Introduction: Technologies of Stateness

The essays assembled in this dossier explore the relationships among international organizations, state-ness, and state formation. The title of the dossier, "Technologies of Stateness," reflects an ambition on the part of the editors and authors to explore, through detailed, "thick description" case studies, the particular material and discursive practices through which international organizations contribute to state-making. Drawing on governmentality studies, "technologies" refers broadly to "that complex of techniques, instruments, measures, and programs that endeavors to translate thought into practice and thus actualize political reasons."[1]

The dossier builds on and contributes to a growing interest in international organizations as objects of empirical and theoretical study as well as renewed interest in states, statehood, and state formation.[2] A multidisciplinary body of scholarship in anthropology, politics, and sociology now approaches "the state" as an assemblage of rationales, techniques, programs, practices, performances, and representations that may vary considerably across time and space.[3] Yet despite these productive turns in a variety of disciplines, relatively little attention has been given to the roles played by international organizations in the processes of state formation. Exceptions exist, of course: a small but growing literature on "global governmentality" explores the role of international organizations as vehicles for the production and dissemination of techniques of governance to states; and constructivist approaches in international relations and institutionalist sociology have produced powerful accounts of how international organizations work to shape states' conceptions of their interests.[4] Yet much more empirical and theoretical work remains to be done to understand the contributions of international organizations to the formation and ongoing reform of and intervention in states.

New Perspectives on States and Internationalism

The authors contributing to this dossier build on diverse aspects of the social, cultural, historical, and anthropological turns in the study of the state and of international organizations, endeavoring to bring these often disconnected inquiries together in productive and illuminating ways.

Following the broad usage of the term across the twentieth century, we use "international organization" (and its cognates, such as "international institution") to include formal, public, or intergovernmental organizations, such as the League of Nations (Megan Donaldson), the United Nations (Guy Fiti Sinclair), and the World Bank (Corinna Unger); as well as private or nongovernmental international organizations serving public functions, such as the Public International Law and Policy Group and Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (Sara Kendall). As Stephen Legg points out in his

contribution, even a gathering such as a round table conference called to determine the future of India in relation to the British Empire might be understood as an international organization of sorts. Further, the dossier editors and authors adopt no predetermined view of what constitutes a "state," much less attempt to identify the quiddity of "stateness"; the case studies include entities whose statehood was formally disputed or liminal, projected or precarious. In each case, the point is to investigate precisely *how* stateness was imagined and realised by and through international institutions of various kinds.

Donaldson and Legg take the interwar League of Nations system as the setting for studies of state-making in Ethiopia and India, respectively. Sinclair and Unger explore state formation in the development work of the United Nations and the World Bank, with case studies focusing on the Congo and Calcutta. Kendall examines the work of inter-governmental organizations and think tanks concerned with constitution-making across the globe in the post–Cold War era. Luis Eslava and Sundhya Pahuja present a *longue durée* sketch of the relationship between international development and nation-states, with particular attention to the World Bank's activities since World War II. Finally, Ole Sending offers a reflection on the preceding dossier contributions from the perspective of a researcher and practitioner in the fields of peacebuilding, humanitarian relief, and development. Together, the essays collected in the dossier offer a rich set of historical and theoretical resources for rethinking the interactions between internationalism and the state.[5]

The specific technologies examined in the dossier's essays vary significantly. Donaldson considers the formulation of new criteria and procedures for admission to membership in the League of Nations. Legg argues that the League supplied a model for the institutional form that marked a crucial stage in India's emergence as a self-governing state, provided a precedent for its recognition as an international actor, and served as a potential arbiter for communal disputes within it. Sinclair and Unger explore the application of a range of techniques and practices of public administration and management promoted by the United Nations and the World Bank. Kendall examines constitution manuals as outwardly apolitical textual devices that work to inscribe the state in particular ways. Eslava and Pahuja survey a variety of technologies of state-making promoted through international law and organizations—from national development plans to structural adjustment and strategies of local administration.

A central dynamic in the proliferation of technologies of stateness deployed and promoted by international organizations relates to the complex and uncertain movement from a world dominated by empires to one consisting largely (though not exclusively) of independent states. This dynamic is the principal focus of the contribution by Eslava and Pahuja, but is equally observable in the other articles in the dossier. Donaldson and Legg both depict a moment of ambiguity and ambivalence, when it was far from clear that polities such as Ethiopia and India would or could ever be seen as equal—even in formal terms—to European states. Sinclair, Unger, and Kendall then focus primarily on episodes in the decolonized Global South, exploring state-making efforts in the Congo, India, the Middle East, and North Africa, among others. As their essays show, clear continuities exist between the technologies of stateness associated with colonial rule and those applied by international organizations after decolonization.

In each case examined here, moreover, new technologies of stateness arose from a

complex interplay of power relations, ideals, ideologies, and forms of knowledge. Each essay in the dossier reveals a complex series of dealings between national and transnational elites that shaped the state-making enterprise, involving varying degrees of cooperation and competition, rivalry and resistance. Each international institution engaged in state-making was dominated by one or more Great Power: Britain and France in the interwar period or the United States since the end of World War II. Changing notions of modernization and development underpin many of the state-making episodes examined in the dossier—from Haile Sellassie's locally inflected "modernization initiatives,"[6] to the state-centered, welfare-oriented modernization theory of the postwar UN and the World Bank, to more market-based approaches since the 1980s. The essays also reflect the ascendance, elaboration, and contestation of various forms of professional expertise, including economics, public administration, and law.

Research Horizons

What new and under-explored lines of research do the essays collected in this dossier suggest? Obviously, the case studies examined here represent only a minute sample of the possible international organizations, states, and technologies available for investigation. The dossier does not encompass, for example, the work of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the WHO, the FAO, the IMF, the WTO, or the OECD—to mention only a handful of the many international organizations established during the twentieth century. How did the technologies of stateness that were developed and deployed by these organizations differ, if at all, from those examined in this dossier? To what extent did they embody similar or distinct conceptions of the state, political rationalities, and forms of expertise? And what of technical, regional, or specialist organizations such as the International Civil Aviation Organization, NATO, OPEC, the various fisheries commissions, or the (now defunct) Comecon and Warsaw Pact?

The dossier's focus on state-making episodes in the twentieth century suggests another set of possible inquiries. On the one hand, that timeframe excludes any consideration of the rudimentary intergovernmental bodies that came into being in the century following the Congress of Vienna, which marked the end of the Napoleonic Wars. These included international unions and bureaus such as the Universal Postal Union, the International Telegraph Union, the International Union for the Protection of Industrial Property, the International Bureau of Weights and Measures, and the International Union of American Republics, all of which continue to exist in one form or another today; international financial commissions in countries situated on the European periphery such as Egypt, Turkey, and Greece; and international sanitary councils at Constantinople, the Suez, Alexandria, and Tehran. All of these may be viewed as early experiments in the internationalization of technologies of stateness, which later rose to exercise much wider and deeper influence in the twentieth century. On the other hand, the dossier omits discussion of more recent developments, including international organizations self-consciously established as alternatives to those dominated by Western states, such as the (China-based) Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank or the (Russia-dominated) Eurasian Economic Union. Extending the analysis to consider the activities of these entities might reveal deeper continuities, and perhaps sharper disjunctures, in the technologies of stateness advanced by international institutions.

Such inquiries also promise to disclose additional theoretical and empirical insights into the dynamics of power and resistance involved in the making of states. As noted above, the case studies presented by Donaldson and Legg highlight the intersections between internationalism and imperialism in the interwar period, but that theme resonates through the rest of the dossier. Further investigations would help to illuminate the extent to which "colonial inspirations" shaped (and continue to shape) the structures and ideologies of international organizations.[7] A question that goes unaddressed is how far international organizations have been instrumental in making and remaking states in the (now) industrialised, "advanced" liberal economies of the Global North in addition to countries in the Global South. Another issue that is mostly absent from the dossier articles is the centrality of violence to statehood: to what extent and in what ways have international organizations deployed and legitimised violence—whether physical, structural, or symbolic—as a technology of stateness? Lastly, a related issue of critical import concerns the specific gendering of such technologies. Re-examining complex institutional formations and practices—such as peacekeeping, structural adjustment, and conferencing, among many others—as technologies of stateness might therefore be expected to recast existing understandings of how our contemporary world has been constructed and configured. We hope the dossier serves as a further stimulus and encouragement for this ongoing project of research.

NOTES

1. Jonathan Xavier Inda, "Analytics of the Modern: An Introduction," in *Anthropologies of Modernity: Foucault, Govermentality, and Life Politics*, ed. Jonathan Xavier Inda (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2005), 1.

2. Of a burgeoning literature on the former, see, for example, Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Patricia Clavin, *Securing the World Economy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Marc Frey, Sönke Kunkel, and Corinna R. Unger, eds., *International Organizations and Development, 1945–1990* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Eric Helleiner, *Forgotten Foundations of Bretton Woods* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014); Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Nelson Lichtenstein and Jill M. Jensen, eds., *The ILO from Geneva to the Pacific Rim: West Meets East* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2016); Patrick Sharma, *Robert McNamara's Other War: The World Bank and International Development* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017). On the latter see, for example, Nehal Bhuta, "State Theory, State Order, State System," in *System, Order, and International Law: The Early History of International Legal Thought from Machiavelli to Hegel*, ed. Stefan Kadelbach, Thomas Kleinlein, and David Roth-Isigkeit (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), chap. 19; Nehal Bhuta, "Democratisation, State-building and Politics as Technology," in *The Role of International Law in Rebuilding Societies after Conflict*, ed. Brett Bowden, Hilary Charlesworth, and Jeremy Farrall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), chap. 2.

3. In anthropology see, for example, Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat, eds., *States of Imagination: Ethnographic Explorations of the Postcolonial State* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); Veena Das and Deborah Poole, eds., *Anthropology in the Margins of the State* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 2004); Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta, eds., *The Anthropology of the State* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell 2006); Akhil Gupta, *Red Tape: Bureaucracy, Structural Violence, and Poverty in India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012); Madeleine Reeves, Johan Rasanayagam, and Judith Beyer, eds., *Ethnographies of the State in Central Asia: Performing Politics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014). In politics see, for example, Timothy Mitchell, "Society, Economy, and the State Effect," in *State/Culture: State Formation after the Cultural Turn*, ed. George Steinmetz (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999) chap. 2; James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). In sociology, see, for example, George Steinmetz, *Regulating the Social: The Welfare State and Local Politics in Imperial Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Philip Gorski, *The Disciplinary Revolution: Calvinism and the Rise of the State in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Patrick Joyce, *The State of Freedom: A Social History of the British State since 1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

4. For the former see, for example, Iver B. Neumann and Ole Jacob Sending, *Governing the Global Polity: Practice, Mentality, Rationality* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014). Also see generally, Richard Warren Perry and Bill Maurer, eds., *Globalization under Construction: Governmentality, Law, and Identity*

(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003); Wendy Larner and William Walters, eds., *Global Governmentality: Governing International Spaces* (London: Routledge, 2004); Jonathan Joseph, *The Social in the Global: Social Theory, Governmentality and Global Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). For the latter see, for example, George M. Thomas et al., eds., *Institutional Structure: Constituting State, Society and the Individual* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1987); Connie L. McNeely, *Constructing the Nation-State: International Organization and Prescriptive Action* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1995); Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996); John Meyer, John Boli, George Thomas, and Frank Ramirez, "World Society and the Nation-State," *American Journal of Sociology* 103, no. 1 (July 1997): 144–81; Michael Barnett and Martha Finnemore, *Rules for the World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

5. See, generally, Cornelia Navari, *Internationalism and the State in the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 2000).

6. Megan Donaldson, "The League of Nations, Ethiopia, and the Making of States," *Humanity* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2020).

7. Jan Klabbers, "The Emergence of Functionalism in International Institutional Law: Colonial Inspirations," *European Journal of International Law* 25, no. 3 (August 2014): 645–75.