

RETHINKING STATE-BUILDING

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General information:

The eighth international seminar is organized in co-operation with the Dept. of Comparative Politics and the Rokkan Centre, Univ. of Bergen, Norway, and supported by the Project *The Politics of Democratic and Welfare Development in South Eastern Europe: A Network for Research and Education*, backed by the Center for International Univ. Cooperation and the Norwegian Research Council, Oslo.

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Location: Cultural House, Konjic, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Although there is no set deadline for the submission of papers, we encourage you to apply as soon as possible.

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<http://www.rokkan.uib.no/bihdemocracy/>

Much has been written about the consolidation of post-war societies, and – depending on the disciplines or schools the authors feel themselves belonging to – different »roads to peace« have been focussed upon: IR approaches are mainly interested in international reasons for and implications of humanitarian intervention and foreign interim administration, liberal-economic approaches promote peace consolidation through market liberalisation and privatisation, democracy and transition theories stress peace through democratisation, and approaches centred around civil society emphasize the law provisions for human and minority rights and the fortification of a societal counter weight to the state. Strangely enough, the state hasn't played a very prominent role in studies on post-war peace consolidation, e.g. in Bosnia and Herzegovina, although the declared goal of the international community is to establish a unified, democratic state and although it was not a type of regime but the very state which was contested by different parties during the intra-state war.

The panel tries to »bring the state back in«, proposing some broad areas of possible contribution which are crucial to the scrutiny of state structures. The overarching question is: Does external state-building build states? Different possible research areas might further our understanding of the state in post-war societies:

- Theoretical aspects of state-building: What does a valuable theory of state in the context of the transitional societies of the »Second« and »Third World« look like? How were/are states or state institutions being built? (e.g., Can, from a sociological-historical point of view, foreign administration lead to the institutionalisation of modern state structures?)
- Research into main state functions: Does state-building enhance or hamper the core functions of the state concerned, i.e. (1) security/monopoly of the use of violence, (2) fiscality/welfare, and (3) rule of law/legitimacy?
- Foreign administrations as instruments of state-building: strengths, problems, limits (e.g., is it, as Stephen Krasner puts it, an alternative to state sovereignty in the view of state failure worth thinking about? Is it a new form of colonialism? And what could that mean for the future of the state?)
- The international community dimension: How does the state figure in their strategies and visions? Are international actors interested in building strong state structures at all? (e.g., Is it possible that the EU isn't that much interested in establishing a strong state because it could hamper the smooth subordination under supranational EU structures?)

We plan to discuss these or similar topics in the panel. In view of the proliferation of political concepts we would like to encourage especially studies which challenge the blind spots of research caused by ahistoricity, issue-focused approaches, and the undue preference of concept juggling over explorations of the matter as well as of political consultancy over the scientific search for genuine truth.

Paper proposals so far:

David Chandler: The Paradox of State-Building: Phantom States and Fragile Empires

Berit Bliesemann de Guevara: Does External State-Building Build a Bosnian State?