



**DANISH INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**  
STRANDGADE 56 • 1401 COPENHAGEN K • DENMARK  
TEL +45 32 69 87 87 • [diis@diis.dk](mailto:diis@diis.dk) • [www.diis.dk](http://www.diis.dk)

**CARRY ON KILLING:  
GLOBAL GOVERNANCE,  
HUMANITARIANISM AND TERROR**

Mark Duffield

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Danish Institute for International Studies, DIIS

Strandgade 56, DK-1401 Copenhagen, Denmark

Ph: +45 32 69 87 87

Fax: +45 32 69 87 00

E-mails: [diis@diis.dk](mailto:diis@diis.dk)

Web: [www.diis.dk](http://www.diis.dk)

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Mark Duffield is Professor at the Department of Politics and International Relations,  
University of Lancaster, UK



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## Abstract in English

In this working paper, Mark Duffield analyses the new security-development terrain in terms of theoretical and historical relations between sovereignty and governance, between hard and soft forms of power. His focus is on the structure and functions of global governance and the current crisis of the non-governmental humanitarian organizations whose relations to sovereignty have become evermore exposed as humanitarian interventions have been substituted by operations for regime change in the global “borderlands”.

## Resumé på dansk

I dette arbejdspapir analyserer Mark Duffield feltet mellem sikkerhed og udvikling, som det har udviklet sig siden den kolde krigs afslutning. Duffield analyserer feltet i forhold til de teoretiske og historiske relationer mellem suverænitæt og regeringsførelse, mellem såkaldt hårde og bløde former for magt, der i den aktuelle kontekst af ’global governance’ er tæt sammenvævet. Han fokuserer på den globale regeringsførelses struktur og funktioner og især på de ikke-statslige humanitære organisationers aktuelle krise, hvor deres forhold til suverænitæt er blevet stadig mere åbenlyst efterhånden som de humanitære interventioner er blevet afløst af militære interventioner, der har til formål at udskifte politiske regimer.

## Introduction

This essay seeks to address two interconnected concerns. The first of these is illustrated by a recent article in the *Guardian* newspaper which highlights the Orwellian doublethink in the pronouncements of President Bush and Prime Minister Blair on Iraq and the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. This doublespeak, "...where black is white and day is night", has been dismissed by some as plain dishonesty; knowing they are wrong, Bush and Blair are out to deceive. The columnist, however, is less cynical. He believes that Blair especially, has created a moral universe that has an internal logic of its own. In this universe, Washington and London know what is right for Iraq and therefore any one who opposes them is an enemy of Iraq, even if they are Iraqi themselves.

If the people of Falluja rise up in protest, then they must be killed, even in their hundreds, for they are acting against Iraq. To echo a former era, the coalition is bombing the city to save it – killing Iraqis to save them (Freedland 2004).

The second concern is the public silence of Western humanitarian NGOs in the face of the human tragedy that lies behind such doublethink. The essay argues that this Orwellian universe and its accompanying humanitarian silence are intrinsic parts of the same design of power. Such an interpretation runs counter to conventional wisdom which sees them as separate and distinct phenomena. In this case, silence is integral to the neutral stance of humanitarian agencies. It is an essential part of their strategic positioning to better gain access and help civilian casualties. To make the case that they are necessary reflections of each other, one cannot use the concepts and assumptions that underpin the internal logic concerned. This would risk yet again reproducing our current predicament. Drawing on the Foucauldian heritage, the essay begins with a critical examination of the nature and interconnectedness of power, global governance and life and concludes with the reflection that there can never be a 'back to humanitarian basics'.

## Power as a Design

Global governance is a design of bio-power. These two terms – design and bio-power – need some elaboration. Understanding power as a design sets it apart from a realist or conventional, state-centric approach to power. For realism, power is something almost tangible. It is an exclusive quality or resource that can be captured, amassed or deployed by the powerful; usually elites of some kind – political, economic, military, criminal, and so on. In this context, power is frequently presented as somehow ‘bad’, or at least, having negative connotations; it is what the ‘powerful’ use against the ‘powerless’. Power as a design, however, is more egalitarian, diffuse and inclusive. We are all agents of power, including actors and non-state organisations that realism would regard as merely the external auxiliaries, servants or sub-contractors of the powerful. Power is the ability to change the behaviour and attitudes of others and, in the process, of ourselves as well (Dean 1999). As such, even life’s bit-players have the ability to stage independent, innovative and often surprising effects. Power relations are everywhere – in the classroom, the doctor’s surgery, the family, the NGO project, and so on. Such relations are productive and shape the comportment of their authoring agents as well as those subject to them.<sup>1</sup> Without relations of power, society and the world would grind to a halt. From this inclusive and pervasive perspective, power itself is ambivalent and can be either ‘good’ or ‘bad’. Deciding between them, and checking the latter in favour of the former, is a matter for a practical ethics and politics.

It would be a mistake to regard the realist conception of power (as an exclusive quality amassed by the powerful) as wrong or misconceived. For many actors and non-state agencies this viewpoint is a convenient construction. It enabled, for example, concentration camp functionaries to frame their defence in terms of ‘just following orders’ of an external power. It also enables humanitarian agencies, in the interests of neutrality, to either remain silent in relation to power so conceived, or else, through recourse to international law, codes of conduct or technical standards, to erect legalistic barriers and professional boundaries to distance themselves from an external power (Leader 1999). An exclusive and amassed view of power also shapes what humanitarian agencies understand by ‘politics’. That is, those various strategies and techniques relating to the augmentation or deployment of external power (Weiss 1999).

<sup>1</sup> Critics of the Foucauldian paradigm have usually concentrated on the ubiquitous nature of power relations, and hence the difficulty or resisting them, to the detriment of its productive capacities. For a defence see (Campbell 1998).

For example, it has often been argued that humanitarian assistance, through its diversion or theft, can strengthen the position of warring parties (Anderson 1996). At the same time, recent concern over the 'politicisation' of aid has focused on how Western states are using humanitarian assistance to accomplish foreign policy objectives (Macrae and Harmer 2003). Silence, the erection of barriers and a politics of externality are important strategies whereby humanitarian agencies are able to deny and conceal their own complicity and involvement in the exercise of power (Campbell 1998; Edkins 2003). Understanding the 'non-governmental' or the implications of 'neutrality' in relation to humanitarianism requires that we move beyond the comforting shield of such conceptions.

Like a particular period of architecture, school of art, music or literary form, power as a design reveals itself through its shape, composition or function. We recognise a design when we see or experience it. A similar design can exist in a variety of circumstances, contexts or organisational arrangements without being reduced to them: it vitalises contingent assemblages while also existing beyond them. Global governance as a design of power is able to inscribe itself within and vector across different state/non-state and public/private institutional complexes separated in space as well as time. Whereas the former constitutes a synchronic diagram of interconnections, complicities and contradictions that define distinct regimes or eras, the latter reveals itself as a genealogical pattern existing across a range of such discrete regimes: the past illuminates the present which itself informs the past. In the case of global governance, its genealogy can be traced over two and a half centuries to the birth of modernity itself.

In relation to being able to change behaviour and attitudes, global governance has been described as a hybrid and contested diagram of power that brings together technologies of *governance* and *sovereignty* (Dillon and Reid 2000). Before analysing these complementary techniques a couple of contemporary examples can be given. Such hybridity can be seen, for example, in the Western civil-political complex that now exists in the Balkans, East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq. Here one finds the 'governance' activities of UN agencies, NGOs and private companies working in humanitarian, developmental and social reconstruction fields, in a complex and sometimes equivocal relationship with the 'sovereign' attributes of Western states, military alliances and international financial institutions. Put another way, this connection is a contemporary expression of the relationship between 'aid' and 'politics'. A similar diagrammatic inscription can also be detected at other levels of international conglomeration; for example, the differences that have emerged on how to confront the threat of global terrorism. While 9/11 created a consensus among leading states on the seriousness of the predicament, the invasion of Iraq has forced to the surface clear differences between America and Europe on how it should be tackled (Coker 2003). The European Union – the world's largest

integrated regional bloc – has been described in terms of a security community that prefers technologies of international governance based on the inclusionary “soft power” of diplomacy, international law, trade and developmental aid (Nye 2002). In contrast, America – the world’s only superpower – is associated with the sovereign “hard power” of unilateralism and the use of force in defence of its wider interests (Kagan 2003).

Many bemoan this rift, arguing a necessary complementarity between governance and sovereignty, aid and politics, soft power and hard power or, to use Bobbit’s terms, “...law and strategy” (Bobbit 2003) in the pursuit of global security (Coker 2003; Ferguson 2003; Cooper 2002). Indeed, it is felt that the current crisis will continue if not deepen unless governance and sovereignty are once again brought into alignment. In order to flesh out these attributes, the notion of bio-power has to be introduced.

## The Bio-Politics of Global Populations

Bio-politics emerged with modernity to form the basis of state power. It is concerned with validating, supporting and promoting the life of the nation (Foucault 1998). For the purposes of this paper, bio-politics is the regulation of life at the aggregate level of population. Bio-politics exists in the governmental technologies that both discover and act upon the varied biological, demographic, health, social and economic factors and mechanisms that constitute life as aggregated species-life. Global governance, however, is a specific form of bio-power. It is a power over the life of populations conceived as existing globally rather than nationally or territorially.<sup>2</sup> More specifically, it is a power over populations experienced as territorial or local illustrations of a particular global species-type. This is how we know, for example, ‘refugees’, ‘economic migrants’, ‘internally displaced’ the ‘chronically poor’, and so on. In relation to global governance, those technologies and strategies that constitute ‘development’ are an essential expression of international bio-power.

Bio-politics, however, contains an intrinsic and fateful duality. As well as fostering and promoting life it also has the power to “...*disallow* it to the point of death” (Ibid: 138 orig. emph.). In making this bio-political distinction, racism plays a formative role (Foucault 2003; Stoler 1995). This not only includes its nineteenth and early twentieth century biological forms, it

<sup>2</sup> Bio-politics as a form of global governance was not specifically examined by Foucault. The body of his work was concerned with its territorial and institutional manifestations.



also involves its contemporary cultural, value and civilisational re-inscriptions (Duffield 1984). Race and its modern codings underpin the division between valid and invalid life and legitimates the measures deemed necessary to secure the former against the later. In this sense, bio-politics is intrinsically connected with the security of populations, including global ones. This duality moreover underlies the paradox of bio-politics: as states have assumed responsibility for maintaining and developing life, wars have become increasingly more encompassing, devastating and genocidal for the populations concerned. The awesome power to unleash limitless death presents itself as a cynical counterpart,

...of a power that exerts a positive influence on life, that endeavours to administer, optimize, and multiply it, subjecting it to all precise controls and comprehensive regulations. Wars are no longer waged in the name of a sovereign who must be defended; they are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations are mobilised for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity: massacres have become vital (Ibid: 136).

As the managers of species-life, since the end of the nineteenth century states have been able to wage total wars that have pitched entire populations against each other in cataclysmic struggles to the death. What is at stake in modern war is the existence of society itself. Genocide consequently emerges as a strategy "...because power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population" (Ibid: 137). Although the ending of the Cold War raised hopes of a 'peace dividend', the diagrammatic form of bio-power was to be re-inscribed in the 'new wars' of the 1990s and confirmed with the declaration of war on terrorism. This re-inscription has taken in its stride the shift in the locus of threat from the Soviet Union, one of the world's largest and most centralized war economies, to its very opposite, that is, the new security cartography of failed states, shadow economies and terrorist networks. However, as the *Guardian* columnist quoted above has grasped, despite this radical re-ordering the bio-political principle of state power has remained the same: in order to carry on living one has to carry on killing (Ibid).

As well as departing from a realist conception of power, the idea of global governance as a design of bio-power also breaks with the conventional view of what global governance is. That is, as an essentially benign undertaking involving state and non-state actors in a collective pursuit of global security, an open and inclusive economic system, effective legal and political institutions, global welfare and development, and a shared commitment to conflict resolution (Biscop 2004). From this perspective, security threats are usually seen as emerging independently of global governance and, indeed, despite its best intentions. It becomes an ethico-poli-

tical response to pre-existing or externally motivated threats. Global governance as a design of bio-power, however, rather than responding ‘out of the blue’ to external threats, directly fabricates its own security environment. In distinguishing between valid and invalid global life, it creates its own ‘other’ – with all its specific deviancies, singular threats and instances of mal-development – to which it then responds and tries to change. Consequently, it also shapes the terrain over which the bio-political logic of living through killing must operate. It is in relation to this constitutive function of global governance that the place of sovereignty within it can now be examined.

## Sovereignty and Global Governance

For Giorgio Agamben (1998),<sup>3</sup> rather than emerging from a social contract, sovereignty is argued to reside in the power to decide the exception. That is, to fix in language the boundary between who or what is included or excluded as valid life: sovereign power is that which constitutes the ‘other’. In populating the space of the exception, sovereignty calls forth a particular form of subjectivity to bear the consequences of exclusion. Agamben has given this subjectivity a generic name calling it ‘bare’ or ‘natural’ life. That is, an abandoned life that effectively exists beyond the rights, conventions and moral restraints of secular and religious law. Deciding the exception constitutes a juridico-political space where anything becomes possible; it is even “...permitted to kill without committing homicide...” (Ibid: 83 as orig.).<sup>4</sup> Such life, however, is more than an abandoned subjectivity destined to bear sovereignty’s ordering; it is constitutive of political order itself. Bare life is an exclusion that is also an inclusion (Ibid: 18). While sovereignty decides the exception, it simultaneously elects to protect society from the threat that it has itself identified. The war on terrorism is an example of this recurrent sovereign design. During the 1990s, the leading ‘homeland’ states, as it were, remapped the zone of exception in terms of a global ‘borderland’ of failed states, shadow networks, rogue states, and so on. Today, this new cartography of risk encapsulates the terrorist threat (National Security Strategy 2002). At the same time, through emergency powers, the derogation of international law and pre-emptive attack, homeland states seek to protect society and its values from the menace their intelligence systems have identified. The global borderlands have once again

<sup>3</sup> In this work, *Homo Sacer*, Agamben sets out to complete the Foucauldian paradigm, in particular, to restore sovereignty as an originary form of bio-power. In Foucault’s work, sovereign power tends to move into the background, is replaced even, by regulatory forms of bio-politics at the dawn of modernity.

<sup>4</sup> For Agamben the concentration camp, in all its various guises, is a defining expression of modern politics.

become zones where anything becomes possible; an open-range where you can kill without committing murder.

If global governance is a power over the life (and death) of populations conceived as existing globally, then sovereignty within global governance effects an untying at a global level. At the dawn of modernity, global governance had two possible trajectories. One was a conjectural cosmopolitan right that is identified with Kant (1983). From this perspective, a universal right belongs to all human beings by virtue of their common ownership and occupation of the earth's surface. Because the earth is a sphere, people cannot scatter themselves indefinitely but must eventually tolerate living in close proximity since, "...originally no one had a greater right to any region of the earth than anyone else" (Kant 1983: 118). Through the shrinking of distance, increased intercourse and mutual commerce, "...the human race can gradually be brought closer and closer to a cosmopolitan constitution", indeed, "...all the people of the earth" could come together in "...a world republic" (Ibid: 118). It would be a republic whose strength would not lie in homogeneity or adherence to a single creed but in diversity and difference. Such a cosmopolitan constitution would be based upon a principle of universal hospitality including rights to associate and visit free from any danger of being "...treated as an enemy upon arrival in another's country" (Ibid: 118).

The subsequent trajectory of global governance, its actuality, has been radically different from that conjectured above. Indeed, rather than a universal hospitality its opposite – an abandoned, rightless person in the figure of the refugee – has become an icon of the modern age. Hannah Arendt has understood this emblematic quality in relation to the nation-state. The nation-state is a juridico-political construct that brings together the inscription of life through birth (nation), the inscription of order (state) and the inscription of locality (territory). The functioning of this architecture produces both rights and rightlessness. Ever since the French Revolution and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, the territorial basis of the nation-state has ensured that "...human rights were protected and enforced only as national rights" (Arendt 1994: 230). As a successful territorializing project, the violent expansion of the nation-state has been purchased at the expense of producing stateless, that is, rightless people. Within modernity's recurring encounter between the citizen and the stateless, human rights have shown themselves unable to protect "...at the moment they can no longer take the form of rights belonging to citizens of states" (Agamben 1998: 126).

While bare life has many guises, in terms of the genealogy of global governance, its archetypal form is the refugee. That is, the stateless and hence rightless person that stands outside the protection conferred by a territorialized citizenship. The refugee represents an untying from a

conjectural cosmopolitan right; an abandonment facilitated by racism and its contemporary cultural, civilisational and security codings. The sovereign ban is connected with the nation-state as a territorializing and re-territorializing project. This expansive spatial project also intersects with what the political economist Paul Harvey (Harvey 2003) has called "...accumulation by dispossession". That is, a capitalist system in which the closure of the global commons (the earth's endowment and associated social and public goods enjoyed by its peoples as a natural right) is an enduring and recurrent feature.<sup>5</sup> Since the nineteenth century successive global regimes of dispossession, vectoring through annexation, colonisation, central planning and, more recently, privatisation, have underpinned global governance as a design of bio-power. Today, under the rubric of globalisation, the wider global commons are once again under assault. Neo-liberalism, for example, is forcing market access, ending the social wage and rendering established livelihoods redundant. Land and its endowments, once freely supporting self-organised communities, having first been transferred to states are now passing to multinational companies. At the same time, armed with the latest genetic tools, agri-business is privatising and closing off the earth's bio-diversity, turning what was once regarded as nature's bounty into commercial property.

Accumulation by dispossession, and its changing retinue of international swindlers, fraudsters and carpet-baggers (Arendt 1994), is intimately connected with the territorializing project of the nation-state. To be more precise, it intersects with a contemporary process of re-territorialisation that underpins the new security terrain. Within this terrain, global spheres of influence are being redrawn as state incumbents are moderated, inducted or changed to accommodate the demands of a universalising liberal-democratic religion. The occupation of Iraq, for example, is nothing if not a significant attempt to redraw the political and economic dynamics of the Middle East. As a result of accumulation by dispossession, livelihoods, ways of life, cultures and people become surplus to requirements; so much collateral damage that treads the world stage as migrants, asylum seekers, internally displaced and the hapless ranks of trafficked humankind. They form the global detritus of what Bauman (2003), echoing Agamben, has called "waste life".

<sup>5</sup> For Marx, primitive accumulation was a one-off occurrence largely involving the enclosure of the commons and the driving of peasants from the land to form the basis of the industrial labour force.

# Humanitarianism and Development

Bare life is an exclusion that is also an inclusion. The sovereign ban, in deciding what society has to be defended against, establishes the political realm. For Agamben, in relation to the individualising and totalising structures of modern power, bare life is the "...hidden point of intersection between juridico-institutional and biopolitical models of power" (Ibid: 6). Regarding global governance, this hidden intersection constitutes the hinge between sovereignty and governance respectively. Sovereignty is charged with protecting the international order from the dangers it identifies and is based on principles of 'emergency'. Governance, on the other hand, is shaped by the bio-philosophical tenets of 'emergence' (Dillon and Reid 2000). Through abandonment and dispossession, sovereignty creates the political terrain on which governance encounters bare life. While governance often contests the excesses of sovereignty, and frequently seeks its reform and amelioration, it also has a pact with sovereignty; governance complements it, governing within its rules and confirming, normalising and building upon its acts of untying and dispossession.

As a result of its liaison with sovereignty, governance within global governance has bare life inscribed within it. Agamben has drawn our attention to a bare life that can be killed without murder being committed. There is, however, another complementary dimension to the state of the exception beyond the restraints of secular and religious law: to govern without acknowledging the historical agency or political memory of the governed (Campbell 1998).<sup>6</sup> Bare life is a blank slate that can either be killed with impunity or else fabricated into a victimised view of humanity that is incapable of acting or improving without intervention. Governance is based upon a bio-political dilemma of whether to protect the a-historic bare life produced by the sovereign ban or to seek its redemption. That is, whether to provide *humanitarian* assistance or to *develop* it by selecting its most worthy (usually those elected to be its most representative) examples and starting them on an endless bio-evolutionary journey of becoming something better, more complete or resilient through unlocking their inner powers of self-realisation. That change should occur through voluntary self-improvement is the essence of development as a relation of governance. It is the primary fitness test in separating life to be protected from that which can be aggregated as 'developmental life'.

<sup>6</sup> It is a dimension that has fostered national and cultural resistance since advent of colonialism and, as in Iraq, is continuing to do so today.

The bio-political duality of governance has a long genealogy within the design of global governance (see Watts 1995; Cooke 2003). It can be detected, for example, in the missionary efforts to improve the condition of freed slaves (Hall 2002), the outcry against genocidal imperial excess (Morel 1920) and the emergence of the colonial practice of Native Administration (Lugard 1965). For the purposes of this paper, just one illustration of this duality will be given, that is, the emergence of the modern NGO movement. At the same time, this example indicates how non-state actors can function as sites of independent, self-actualising power within the design of global governance. The NGO movement emerged as a humanitarian response to the great Total Wars of the twentieth century. Drawing on a long humanitarian genealogy, it appeared in a protective role to the bare life that these cataclysms produced in their millions: the blockaded civilians, internees, orphans, displaced and refugees of war-torn Europe (Jones 1965).<sup>7</sup> From the moment of its inception, however, the NGO movement was ensnared within the recurrent bio-political dilemma of whether to protect the bare life encountered or to change and develop it. During the 1950s, this tension reached a new pitch with the discovery of a vast new world of global poverty in the wake of decolonisation (Escobar 1995).

The choice between relief and development, however, is not simply a technical or programmatic one. Reflecting its pact with sovereignty, the decision is bio-political and entails deciding a governmental exception. For the NGO movement, it involves separating the displaced, refugees and other disaster victims, that is, the original beneficiaries of non-governmental humanitarian assistance, from the far greater numbers of "...people for whom poverty is the lifelong environment" (Jones 1965: 35). The daunting task of helping the teeming millions existing in abject poverty requires transforming the bare life of humanitarian protection into a self-improving developmental life. In bio-political terms, it necessitates separating a developmental life that is worthy of support and investment from a humanitarian life that can be helped but also disallowed to the point of death. Throughout the existence of the NGO movement this recurrent bio-political dilemma has frequently used the child – the epitome of victimhood and helplessness – to frame its predicament (see Edkins 2003; Pupavac 2001).

<sup>7</sup> For an overview of the emergence of Save the Children Fund in relation to the humanitarian consequences of WWI see <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk>.

To decide between present need and future hope, between the child that will die next week unless he is fed and the child who will live a hungry life unless his conditions are bettered: this is the most painful of tasks (Jones 1965: 43-44).

Deciding which life to foster and which to abandon is daily enacted in innumerable NGO project encounters, routine programme evaluations and funding appeals (Stockton 2004). Rather than just auxiliaries deploying the accrued power of their sponsors, in deciding the exception, NGOs are a self-actualising governmental power among borderland populations. The originary bio-political distinction between life to be supported and that which can be disallowed establishes a dialectical relationship between development and relief. In validating some bare life, development conceals and re-enacts the sovereign abandonment that called it forth. It is this sense of abandonment that fires the humanitarian ethic. It draws forth the best of people – the idealists, the rebels and the driven. At the same time, however, relief confronts an excluded bare life that is also an inclusion; the abandoned object of humanitarian action is constitutive of the political realm itself. The insistence that humanitarianism is ‘neutral’ and separate from politics, means that humanitarians can only grasp human life as bare life. By excluding the political, humanitarianism reproduces the isolation of bare life and hence the basis of sovereignty itself. Consequently, despite their best intentions, humanitarians “...maintain a secret solidarity with the very powers they ought to fight” (Agamben 1998: 133; also see Campbell 1998, Edkins 2003).

Within the genealogy of global governance, relief and development continually move in and out of each other in a dialectic that seeks both to protect bare life and, at the same time, to develop it. This dialectic, which exists in a secret liaison with sovereignty, has shaped the expansion, institutional architecture and rivalries within the modern NGO movement (Whitaker 1983; Macrae 1998). Indeed, since the latter part of the nineteenth century, humanitarian emergencies have regularly provided geographic entry points for non-state associations working at the level of people and their security (Davis 2001). Emergencies furnish a public platform for NGOs, they raise organisational profiles, funding levels, and mobilise recruits and volunteers. At the same time, the normalisation of the global abandonment and dispossession that these emergencies represent is regularly tasked to governance of development.

Since the mid 1980s, this self-actualising ‘non-governmental’ power has been drawn into a closer relationship with leading states and multilateral agencies. Through the access afforded by humanitarian emergencies, states have become key funding agents and, increasingly, sources of policy direction. During the 1990s, NGOs became important governmental actors within an evolving civil-political complex (Duffield 2001). As a consequence, NGOs have

continued to grow in numbers and expand in influence. Western sovereignty has been re-asserted among borderland populations not so much in terms of NGOs redeploying an accrued state power at the level of populations. It is rather that states, exploiting governance's secret solidarity with sovereignty, have amplified an independent and pre-existing governmental power through their funding, political patronage and military assets.

## The New Security Terrain

Agamben has argued that the oppositional categories that founded modern politics – left/right; public/private; absolutism/democracy; war/peace; and so on – have been steadily dissolving “...to the point of entering today a real zone of indistinction” (1998: 4). The post-Cold War security terrain constitutes such a zone. It has emerged from the dissolving of another set of traditional political dichotomies – that of the national/international, domestic / foreign and inside / outside. Politicians have become seized with globalisation as something that shrinks the distance between the domestic and the foreign.

Indeed, it often renders them identical: tackling terrorism in the USA means dealing with issues on the ground in the mountains of Afghanistan; bringing economic security to just one town in northern England means addressing the international machinery of global finance. The international has become domestic and the domestic international (Blair 2002: vii).

This growing indistinction has also been accompanied by a radical change in the perceived locus of international threat. This has shifted from the Soviet Union, as one of the biggest, most centralised and heavily armed war economies to its antithesis, that is, the world's failed states and their associated shadow networks. Despite this radical reorientation, however, the bio-political logic of living through killing has remained the same. Within this logic,

...there is nothing inconsistent in saying that we will increase our aid to development and give hope to Africa, yet be prepared if necessary to fight to defend the values we believe in (Blair 2003).

With the dissolving of the domestic / foreign distinction, insecurity can now manifest itself *anywhere at anytime*. The new security terrain is characterised by a radical interdependence and interpenetration in which even the most distant ‘pre-modern’ borderland unrest can have serious consequences for the homeland. Moreover, a victory for terrorism is not simply a



political defeat for homeland states, it "...would defeat civilisation and democracy everywhere" (Blair 2004). Frontiers and boundaries have become fragile in the face of such ubiquitous threats.

Today the threat is chaos, because for people with work to do, family life to balance, mortgages to pay, careers to further, pensions to provide, the yearning is for order and stability and if it doesn't exist elsewhere, it is unlikely to exist here. I have long believed this interdependence defines the new world we live in (Blair 2001b).

In confronting such interdependent and ubiquitous threats, the international community must assert itself anew. The experience of dealing with financial markets, climate change, world trade, nuclear proliferation, and so on, has shown that self-interest and mutual-interest are inextricably woven together. This is, "...the politics of globalisation" (Ibid). You do not have to do anything radically new, simply redouble your existing efforts. This merging of individual/mutual self-interest embodies the power of community within the international community. It is a merger that is possible because of the shared values of freedom and justice that underpin it. Being prepared to fight to defend these values is not the same as simply wishing to punish. It represents a determination,

...to bring those same values of democracy and freedom to people around the world. And I mean: freedom, not only in the narrow sense of personal liberty but in the broader sense of each individual having the economic and the social freedom to develop their potential to the full (Ibid).

The values at stake in the new security terrain are the opposite of those held by terrorists and religious fundamentalist. They are the belief "...in reason, democracy and tolerance" and they are held every bit as strongly as the beliefs held by fanatics (Blair 2001a). The violence of regime change is necessary to remove those leaders that undermine and conspire against civilized values. In Afghanistan, as in Iraq, it is war not for the sake of subjugation but to allow ordinary people, "...to re-take control of their country and in doing so close down the threat posed by the present rulers" (Blair 2001c). Within these developmental wars, that is, wars among oppressed populations to unlock their powers of self-realisation and democratic self-longing, the "...political and diplomatic go hand in hand with the military". They also necessitate assembling "...a humanitarian coalition alongside the military coalition" (ibid). In other words, the new security terrain requires a more integrated and transparent relationship

between aid / politics; non-state / state; civil / military; private / public, and so on. That is, between governance and sovereignty within global governance.

The new security terrain is one of a radical interdependence between the domestic and the foreign and the civil and the political. In securing the values of the homeland against those of the borderland, pre-emption and regime change has become necessary. Regime change, however, is more than an act of sovereign subjugation: it is a developmental act of governance. It is necessary so that borderland populations can realise their self-longing for reason, democracy and privatisation and, in achieving this condition, become allies in the fight for global security. Regime change is therefore as much concerned with ‘winning the peace’ as with ‘winning the war’. The former demands that humanitarian and development assistance work to establish the political outcome demanded by sovereign right. Aid must support the emergence and legitimacy of transitional governments. It must be seen to make a difference in the lives of ordinary people, helping justify regime change and demonstrating to regional critics that liberal-democracy works. In an interconnected world, aid must work not only in the interests of regional security but homeland security as well. This radical interconnectedness and interpenetration of the new security terrain lies at the heart of the crisis of humanitarianism: *it has exposed to borderland populations humanitarianisms secret solidarity with sovereignty*. The Emperor has finally realised he has no clothes.

## Humanitarianism and Terror

The NGO movement grew in the liminal space created by Cold War superpower rivalry. It exploited its neutral position between people and states to develop as an independent bio-political force among borderland populations. The end of the Cold War, however, saw a normative change in the nature of international relations from a condition of formal state equality to *de facto* inequality (Pupavac 2002; van der Pijl 2002). This shift towards the new security terrain was to see both the growing ease of humanitarian intervention and, paradoxically, a deepening sense of crisis among humanitarian agencies. With the ending of the Cold War and the growing dominance of states in the funding of humanitarian operations, relatively independent non-state agencies were drawn into an increasingly integrated civil-political complex. During the 1990s, this led to a growing crisis of identity among NGOs and concerns over the increasing political proximity of states (Hulme and Edwards 1997). In interpreting this emerging civil-political complex, it should be noted that the hidden solidarity between governance and sovereignty is a two-way relationship. Since the early 1990s, leading states have called upon the hidden connection to embark on a series of “humanitarian wars”

(Roberts 1993). That is, conflicts in which humanitarian concerns have replaced national interest as a justification for governmental intervention in the borderlands.

Humanitarian war is synonymous with state intervention in the relief/development dialectic. Increasingly, Western donor governments, with all the political networks and financial resources at their command, have fixed the line between that valid developmental life to be supported and a bare life that can be allowed to die. Whereas in the hands of NGOs, such governmental power operates at a programmatic level, among states in the context of the war on terror, its implications begin to take on regional, international and, indeed, racial/civilisational dimensions. Humanitarian war is also associated with 'humanitarian famine'. That is, a growing strategic unevenness of aid dispensations, variations in levels of response and marked instances of the absence of political will (Macrae *et al* 2002). In places like Sudan, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, it has resulted in vast and recurrent humanitarian tragedies *in the midst* of ongoing international humanitarian operations. Even in the 'information age' bare life can be allowed to die on an epic scale.

Humanitarian famine and regime change are two extremes in the bio-political 'politicisation' of aid within the new security terrain. While aid agencies have criticised such politicisation, for many the evident discomfiture is in the public exposure of the relationship between sovereignty and governance, and hence their complicity with the design of global governance. This process of exposure has been most acute in relation to the civil-military complex, the exemplary expression of current attempts to achieve policy coherence between aid and politics. That the search for 'coherence' has become a key aspect of humanitarian war reflects the real sense in which the new security terrain is based on a growing dissolution of traditional political dichotomies. The advent of the civil-military complex has its origins in the key humanitarian distinction between the Cold War and post-Cold War periods. Prior to the end of the 1980s, UN humanitarian and development agencies usually only became involved in a war situation only after a formal ceasefire had been agreed (Goulding 1993). By the early 1990s, the formal acceptance among aid agencies to work in ongoing and unresolved conflict had become the norm with the result that the established divisions between war/peace, state/non-state and relief/development rapidly collapsed. It is in this situation of a growing *incoherence* that the civil-military complex has expanded and undergone significant mutation (Williams 1998; Pugh 2001; Ignatieff 2003).

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, for example, it primarily involved humanitarian agencies working under military protection within a negotiated space agreed with the warring parties (Duffield 1994). Within this space, warring parties enjoyed varying degrees of *de facto* recognition.

Humanitarian agencies were often able to use this contingent legitimacy, albeit in a deepening state of crisis, to continue to negotiate and reaffirm their own 'neutrality'. Characteristically, agencies attempted to maintain operational independence through the development of codes of conduct, letters of understanding and similar protocols (Leader 1998) to separate themselves, in a realist sense, from the external power of donors and warring parties. At a time when political boundaries are blurring and collapsing, many humanitarian agencies have continued to use institutional means to try to re-establish them. Since the end of the 1990s, however, beginning with Kosovo and East Timor and especially following regime change in Afghanistan and Iraq, the negotiated space of the initial phase of humanitarian war has mutated into the occupied space of regime change. Within the later, the quasi-legitimate oppositional interlocutors of yesterday have been replaced by sovereign friend/enemy distinctions; they have been replaced by excluded and hence non-recognisable and non-interlocutory criminals, fanatics and terrorists. An increasing share of the humanitarian, developmental and nation-building activities previously undertaken by UN agencies and NGOs is being absorbed or coordinated by military actors (Macrae and Harmer 2003). The blurring of the national / international and aid / politics dichotomies has established a new security terrain that encompasses the homeland and the borderland. It spans this vast spatial arena with the operational logic of either being for us or against us

The tying of aid to an interventionary agenda of pacification and liberal-democratic reform has exposed the pact between sovereignty and governance within global governance. Not only has the UN been marginalised, the long-cherished independence of non-state actors has been seriously compromised and their neutrality openly questioned (Weiss 1999). Apart soul-searching among aid agencies themselves, perhaps more seriously, in the eyes of borderland populations humanitarian agencies have lost their innocence. With the redefining of aid as having a political agenda in terms of supporting regime change, the numbers of aid workers deliberately killed and kidnapped has grown. Whole swathes of Iraq, Afghanistan and Chechnya, for example, are presently no-go areas for NGOs. It is a crisis moreover, that is having sector-wide effects beyond the immediate theatres of operation. The bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad in August 2003 is but a peak in a long-term and widespread trend. For humanitarian NGOs, especially European ones (Minear 2002), the war on terrorism has promoted a deepening crisis of legitimacy (Donini; Niland, and Wermester 2004; FIFC 2004).

## Concluding Remarks

The response of humanitarian agencies to this crisis has been largely predictable. Some have virtually ignored it in the mistaken belief that it can be avoided by concentrating on the forgotten ‘humanitarian famines’ (Oxfam 2003). Others have argued for business as usual in the sense that humanitarian agencies should continue, albeit more “cunningly”, to stalk sovereignty (Slim 2004). By calling on international law, the Geneva conventions and the UN system, some have tried to resurrect boundary fences on the quicksand of occupied political space (HPG 2003). In general however, there has been a public silence in relation to the fundamental issues that our present predicament has forced to the surface (Vaux 2004). The invasion of Iraq has brought this long simmering crisis to a head and, at the same time, created “...an important liberal moment” for serious reflection (Warner 2003). The crisis demands something more than another reinvention of an established design of bio-power; it requires more than a debate about whether or under what operational conditions to work in occupied political space. Most definitely, the crisis – in exposing the hidden pact between governance and sovereignty – has meant that one can no longer talk of a return to humanitarian basics (Reiff 2002). The call for neutrality, which reinforces the isolation of bare life, only serves to reproduce sovereignty itself. At a time of hyper-security, when the concentration camp has once again moved to the foreground of political imagination, this is an inadequate response.

The problem faced by humanitarian agencies is not a programmatic one, it is political. It involves understanding and moving beyond a design of power which encompasses us all. It is not simply a question of reuniting humanitarianism with politics, it requires a need to reinvent politics itself and free it from its bio-political moorings. Perhaps a clue is given in the recurrent dilemma in relation to which governance within global governance defines itself. It would involve refusing to distinguish between the starving child and the poor child. Such a refusal, however, is not a programmatic call for more multi-mandated NGOs: it constitutes a political challenge. It requires a politics that goes beyond the refugee producing nation-state and the endless bio-evolutionary treadmill of development. Instead of reinforcing the isolation of bare life or insisting on its betterment, it requires a humanitarianism that accepts its historical agency and political memory and, in so doing, challenges the foundations of sovereignty. It would be a humanitarianism that helps politics return to its practical vocation, that is, as pro-

viding a commentary and constant check on the exercise of power itself. Despite high hopes,<sup>8</sup> however, the lesson of the post-Cold War period is that, while not impossible, we are unlikely to find such a politics emerging from within the established humanitarian sector.

<sup>8</sup> See Campbell (1998) for Foucault's involvement with Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF) in the late 1970s and early 1980s and the hopes that public humanitarian action based on the principle that 'we are all governed' would challenge the basis of sovereignty.

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