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New narratives of international security governance: the shift from global interventionism to global self-policing

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This article examines the transformation in the narratives of the international governance of security over the past two decades. It suggests that there has been a major shift from governing interventions designed to address the causes of security problems to the regulation of the effects of these problems. In re-articulating the goals of international actors, the means and mechanisms of security governance have also changed, no longer focused on the universal application of Western knowledge and resources but rather on the unique local and organic processes at work in societies that bear the brunt of these problems. This transformation takes the conceptualisation of security governance out of the traditional terminological lexicon of security expertise and universal solutions and instead articulates the problematic of security and the policing of global risks in terms of local management processes, suggesting that decentralised coping strategies and self-policing are more effective and sustainable solutions.

Keywords: governance; security; causation; effects

Introduction
Particularly since the end of the Cold War, security governance has been a question at the very top of the international policy agenda. However, despite its centrality, there seems to be increasingly less clarity with regard to what problems necessitate external security interventions, how any such intervention should be managed and whether interventions are or could be effective. For the purposes of this paper, security governance interventions will be understood as the projections of external power in or over another state in order to direct or influence the security behaviour of actors within that state. Of course, security interventions can take a number of forms: from non-material interventions in a conflict or dispute, for example, making political/diplomatic statements which may lend support to one side or another; to more directly seeking to influence behaviour, through political, economic or social policy interventions, up to more coercive interventions, for example, sanctions on a state or individuals and, at the most extreme, direct coercive military intervention in the case of perceived severe abuses of state power. This paper seeks to conceptualise a fundamental shift in the understanding of security governance – not in terms of the technical categories above, arranged in a continuum from diplomatic communiqués to military coercion, but in terms of how governance is understood to work in relation to traditional security governance understandings of the need for centralised authority and, crucially today, in terms of Western, liberal or modernist forms of knowledge. It will be argued that security governance scholarship could and should take greater account of these shifts, especially as they relate to the transformation and mainstreaming of risk management as governance and the rise of

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approaches orientated to resilience as an internally generated capacity for the self-regulation or the self-policing of security risks.

Debates over security governance interventions have seen a shift from political concerns of self-government to increasingly pragmatic concerns of stability and effectiveness. It seems that the difficulties associated with centralised forms of governance intervention, designed to address problems in terms of cause-and-effect understandings, have become a greater concern for international interveners than the problems ostensibly to be addressed. This can be illustrated through contrasting the difference between the confidence – today, critics would say ‘hubris’1 – of 1990s understandings of the transformative nature of security governance interventions with current, much more pessimistic, approaches. In the 1990s, leading advocates understood security governance as able to address the ‘causes’ of problems in a global and interconnected world.2 Today, analysts are much more likely to highlight the fact that complex interactions and processes cannot be subordinated to modernist linear cause-and-effect models, aspiring to address problems at the level of causal relations.3

Giorgio Agamben usefully argues that the shift from a concern with causation to that of effects is a depoliticising move.4 Debates about addressing causation involve socio-political analysis and policy choices, putting decision making and the question of centralised sovereign power at the forefront. However, the regulation of effects centres, disperses or redistributes the focus away from the public, political sphere to the pluralised, differentiated (and often the private or personal) sphere of everyday life. The management of effects involves ongoing facilitative engagement in social processes and evades the question of security governance as centralised political decision making.5 Agamben argues that whilst the governing of causes is the essence of politics, the governance of effects reverses the political process:

We should not neglect the philosophical implications of this reversal. It means an epoch-making transformation in the very idea of government, which overturns the traditional hierarchical relation between causes and effects. Since governing the causes is difficult and expensive, it is more safe and useful to try to govern the effects.6

The governance of effects can therefore be seen as a retreat from the security commitments of earlier governance approaches of the 1990s, in terms of both resources and policy goals. However, it is the shifting conceptualisation of security governance itself, which is the concern of this paper. Security governance conceptualised as the governance of effects relocates the subject position of the security governance actors in relation to both the problem under consideration – which is no longer amenable to external policy solutions – and the society or community being intervened upon or ‘secured’ – which is no longer constructed as lacking knowledge or resources, but as being the key agency of transformation. In a world conceived as complex and non-linear, the management of effects necessarily implies the redistribution of policing and securing capacity away from central authorities, in the realisation that order emerges from the ‘bottom up’ rather than from the ‘top down’.7 Transformation comes not through external cause-and-effect security governance interventions but through the facilitation or empowerment of decentralised local agential securing capacities enabling societies to police themselves in terms of managing their own risks.

The cause-and-effect model of intervention

The cause-and-effect model, the archetypal model of centralised security governance in the policy debates in the 1990s and 2000s, particularly around the legal and political
concerns of the right of humanitarian intervention and regime change under the auspices of the War on Terror, operated on the basis of crisis or the exception. In this framing, the policy response tended to be one of centralised direction, under United Nations or United States and NATO command, based upon military power or bureaucratic organisation, which often assumed that policy interveners operated in a vacuum, where social and political norms had broken down, and little attention needed to be paid to the particular policy context. Cause-and-effect approaches share three key aspects.

**Universalist**

First, this model of security governance was universalist. Intervening states and international institutions were understood to have the power, resources and objective scientific knowledge necessary to solve the problems of conflict and human rights abuses. Debates in the early and mid-1990s assumed that Western states had the knowledge and power to act and therefore focused on the question of the political will of Western states.\(^8\) Of particular concern was the fear that the United States might pursue national interests rather than global moral and ethical concerns.\(^9\) In this framework, problems of security governance were seen in terms of a universalist and linear understanding. It was believed that humanitarian and human rights interventions, even including regime change and post-conflict management, could be successful on the basis that a specific set of policy solutions could solve a specific set of policy problems. This framework of security governance reached its apogee in international statebuilding in the Balkans, with long-term protectorates established over Bosnia and Kosovo, and was reflected in the RAND Corporation’s reduction of such interventions to simple cost and policy formulas that could be universally applied.\(^10\) This set up a universalist understanding of good security governance – the idea that certain solutions were timeless and could be exported or imposed – like the rule of law, democracy and markets.

The universalist framework legitimising security governance interventions thereby established a hierarchical and paternalist framework of understanding. Western liberal democratic states were understood to have the knowledge and power necessary to solve the security governance problems that other ‘failed’ and ‘failing’ states were alleged to lack. It was therefore little surprise that these interventions challenged the sovereign rights to self-government, which had long been upheld after decolonisation in the 1950s and 1960s. Many commentators have raised problems with the idealisation of liberal Western societies and the holding up of abstract and unrealistic security governance goals which tended to exaggerate the incapacity or lack of legitimacy of non-Western regimes.\(^11\) Beneath the universalist claims of promoting the interest of human rights, human security or human development, critical theorists suggested new forms of international domination were emerging, institutionalising market inequalities or restoring traditional hierarchies of power reminiscent of the colonial era.\(^12\)

**Mechanistic**

Second, this security governance framework was mechanistic. The problems of non-Western states were understood in simple terms of the need to restore security governance to the equilibrium of the status quo – which was understood as being disrupted by new forces or events. Illustrated, for example, in the popular ‘New Wars’ thesis, which argued that security was disrupted by exploitative elites seeking to destabilise society in order to cling to resources and power,\(^13\) or that the lack of human rights could be resolved through...
The assumption was that society was fundamentally healthy and that the problematic individuals or groups could be removed or replaced through external policy intervention, which would enable a secure equilibrium to be restored. This was a mechanistic view of how societies operated – as if they were machines and a single part had broken down and needed to be fixed. There was no holistic engagement with society as a collective set of processes, interactions and inter-relations. The assumption was that external security governance actors could come up with a ‘quick fix’ – perhaps sending troops to quell conflict or legal experts to write constitutions – followed by an exit strategy. The problems of securing based upon these mechanistic assumptions lead to an extension of the cause-and-effect paradigm in the form of peacebuilding and state-building and attempts to understand the endogenous causal processes at play and the search for the societal preconditions necessary for secure establishment of liberal regimes of markets, democracy and the rule of law.

**Reductionist**

Third, this security governance framework was reductionist. This approach left out the interactive relationship between the state and society and multiple possible responses to the appearance of certain problems or security governance failings. First, certain societies may be more prone to some security problems rather than others, instead of viewing these problems as discrete threats to otherwise healthy systems, vulnerability to conflict or famine or environmental changes, should therefore be seen as a product of the social, economic and political systems in place, and addressed at that level. Secondly, conflict, corruption, poverty or other security problems manifest themselves differently in different societies and have different consequences and impacts, making any external measure or comparison impossible. Some societies may be better able to cope with the stresses and strains of poverty or inequality than others, for example, or conflict, corruption or other problems might be understood as reflecting processes of change and development and therefore be seen as coping mechanisms or as positive, depending on the context of the society concerned.

The universalist, mechanistic and reductionist approach to international security governance was highly centralised and assumed that international intervention was the prerogative of leading Western states and that the subjects of intervention were non-Western states and that Western international specialists had the knowledge, technology and agency necessary to fix the problems. Traditionally, in the discipline of International Relations, critical commentators have understood this as a paternalistic framework, reproducing relations of inequality and reinforcing or constituting more open hierarchies of power, through the challenge to post-colonial sovereignty claims to political equality and self-government.

However, as will be considered further, a second way of critically conceptualising centralised epistemes of security governance has developed rapidly since the early 1990s, which engages with the knowledge assumptions at play in the legitimisation of security governance on the basis of universalist, mechanistic and reductionist understandings of the nature of social and political processes. These critics suggest that the claims of Western knowledge and power are false and hubristic and that Western modernist understandings of knowledge as context free and universally valid are problematic. Policy interventions assuming cause-and-effect relations are therefore criticised increasingly on practical and functionalist grounds rather than on ethical and political ones. Critics working within the second critical paradigm tend to reframe problems as emergent...
outcomes of complex processes rather than as discrete problems amenable to linear and reductionist security interventions. This process is well articulated by Michael Dillon’s conception of ‘the emergency of emergence’, in terms of a shift in policy concerns from sovereign power over territory to biopolitical concerns over the circulatory and contingent processes of life. For Dillon:

It is precisely here in the ground of life itself that contemporary biopolitics of security therefore intuit a pure experience of order, and of its mode of being, radically different from the Newtonian physics of a mechanistic and positivistic real that once inspired the west’s traditional state-centric territorial geopolitics of sovereign subjectivity.

Problems to be addressed are thus no longer construed as amenable to centralised forms of top-down power and cause-and-effect interventions but instead seen as a result of complex interconnected processes with no clear lines of causation. Rearticulating problems in terms of emergent or complex outcomes necessarily prevent security governance from being understood as a technique of external crisis solving. The alternative to addressing causes, as discussed earlier, is security governance at the level of effects. The governance of effects no longer necessitates claims of centralising knowledge, power and direction and thereby no longer poses the problem of political autonomy and state sovereignty. In this framing, conflict, poverty and humanitarian disasters become normalised, leading to coping strategies rather than crisis-driven discourses of political exception.

The governance of effects relies on a systems- or process-based ontology, suggesting that security governance interventions need to work with rather than against organic local practices and understandings and that there is a need for more homeopathic forms of policy intervention designed to enhance autonomous processes rather than undermine them. A key paradigm, which has enabled this shift in perspective, has been that of resilience thinking, which emphasises the complexity and interconnectedness of the key areas of security governance from disasters to conflict, crime and environmental degradation. In these more holistic and systemic approaches, interventions do not bring security in ‘from the outside’ but enable its internal and ‘bottom-up’ development. As Judith Rodin, president of the Rockefeller Foundation argues: ‘To be resilient is to be aware, adaptive, diverse, integrated, and self-regulating.’

The understanding of the internal production of both problems and solutions is highlighted in the title of Kathleen Tierney’s influential monograph ‘The Social Roots of Risk: Producing Disasters, Promoting Resilience’.

International policy making and the governance of effects

The shift from centralised security governance at the level of causation to intervention at the level of effects has been predominantly discussed in relation to the need to take into account the ‘law of unintended consequences’. The problem of ‘unintended consequences’ has become a policy trope regularly used as a shorthand expression for the profound shift in understandings of security governance, addressed in this paper, and can be understood as a generalised extension of Ulrich Beck’s view of ‘risk society’ with the determinate causal role of ‘side effects’ or of Bruno Latour’s similar analysis of today’s world as modernity ‘plus all its externalities’. It seems that there is no way to consider security governance in terms of intended outcomes without considering the possibility that the unintended outcomes will outweigh these.

The shift to the focus on effects rather than causes acknowledges the limits of policy intentionality based on cause-and-effect assumptions and explicitly challenges the
rationalist and reductionist assumptions prevalent in disciplinary understandings of security governance. Although, today, this critical understanding of security governance is seen as radical, this perspective was initially the preserve of conservative or Realist critics of the liberal internationalist expansion of security governance. Ivan Eland, director of Defense Policy Studies at the Washington-based Cato Institute, highlighted at the time of the 2003 Iraq war, for example, that:

...perhaps the biggest reason for avoiding wars unnecessary for self-defense is the unintended consequences. The best example of the severe unplanned effects of a war: to needle the Soviet Union, Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan thought they would aid a rebellion in an unimportant backwater called Afghanistan. They ended up creating one of the few genuine threats to the US homeland in the history of the republic – al Qaeda. Who knows what unintended consequences will arise from the US intervention in Liberia or in other future civil wars. 29

Following the apparent successes of ethical and humanitarian interventions in the 1990s, the response to the shock terrorist attacks of 9/11 appeared to intensify the trend towards centralised forms of security governance under US leadership. The 2002 US National Security Strategy expanded and securitized the interventionist remit, arguing that: ‘America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones.’ 30 In effect, drawing the opposite lesson to that suggested by conservative critics: that the al-Qaeda attacks were, in fact, the product of ignoring and isolating Afghanistan and failing to intervene forcefully enough in the case of domestic state failings. The recognition that we lived in a globalised and interconnected world seemed to bind the needs of global security governance with those of human rights, democracy and development, creating a powerful interventionist consensus. 31

By 2012, a decade later, the US Defense Strategic Guidance policy was operating on a different set of security governance assumptions: that US forces would pursue their objectives through ‘innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches’ rather than the conduct of ‘large-scale, prolonged stability operations’. 32 In 2013, discussion over potential coercive security intervention in Syria was dominated by the same fears, that the unintended outcomes would outweigh the good intentions of external actors. 33 General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, warned that policy caution was necessary as: ‘We must anticipate and be prepared for the unintended consequences of our action.’ 34 According to David L. Phillips, Director of the Program on Peace-Building and Rights at Columbia University’s Institute for the Study of Human Rights, any coercive security action would inevitably be unintentionally destabilising: ‘However limited or narrow in scope, striking Syria will have consequences across the “Shiite Crescent” that spans Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. 35

As Michael Mazaar argued in the influential US journal, Foreign Affairs, in 2014, securing security governance goals of peace, democracy and development in failing and conflict-ridden states could not, in fact, be done by instrumental cause-and-effect external policy interventions: ‘It is an organic, grass-roots process that must respect the unique social, cultural, economic, political, and religious contexts of each country... and cannot be imposed. ’ 36 For Mazaar, policy would now follow a more ‘resilient mindset, one that treats perturbations as inevitable rather than calamitous and resists the urge to overreact’, understanding that policy intervention must work with rather than against local institutions and ‘proceed more organically and authentically’. 37 This is also reflected by high-level policy experts in the US State Department; according to Charles T. Call, senior adviser at the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, current US approaches...
seek not to impose unrealistic security governance goals but instead to facilitate local transformative agency through engaging with local ‘organic processes and plussing them up.’

In security governance policy thinking today, increasing numbers of analysts, not only conservative or neoliberal theorists, have challenged the knowledge assumptions underpinning universalist, mechanistic and reductionist views of security governance. It has become increasingly commonplace for radical critics, drawing on a wide range of critical social theory, such as new materialism, complexity approaches, actor network theory and philosophical realism, to suggest that the ‘lessons learned’ from the limited successes and outright failures of centralised forms of security governance since 1990 concur with those drawn by pragmatic US army generals and policy advisors. This is a far cry from the understandings of security governance in the 1990s and early 2000s when intervention was supported not on the basis of technical or pragmatic considerations but as part and parcel of the moral standing and meaning of international institutions and the leading states which composed and directed them. It was precisely the centralising grand narratives of liberal internationalist promise and social and political transformation, under the guidance of leading Western democracies, which inspired support for the extension of cause-and-effect policy understandings and the extension of claims of external security governance authority. Liberal states were understood to have the right and the authority to undertake security governance interventions on the basis of ideological grounds, altruism and the effectiveness of centralised understandings of agency and effects.

Security governance, today, is increasingly understood to be problematic if it is based upon the centralising grand narratives of liberal internationalism, which informed and drove the debate on security governance in the 1990s, when issues of intervention and non-intervention in Africa and the Balkans were at the centre of international political contestation. International security interventions are not opposed per se or on principle, but on the basis of the problematic centralising universalist and hierarchical knowledge assumptions which informed policy interventions and produced the hubristic and reductionist promises of transformative outcomes. According to the critical consensus, international policy makers need to liberate themselves from the constraints of their outmoded centralised and mechanistic models, inherited from the Enlightenment in the seventeenth century and associated with Descartes’s strict mechanical division between the mind and the body and Isaac Newton’s view of the universe as a mechanical clock-work model of timeless universal laws.

In fact, the critique of cause-and-effect understandings of intervention has a long scientific heritage in similar critiques of modern medical interventions based upon antibiotics and other artificial chemical and technical remedies. The reductionist understanding of securing health in the biomedical sciences has often been problematised for its lack of attention to unintended consequences which can easily mean that the cure can be worse for individual and societal health care than the initial affliction. These critiques have operated as a readily available template for the rapid development of a critical conceptualisation of security governance in the discipline of International Relations; one that bears little relation to traditional concerns of international stability, international law, sovereign rights of independence or to post-colonial sensibilities.

These critiques of linear and reductionist cause-and-effect approaches to securing health have tended to focus upon the value of organic, natural or endogenous powers of resistance and resilience which have been understood to be unintentionally undermined through the mechanistic assumptions of modern Western science. In the parallel arguments in the area of security governance, the decentralised organic processes of
endogenous development tend to be prioritised over centralised universalising, mechan-
istic or reductionist approaches to security governance which seek to introduce policy
solutions from the outside. For example, while markets, development, democracy, security
and the rule of law might be good when they develop organically, it is often argued that
when they are extracted from their context and applied in a ‘pure’ form they can be
dangerous as they lack the other ingredients connected to institutions and culture. This
perspective was first argued in relation to intervention in the Balkans in the mid- and late-
1990s, when security governance narratives began to shift attention to the endogenous or
internal capacities and capabilities of the local society rather than seeking externally
managed ‘military solutions, quick fixes [and] easy, early exits’, associated with simple
cause-and-effect understandings. However, the critique of cause-and-effect assumptions,
which focused on the centralised knowledge and expertise of external policy interveners,
rapidly extended beyond the critique of coercive or military interventions to cover a broad
range of security governance interventions associated with the liberal internationalist goals
of promoting markets, democracy and the rule of law.

Security governance as self-policing

The governance of effects, increasingly taken up by international security governance
community, thereby insists that problems cannot be dealt with merely at the level of
causation, by identifying and categorising a problem as if it could be understood in the
reductionist terms of cause and effect, with every problem having a specific causation,
which could be universally secured through the development of a specific ‘cure’. This
reductionist view was held to fit well with a mechanistic understanding of policy inter-
vention: the assumption being that the body of the state or society was essentially healthy
and that a specific external cause could be isolated and addressed to produce a cure and a
return to a secure and stable equilibrium. This approach entirely excluded the specific
internal and external historical, social, political and economic environment and also any
understanding of what was necessary to encourage the state or society’s own capacities
and capabilities to manage effects.

Security governance based on the governance of effects therefore has no need for
centralised ready-made international policy solutions that can simply be applied or
implemented, and therefore implies little possibility of learning generic lessons from
intervention that could be applied to all other cases of conflict or of underdevelopment
on the basis that if the symptoms appeared similar the cause must be the same. Crucially,
this framing takes intervention out of the context of centralised policy making and policy
understanding and out of the centralised political sphere of security governance expertise.
The focus therefore shifts away from international policies (supply-driven policy making)
and towards engaging with the decentralised and highly disparate internal capacities and
capabilities that are already held to exist. In other words, there is a shift from the
centralised agency, knowledge and practices of policy interveners to a decentralised
focus on societies and communities, which are the objects of security concerns. As the
2013 updated UK Department for International Development Growth and Resilience
Operational Plan states: ‘We will produce less “supply-driven” development of product,
guidelines and policy papers, and foster peer-to-peer, horizontal learning and knowledge
exchange, exploiting new technologies such as Wiki/huddles to promote the widest
interaction between stakeholders.’

‘Supply-driven’ policies – the stuff of centralised politics and of security expertise –
are understood to operate in an artificial or non-organic way, and to lack an authentic
connection to the effects which need to be addressed. The imposition of external institutional and policy frameworks has become increasingly seen as artificial and thereby as having counterproductive or unintended security outcomes. Decentralised effects-based approaches thereby seek to move away from the ‘liberal peace’ policy interventions – seeking to export constitutional frameworks, to train and equip military and police forces, to impose external conditionalities on the running of state budgets, to export managerial frameworks for civil servants and political representatives or to impose regulations to ensure administrative transparency and codes of conduct – which were at the heart of international security governance prescriptions in the 1990s and early 2000s.\(^{44}\)

It is argued that the centralised ‘supply-driven’ approach of external experts exporting or developing liberal institutions for security governance does not grasp the complex processes generative of instability or insecurity. Instead, the cause-and-effect model of governance is seen to create problematic ‘hybrid’ political systems and fragile states with little connection to their societies.\(^{45}\) The imposition of security governance frameworks, which have little connection to society, is understood as failing, not only in not addressing causal processes but also as making matters worse through undermining local capacities to manage the effects of problems, shifting problems elsewhere and leaving states and societies even more fragile or vulnerable. This approach is alleged to fail to hear the ‘message’ of problematic manifestations or to enable societies’ own organic and homeostatic processes to generate corrective, resilient or self-managing and self-policing mechanisms of security governance. Triggering external security interventions is said to shortcut the ability of societies to reflect upon and take responsibility for their own affairs and is increasingly seen as a counterproductive ‘over-reaction’ by external powers.\(^{46}\)

There is an increasingly prevalent view that, contrary to earlier assumptions, security governance solutions can only be developed through practice by actors on the ground. As noted earlier, following Agamben, the conceptualisation of security governance in terms of the governance of effects inverses the traditional disciplinary understanding of security governance as an exercise of centralised political power and authority. It does this through denying security governance intervention as an act of external centralised decision making and policy direction as understood in the security paradigm of liberal modernist discourse. This can be seen through an examination of the decentralising policy shifts towards self-policing in the key areas of international security concern: security and the rule of law; development; and democracy and rights.

\textit{Security and the rule of law}

Policy interventions are increasingly decentralising in relation to the understanding of conflict. There is much less talk of conflict prevention or conflict resolution and more of conflict management. As the UK government argues, in a 2011 combined UK Department for International Development (DfID), Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Ministry of Defence document, conflict per se is not the problem: ‘Conflict is a normal part of human interaction, the natural result when individuals and groups have incompatible needs, interests or beliefs.’\(^{47}\) The problem which needs to be tackled is the state or society’s ability to manage conflict: ‘In stable, resilient societies conflict is managed through numerous formal and informal institutions.’\(^{48}\) Conflict management, as the UK government policy indicates, is increasingly understood as an organic set of societal processes and practices, which centralised international policy intervention can influence but cannot import solutions from outside or impose them. As leading peace theorist, Jean Paul Lederach, presciently stated: ‘The
greatest resource for sustaining peace in the long term is always rooted in the local people and their culture. For Lederach, managing conflict meant moving away from cause-and-effect forms of centralised external intervention which see people as ‘recipients’ of policy, and instead seeing people as ‘resources’, integral to peace processes, therefore it was essential that:

...we in the international community adopt a new mind-set – that we move beyond a simple prescription of answers and modalities for dealing with conflict that come from outside the setting and focus at least as much attention on discovering and empowering the resources, modalities, and mechanisms for building peace that exist within the context.

One of the central shifts in understanding conflict as something that needs to be ‘coped with’ and ‘managed’ rather than something that can be ‘solved’ or ‘prevented’ is the view that state-level interventions are of limited use. Peace treaties can be signed by state parties, but unless peace is seen as a decentralised and ongoing transformative inclusive societal process, these agreements will be merely superficial and non-sustainable.

Just as peace and security are no longer understood to be able to be secured through centralised cause-and-effect forms of intervention, reliant on policy interveners imposing solutions in mechanical and reductive ways, there has also been a shift in understanding the counterproductive effects of attempts to export the rule of law.

The governance of effects approach is driven by a realisation of the gap between the formal sphere of law and constitutionalism and the social ‘reality’ of informal power relations and informal rules. This perspective has also been endorsed by Douglass North, the policy guru of new institutionalist economics, who has highlighted the difficulties of understanding how exported institutions will interact with ‘culturally derived norms of behavior’.

The social reality of countries undergoing post-conflict ‘transition’ could not be understood merely by an analysis of laws and statutes. In fact, there appears to be an unbridgeable gap between the artificial centralised constructions of legal and constitutional frameworks and the decentralised and pluralised realities of everyday life, revealed in dealings between individual members of the public and state authorities.

Development

A key security area where the shift from addressing causes to the governance of effects has had an impact has been in the sphere of development – the policy sphere previously most concerned with transformative policy interventions. Coping with poverty and with disasters through enabling societies to be more resilient and self-reliant is clearly a very different problematic from seeking to use development policy to reduce or to end extreme poverty. However, discourses of disaster risk reduction have increasingly displaced those of sustainable forms of development because of the unintended side effects of undermining the organic coping mechanisms of communities and therefore increasing vulnerabilities and weakening resilience. Claudia Aradau has highlighted the importance of the DFID shift in priorities from poverty reduction strategies to developing community resilience, which assumes the existence of poverty as the basis of policy making. As she states: ‘resilience responses entail a change in how poverty, development and security more broadly are envisaged’; this is clearly highlighted in DFID’s 2011 report outlining the UK government’s humanitarian policy:
Humanitarian assistance should be delivered in a way that does not undermine existing coping mechanisms and helps a community build its own resilience for the future. National governments in at-risk countries can ensure that disaster risk management policies and strategies are linked to community-level action.\textsuperscript{55}

As George Nicholson, director of Transport and Disaster Risk Reduction for the Association of Caribbean States, argues explicitly: ‘improving a person’s ability to respond to and cope with a disaster event must be placed on equal footing with the process to encourage economic development’, highlighting the importance of disaster risk as a strategy for managing effects versus the cause-and-effect approach associated with development policy interventions.\textsuperscript{56} Whereas centralised development approaches put the emphasis on external policy assistance and expert knowledge, disaster risk reduction clearly counterposes an alternative decentralised framework of intervention, where it is local knowledge and local agency that counts the most. Disaster risk reduction strategies stress the empowerment of the vulnerable and marginalised in order for them to cope and to manage the effects of the risks and contingencies that are concomitant with the maintenance of their precarious existence.

**Democracy and rights**

As emphasised earlier, the management of effects approach does not seek to assert centralised sovereign power or Western hierarchies of power and knowledge, in fact, the governance of effects operates as both an epistemological and ontological challenge to the cause-and-effect understandings of security governance, dominant until the last decade. These points are highlighted, for example, in Bruno Latour’s critical engagement with modernist modes of understanding: arguing that Western societies have forgotten the lengthy processes which enabled them to build liberal institutions dependent on the lengthy process of the establishment of a political culture, which has to be steadily maintained, renewed and extended and cannot be exported or imposed.\textsuperscript{57}

This shift away from formal centralised universalist understandings of democracy and human rights is increasingly evidenced in the shifting understanding of human rights-based approaches to empowerment. Understanding empowerment in instrumental cause-and-effect terms based upon the external provision of legal and political mechanisms for claims is increasingly seen to be ineffective. Rights-based NGOs now seek not to empower people to access formal centralised institutional mechanisms but to enable them to empower themselves. The governance of effects approach places the emphasis on the decentralised agency and self-empowerment of local actors, not on the introduction of formal frameworks of law, supported by international human rights norms.\textsuperscript{58}

The approach of ‘finding organic processes and plussing them up’ (as articulated by the US State Department policy advisor, cited earlier in the paper) is not limited to security governance but has been increasingly taken up as a generic approach to overcome the limits of cause-and-effect understandings. A study of Finnish development NGOs highlights that rather than instrumentally selecting groups or civil society elites, new forms of intervention appear as anti-intervention, denying any external role in this process and stressing that there is no process of external management or selection as policy interveners work with whatever groups or associations already exist and ‘have just come together... it is not our NGO that brought them together but we just found them that way’.\textsuperscript{59}
A similar study, in southeastern Senegal, notes that policy interveners are concerned not only to avoid both the ‘moral imperialism’ of imposing Western human rights norms, but also to avoid a moral relativism which merely accepts local traditional practices.\(^6^0\) The solution forwarded is that of being non-prescriptive and avoiding and ‘unlearning’ views of Western teachers as ‘authorities’ and students as passive recipients.\(^6^1\) Security governance is articulated as the decentralised facilitation of local people’s attempts to uncover traditional practices and in ‘awakening’ and ‘engaging’ their already existing capacities: ‘By detecting their own inherent skills, they can more easily transfer them to personal and community problem solving.’\(^6^2\) These processes can perhaps be encouraged or assisted by external policy interveners but they cannot be transplanted from one society to another and, even less, can they be imposed by policy actors. Tackling the effects of these problems as if they were the product of direct causal relations thereby misunderstands policy needs through being trapped in the reductionist mind-sets of centralised liberal governance understandings.

In the examples of the governance of effects, given earlier, it is clear that problems are increasingly less likely to be conceived as amenable to centralised political solutions in terms of instrumental security governance interventions on the basis of cause-and-effect understandings. Those subject to new forms of empowerment and capacity-building are thereby seen less as rational citizens of states – capable of negotiating, debating, deciding and implementing policy agendas – but instead are increasingly caught up in never-ending processes of governing effects at the local or community level. With this shift to internal understandings, of how societies are held to produce their own risks and their own resilience and coping mechanisms, there, of course, lies a different set of ‘unintended consequences’: those that stem from responsibilising the marginal and excluded for their own exclusion and higher exposure to a wide range of security governance risks, from conflict to environmental degradation.\(^6^3\)

**Conclusion**

The shift in understanding of security governance from addressing causes to the governance of effects, focusing on the problem society’s own capacities and needs and internal and organic processes, has been paralleled by a growing scepticism of attempts to export or impose centralised Western models. In decentralising and depoliticising discourses of security governance around the governance of effects, there is no assumption that the external intervener is any way limiting the freedom or the autonomy of the state or society intervened upon and the discourse does not establish the intervening authority as possessing any greater power or knowledge or establish a paternalist relationship of external responsibility. The security governance intervention, in this framing, is articulated as one that respects the autonomy of the other and even enables the development of decentralised autonomous capacities. Security governance thus requires no centralised specialist knowledge and, in fact, tends to problematise such knowledge claims, and instead could be understood to require more therapeutic capacities and sensitivities, more attuned to open and unscripted forms of engagement, mutual processes of learning and unpredictable and spontaneous forms of knowledge exchange.\(^6^4\)

While centralised cause-and-effect security governance interventions, with crude levers of external power, might be out of fashion, international security governance appears to be alive and well as enabling societal self-policing: thriving on the ‘non-interventionist’ move towards effects-based approaches oriented towards developing existing decentralised local capacities and capabilities. This blurs the traditional security...
distinctions between domestic and international forms of security governance and expands the conception of policing as a process of self-management and self-regulation. If security risks and the capacities for resilience – those of prevention, coping and rebuilding – are seen as internally generated, then not only are the boundaries between the domestic and the international blurred but also those between policing and governance itself.

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Notes
2. For example, Blair, “Doctrine of the International Community.”
3. See, for example, Ramalingam, *Aid on the Edge of Chaos*; and Ramalingam et al., “Exploring the Science of Complexity.”
5. See further, Chandler, “Democracy Unbound?”
8. See, for example, Held, *Democracy and the Global Order*; and Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*.
11. See, for example, Heathershaw and Lambach, “Introduction: Post-Conflict Spaces and Approaches to Statebuilding”; and Lemay-Hébert, “Statebuilding without Nation-building?”
17. See, for example, Commission for Africa, *Our Common Interest*.
18. With regard to development and poverty, see Sen, *Development as Freedom*.
19. See, for example, Cramer, *Civil War Is not a Stupid Thing*.
22. Dillon, “Governing Terror.”
23. Ibid., 13.
31. See Mazarr, “The Rise and Fall of the Failed-State Paradigm.”
33. Ackerman, “US Military Intervention in Syria.”
34. Ibid.
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