* instruments (treaties, programs, institutions) which aim to (re)build and/or reform internal security institutions in “transitional countries”, especially those emerging from conflict. This is a form of foreign aid which is central to contemporary US foreign policy practice, and which is enmeshed in a set of other bilateral programs – the training of foreign armed forces, the promotion of the rule of law abroad, the reform of foreign criminal justice systems, to name but a few. And, unlike global prohibition regimes such as the “war on drugs”¹⁸, it has a much

¹⁷ For a mind-boggling raft of examples, cf. Rajiv Chandrasekaran’s excellent book (Chandrasekaran 2006)

¹⁸ On global prohibition regimes, cf. Ethan Nadelmann’s original article (Nadelmann 1990)

more *productive* ethos – the ultimate goals are not primarily to interdict and punish certain forms of unlawful or criminal behaviour (although disciplinary, punitive, and sometimes illiberal, practices certainly find their place in such assistance programs), but to shape social institutions which are brought to bear on the conduct of individuals, socializing them in a particular way of relating to policing, and the rule of law more generally – a crucial aspect in the promotion of liberal forms of governing¹⁹, in less obviously visible but equally effective ways.

Early efforts of police assistance by the US were marked by a degree of militarism, as illustrated by the preferential deployment of constabulary units in the context of interventions and post-conflict “stabilization and reconstruction” (S&R) operations, as they would be called today, in the circum-Caribbean region²⁰. Police assistance efforts were limited and uncommon, the main mission of such constabulary forces being the (re)establishment of public order, especially in the rural hinterlands of Caribbean neighbours, in the face of failure by local elites of doing so unaided. Alternatively, they were part and parcel of “pacification” efforts by occupying US troops. When training occurred, it was geared essentially towards the short term objectives of subduing a local insurgency, shoring up a friendly (and usually undemocratic) regime, ensuring US control of what it regarded as its legitimate sphere of influence. This shouldn’t surprise us, since the overall paradigm of “police” was still essentially understood as a social function to administer community life so as to promote public order, which was conducive to prosperity. It was only during WWII that the constabulary strategy began being systematically complemented by thorough reform of the institutional and legal framework in which the local police forces functioned, and the preoccupation emerged with the development of long-term capabilities, indigenous ownership of the reform process, and the de-militarization and de-politicization (if indeed one can use the expression) of post-conflict police institutions. The linking of US bilateral police assistance to the preoccupations of serious nation-building had begun.

¹⁹ While there has been some recent, pathbreaking work on similar processes of socializing agents in international society, through security practices and institutions, into an expanding “global liberal governmentality” (cf. Gheciu 2005 on NATO’s role), police assistance has received little or no attention in this analytical context.

²⁰ Between the 1898 and the 1930’s, just before World War II, the bulk of US assistance to internal security forces was centred on the circum-Caribbean region, occurring in the context of US imperial expansion in the late 19th century, as the presence and influence of the rival Spanish Empire receded. In particular, it took place under the general premises of the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, and a policy of “preventive intervention”, whereby “American armed forces intervened to restore order where local armies failed.” (Pérez Jr. 1982: 168). It was in this context that the US intervened militarily in Cuba (four times, in 1898-1902, 1906-09, 1917, 1921), Haiti (1915-1934), Honduras, Nicaragua (1912-1933), Panama (a country largely created on account of a 1902 US intervention), Mexico and the Dominican Republic. To this list one could add American interventions in the Pacific archipelagos (Hawai’i, Samoa), of which the Philippine War (1899-1902) and its complex aftermath (1903-1934) was the most significant case. For a full, annotated list of US armed intervention worldwide (1798-2001) cf. Richard Grimmet’s report for the Congressional Research Service (Grimmet 2002).

The German and Japanese experiences with post-conflict police assistance in the wake of major warfare and subsequent occupation hold some important insights, historically speaking, about US policebuilding strategies, both in terms of continuities and important ruptures. While still largely based on the use of constabulary force with executive authority to achieve public order prior to developing and training local police forces, and while still remarkably shaped by the demands of policebuilding in the wake of intervention and/or violent conflict, often in regions where the occupying forces enjoy little legitimacy with the populace, these experiences nonetheless sowed the seeds on change in terms of US approaches to policebuilding. The first step was a gradual recognition that there was no actual framework – legal, institutional, budgetary – to deal with policebuilding proper. As a result, one can see that the experiments with police assistance in both Germany and Japan, unlike most earlier attempts, actually emphasized and followed through on the development of local police capability. Secondly, they started a preoccupation with the reform of the wider structures (legal, political, institutional, and social) in which police-(re)building must perforce occur. And finally, and perhaps more importantly, these variegated experiences at the end of the Second World War began highlighting the connection between state-building (especially re-making internal structures of security governance in a way conducive to particular forms of modern liberal government) and democracy promotion (as evinced in discourses of democratizing the police *and* democratizing through the police) as intertwined overall strategies within which US police assistance would take place. In short, the lessons drawn from police assistance until the Cold War, as discussed in the next section, opened the way for the creation of more specific, durable institutions and policies of international police assistance. This also reflects a slow, gradual *change in paradigm* from wanting to establish a rough semblance of order in post-conflict scenarios, to the linking of policebuilding with democratization, the overarching concern of US foreign policy since at least the 1990's.

Regarding American deployment of police assistance abroad, the Cold War years, from the mid-1950's to the creation of ICITAP²¹ in 1986, were a remarkable period in at least two ways. The first is the degree to which institutional and intellectual developments in the field at this time have come to shape in significant ways the evolution of US police assistance, allowing the overall paradigm of police assistance to transition gradually from earlier ad hoc interventions deploying constabulary forces to maintain public order in post-intervention scenarios, to a much more constant, sustained and articulated

²¹ The International Criminal Investigative Training and Assistance Program is the branch of the Department of Justice which was created specifically to deal with US police assistance abroad. For a good overview of the ICITAP, its creation and policies, cf. (Call 1998)

policy of support, training and equipping foreign police forces, in order to develop local capabilities and (to a degree) local ownership of the process. Similarly, it was a period that highlights the transition from an essentially militarized form of police assistance taking place in a vague institutional haze, and almost without means of regulation or effective legislative oversight, to a policy environment characterized by multiple competing agencies seeking to achieve the status of lead nation or focal point, a growing primacy of civilian agencies and concepts (at least until 2005), and heavy regulatory framework – paradoxically, as a result of so many ideologically tainted abuses of human rights in Latin America during this period. Moving from the structural to the programmatic level, the operational concept at this time was that of “foreign internal security assistance”, that is, assistance to the internal security forces (police, gendarmeries, paramilitary groups) of foreign countries in the context of anti-Communism and counter-insurgency. The key player throughout this period was the (in)famous Office of Public Safety (OPS).

Despite being inextricably tainted by its association with the worst abuses of human rights in Latin America (Huggins 1998) – a fact which ultimately led to its timely extinction in 1974 - the impact of the OPS should not be underestimated. In little more than a decade (and less than two even if we consider the earliest “public safety programs” under Eisenhower), it trained and/or equipped over half a million personnel in more than 41 countries (McHugh 1994), where it also significantly boosted institutional capabilities (albeit in a lopsided manner that over-privileged the host countries’ security institutions). More importantly, its workings also crystallize the emerging doctrine of US police assistance as it operated throughout the Cold war years, and allow us to have a glimpse of the lines of change and continuity in this policy, namely:

- 1) The importance of police assistance in contexts where military training and assistance, or indeed full-fledged military deployment, would be unacceptable. This led to a regime of practices that gradually came to emphasize the “local ownership” of security tasks, and the need to develop local institutions and skills to cope with security demands (cf. Rosenau 2003: 72), a trait significantly different from earlier experiences in the circum-Caribbean region, and somewhat more mature and constant than during WWII.
- 2) The interpenetration of programs and agencies involved in bilateral police assistance, ranging from US military advisors (albeit in ever-decreasing roles as far as actual police training was concerned), to the Department of State through USAID, to the CIA and the DEA. This

inevitably created a sort of institutional fog, filled with tensions (not least between civilian and (para)military agencies), a feature of US police assistance which is present to this day. This dispersion of authority and objectives in terms of agencies involved is mirrored in the variety of instruments used to deliver police training, from exchange programs (with foreign counterparts typically coming to the US for relatively short periods of intensive training at American institutions), to the use of contractors to deliver in-country assistance and training, to the creation of purpose-built training institutions, such as the original International Police Academy which today has several successors.

- 3) The emphasis, at the level of the overall intellectual trends informing US police assistance abroad, placed on internal security institutions – in particular the police – as visible markers of state power, and as “barometers” of a state’s ability to perform. As a consequence, the gradual linking of security assistance (and therefore the overall objectives of the US national security) with modernisation theory, and a drive to develop Third World countries. This marks an important step in articulating the ideas of “security assistance as development” (so prevalent today) and “development assistance as obtaining security”, particularly the intellectual strand that affirms the link more and better governance institutions (including security governance) and the US’s ability to diminish or at least manage security threats of a non-military nature.

The period following the extinction of the Office of Public Safety saw an involution and fragmentation of US police assistance, as would be expected. But, quite significantly for the purposes of this presentation, it is during this time - with the creation and expansion of ICITAP, - that a link is visibly spelled out between technical police assistance and the promotion of democracy abroad, a trend which has continued unabated until today (cf. e.g., Carothers 2000). It is also during this time that US international police assistance becomes linked to “administration of justice” (AOJ) programs, and to rule of law more broadly. In other words, there was a mounting sense that police assistance was essentially a “technical enterprise”, the exporting of particular advanced forms of expertise in the service of American development and security policies. Whereas the OPS had been indelibly marked by a concern with identifying “subversive elements”, fighting “Communist infiltration” and supplying the state with credible means of coercion, the ICITAP was much more geared to the interface between legal reform and the promotion of (neo-)liberal forms of governance, and the role of police reform therein. The emphasis was on the role of the police as a productive force at the service of the community, and the buzzwords that began to dominate the literature were “democratic policing”,

“community policing”, “best practices”, and “standards”. As such, one can see the gradual development of US police assistance as it tries to legitimize itself by representing its workings not as a form of governing distant populations through the structuring of the security field in particular ways which evince a liberal modernist bias, but rather as a technical, neutral and apolitical form of foreign aid, which is clearly a misrepresentation. US police assistance, in the alternative reading offered by this paper, is an inherently political and heavily politicized process, in which power may indeed operate in less obvious but in fact more effective ways.

Conclusions

The present paper has called attention to how statehood and sovereignty have been problematized by contemporary security establishments in Western liberal states, in a move that increasingly links the lack of governmental presence in the entirety of its territory with the security interests of the Western world, the US most prominently. Thus, effective statehood in this context means essentially (i) a Weberian monopoly on legitimate means of coercion, and following from it (ii) the ability to effectively ensure public security. Therefore, at the beginning and at the core of peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts should be the task of (re)building internal security institutions, which provide the basic foundations of the desirable political order – a view that neatly resonates with current US efforts at police building in post-conflict settings. So, it is by now firmly “established” that the recipe for success is to structure the security field through strong security institutions, which can then structure and sustain the “political field” or “political process” in desirable ways. But the crucial question remains unasked: *institutions of what kind?* Institutionalisation is never neutral, as I hope to show with present the analysis of police assistance in US foreign policy.

The example of Afghanistan – currently absorbing close to half a billion dollars a year from American police assistance programs²² – provides a good illustration of what I mean with this question. The US has identified the rebuilding of internal security forces as a key area of concern, and has, since 2003, sought to build a strong, effective set of policing institutions.²³ However, the US has been adamant, for instance, that Afghanistan should have a *national* police force, rather than a more de-centralized, municipal model (similar, for instance, to the highly fragmented and localized American model).

²² Current figures are constantly changing, and they depend on whether one includes supplemental appropriations, transfers from defence budgets to policing programs, etc. (refs!)

²³ The police institutions in Afghanistan comprise Afghan National Police (ANP), the Afghan Border Police, the (now extinct) Afghan Highway Police, and the (recently created) Afghan National Auxiliary Police, a constabulary type force.

Similarly, it has contested Germany's lead nation status on policebuilding, and currently dwarfs German efforts in terms of both money and personnel. It has also "suggested" that the Afghan Ministry of Interior should raise its police force ceilings by a few thousand. Moreover, in the course of its strenuous state-building efforts in Afghanistan, the US has essentially ignored and de-legitimized the nearest thing Afghanistan has had to a police force and the rule of law in the last 35 years: the tribal councils (*jirgas*) and the tribal militias charged with enforcing law and order, under the tutelage of village tribal elders (*spingiri*). As seen from the bottom up, therefore, institution building on the field of policing and rule of law in Afghanistan seems anything but neutral. Indeed, it evinces a clear political agenda of liberalization and modernization through the establishment of a national police force functioning according to American standards, and evincing a marked liberal bent. Edward Rees, in a recent study on security sector reform (Rees 2006), concisely illustrates the problems of such institutionalist strategies when he remarks that while the greatest successes in post-conflict security reform have been in establishing large institutions ("large bodies of experts", he refers), the greatest failures have been in establishing *indigenous* civil society control and oversight of such security institutions.

Additionally, little emphasis is placed, apart from lip-service or purely nominal fund allocations, to other important tools of reforming the security environment of post-conflict states in the framework of state-building²⁴. This is particularly evident in terms of transitional justice efforts, and also a full-fledged emphasis on judicial reform, both of which have hardly been tried in the dominant scenarios of Afghanistan and Iraq. The tonic has most decidedly been on reconstituting state structures, particularly in terms of the monopoly of the legitimate means of violence, which reflect a Western view of what statehood is and how it should perform security.

In other words, an analysis of US practices of security in terms of international police assistance foregrounds the ways in which security governance has become a paramount tool of foreign policy, and it highlights the inherently political nature of what I usually presented as an apolitical exercise of altruistic foreign aid. Instead, the picture that emerges is that of a hegemonic power which seeks to structure the possible field of action of others through security assistance, as is most visible in Iraq and Afghanistan today, which opens up all kinds of questions about the Western project of slowly but surely expanding and deepening forms of liberal governmentality.

²⁴ A review of the funds allocated to transitional justice initiatives pales in comparison to the figures relative to policebuilding. Similarly, numbers of personnel involved in both areas – both in policymaking, and on the ground implementing them – are absolutely disparate.

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