Mark Duffield is probably the leading theorist of the nexus between security and development. His book Development, Security and Unending Wars, pursues and develops the themes of his earlier work, especially that of his 2001 book Global Governance and the New Wars, which focused on the shift from inter-state war to the perception of underdevelopment as a source of international insecurity. In this earlier work Duffield usefully highlighted the regulatory mechanisms of the global governance of ‘liberal peace’ through interventionist management of the behaviour of those deemed ‘at risk’.

For Duffield, the discourse of human security is one of permanent emergency and unending war. He argues that human security is a key reflection of the dominance of biopolitical framings of international relations - interconnecting security and development concerns – through having ‘life’ or the population as a reference point rather than the state (p.118). Human security discourse seeks to universalise or globalise security problems of instability by positing the responsibilities of the West to intervene and manage insecurity at the same time as seeking to contain the risks of instability through a focus on non-material development, in terms of the technologies of community-based self-reliance.

For Duffield, there is nothing progressive in the biopolitical framing of security in terms of permanent instability. The human security approach, for example, as advocated by Mary Kaldor, is seen to blur the divisions and power relations shaping security discourse at the same time as instituting a racial discourse of biopolitical division between the secure and the insecure - those living under effective and ineffective governance; those developed and those deserving of development. This bifurcation is captured in the descriptive and contingent division between the ‘insured’ – those living in mass consumer society with social welfare protections – and the ‘uninsured’ – those living in underdeveloped societies where instability is an ever present threat and where the development solution is self-reliance and containment through the social engineering of community support mechanisms.

For Duffield, one crucial distinction between biopolitics and traditional inter-state relations is at the level of sovereignty: he highlights how the focus on ‘life’, or the population, makes sovereignty contingent on state ‘effectiveness’. The blurring of the political distinctions between the inside and outside, the sovereign post-colonial state and international institutions and NGOs, are most clear in the case of ‘governance states’, where the donors and international financial institutions operate inside the institutions of the fragile state under the aegis of shared partnership to achieve poverty reduction. Duffield argues that while the state is brought back into interventionist frameworks with the merging of development and security, this is a very different entity from the post-colonial state which sought to defend its sovereign rights and to lead the development process; for the governance state, ‘while its territorial integrity is respected, sovereignty over life is internationalized, negotiable and contingent’ (p.169).
As an engaged and empirically-grounded critique of cosmopolitan liberal internationalist articulations of universal human security discourses and of the progressive nature of new forms of global governance, conditional sovereignty, and human development, Duffield’s book is certainly compelling reading. Where I wish to raise questions is over the critical theoretical approach deployed in the work. Duffield argues in the Preface that the book’s ‘most important departure… relates to the application of the Foucaldian [sic] concept of biopolitics’ (p.viii). It is the biopolitical angle which Duffield suggests distinguishes this book from his earlier work, which equally sought to understand Western interventionist frameworks as techniques of stabilisation, containment and counter-insurgency in the post-colonial world. This is an interesting point, but I would like him to expand much more on what this framework adds to his earlier work. In particular, there are three questions which I wish to pose:

Firstly, I am not sure that this methodological framing does mark this book out as distinct from his 2001 book, *Global Governance and the New Wars*, which stresses the point that:

> The ultimate goal of liberal peace is stability. In achieving this aim, liberal peace is different from imperial peace. The latter was based on, or at least aspired to, direct territorial control where populations were ruled through juridical and bureaucratic means of authority… Liberal peace is different; it is a non-territorial, mutable and networked relation of governance… ideally liberal power is based on the management and regulation of economic, political and social processes.iii

Already implicitly, if not explicitly, Duffield seems to be employing a Foucauldian framework distinguishing biopower over processes from disciplinary sovereign power over territory. In my view, rather than adding anything, Duffield’s much more explicit use of Foucault’s concept of biopower appears to have held his work back from fully exploring and exploiting his empirical insights. Without drawing explicitly on Foucault he was previously able to highlight the depoliticising effects of the new discourses of development and security, and to note how the defeat of the post-colonial project facilitated the problematisation of the non-Western state and the securitisation of underdevelopment.iv The weak point in his analysis was theorising the processes of intervention and the blurring of security of development, which he was so insightfully describing.

Secondly, in focusing on biopower, but without really using this conception to deepen our understanding, Duffield appears to be evading the task of explanation. Foucault himself stated that his analysis of biopower was ‘not in any way a general theory of what power is. It is not a part or even the start of such a theory’, merely the study of the effects of liberal governance practices, which posit as their goal the interests of society – the population – rather than government.v Biopolitics, as developed by Foucault, is used broadly to describe government in the age of liberal modernity, where the state is no longer alien and external to society. The population are no longer an alien mass to be coerced or manipulated, as in the pre-modern time of Machiavelli; instead, the needs of society as a whole ‘offer a surface on which [power] can get a hold’, or ‘secure’ itself.vi
Rather than the disciplinary sovereign power of external rule, the state operates on the basis of ‘governmentality’ of the liberal freedoms of the political and the economic sphere, where society (capitalist social relations) internally generates the need for regulatory governance.\textsuperscript{vii} Foucault is, in fact, describing the dynamic of liberal modernity, understood as a society-orientated process, with a social, collective purpose or goal, rather than a process of narrow regulatory governance by the disciplinary techniques of the sovereign. Foucault states: ‘I think this marks an important break. Whereas the end of sovereignty is internal to itself and gets its instruments from itself in the form of law, the end of government is internal to the things it directs; it is to be sought in the perfection, maximization, or intensification of the processes it directs’.\textsuperscript{viii}

Duffield is grappling with how to explain the apparently ‘post-territorial’ and ‘post-political’ dynamics of international regulation and seeks to locate the explanation in the post-colonial world itself and the threat it (the ‘uninsured’) allegedly poses to the security of the mass consumption societies of the West. He argues that there is a Western projection of the problems of the inequalities and inclusions and exclusions of the world market as a problem of the underdevelopment of weak, fragile and failing states, which are then the subject of new forms of global techniques of intervention and governance. While this appears to be a radical point of critique, it is not clear how this framing offers a way into understanding why such a radical shift from the politics of international security to the ‘biopolitics’ of human security should have taken place.

Thirdly, and perhaps most worryingly, whilst Foucault himself understood his work on biopower as a correction to the reading of his work on disciplinarity, which created the impression of merely asserting ‘the monotonous assertion of power’,\textsuperscript{ix} Duffield, in effect, reads biopower ahistorically, as a fait à compli, suggesting that the only alternative is to assert that we are all victims of governmentalism: ‘we are all governed and therefore in solidarity’ (p.232). Apparently we should focus on what we share with post-colonial societies, not offering the hierarchical ‘solidarity’ of development or political autonomy but instead the solidarity of learning from the poor and being marginalised as equals; once humbled: ‘through a practical politics based on the solidarity of the governed we can aspire to opening ourselves to the spontaneity of unpredictable encounters’ (p.234). In highlighting the hegemonic frameworks and interests underpinning the idealistic approach to new frameworks of human security, Duffield appears to throw the baby of human agency out with the bathwater of development, rejecting modernizing aspirations towards democracy and development for recreating oppressive neoliberal biopolitical frameworks of control and regulation. I would be very interested to know how Duffield intends his critique to inform and enable practices of resistance rather than encouraging a passive acquiescence to these new global mechanisms of regulation.

London, December 2010

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iii Duffield, p.34.  
iv Duffield, p.23.  
vi Foucault, p.75  
 vii Foucault, pp.91-99.  
 vili Foucault, p.99.  
 ix Foucault, p.56; see also Jean Baudrillard’s assertion that for Foucault, power always wins, at issue is merely its modulation, *Forget Foucault* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1987 (1977)), p.33.