

International peacebuilding and the ‘mission civilisatrice’

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Abstract. International peacebuilding operations seek to stabilise countries that have recently experienced civil wars. In pursuing this goal, however, international peacebuilders have promulgated a particular vision of how states should organise themselves internally, based on the principles of liberal democracy and market-oriented economics. By reconstructing war-shattered states in accordance with this vision, peacebuilders have effectively ‘transmitted’ standards of appropriate behaviour from the Western-liberal core of the international system to the failed states of the periphery. From this perspective, peacebuilding resembles an updated (and more benign) version of the *mission civilisatrice*, or the colonial-era belief that the European imperial powers had a duty to ‘civilise’ dependent populations and territories.

International ‘peacebuilding’ operations typically aim to prevent violence from recurring in countries that are just emerging from civil conflicts.¹ As the number of peacebuilding missions has multiplied since the end of the Cold War—with operations in Central America, Southeast Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Southeast Asia—the scholarly literature on peacebuilding has grown apace.² Much of this literature focuses on the practical challenges of peacebuilding, while paying little attention to the ideological assumptions of these operations.³ This article argues that

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¹ According to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the term ‘peacebuilding’ refers to ‘actions undertaken at the end of a conflict to consolidate peace and prevent a recurrence of armed confrontation’. Kofi Annan, ‘The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa’, Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council, S/1998/318 (13 April, 1998), para. 63. Although there is no canonical definition of peacebuilding, Annan’s formulation echoes common usage; see Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, ‘International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis’, *American Political Science Review*, 94:4 (December 2000), p. 799.

² Recent book-length contributions include Michael Pugh (ed.), *Regeneration of War-Torn Societies* (London: Macmillan, 2000), Elizabeth Cousens, Chetan Kumar and Karin Wermester (eds.), *Peacebuilding as Politics: Cultivating Peace in Fragile Societies* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000), and Luc Reyhler and Thania Paffenholz (eds.), *Peacebuilding: A Field Guide* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

³ I elaborate this critique of the peacebuilding literature in Roland Paris, ‘Broadening the Study of Peace Operations’, *International Studies Review* 2:3 (Fall 2000), pp. 27–44. Recent works that, by contrast, do explore the ideological underpinnings of peacebuilding include: Oliver Ramsbotham, ‘Reflections on UN Post-Settlement Peacebuilding’, *International Peacekeeping*, 7:1 (Spring 2000), pp. 169–89, A.B. Fetherston, ‘Peacekeeping, Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding: A Reconsideration of Theoretical Frameworks’, *International Peacekeeping*, 7:1 (Spring 2000), pp. 190–218, Michael Pugh, ‘Protectorates and the Spoils of Peace: Intermestic Manipulations of Political Economy in South-East Europe’, Copenhagen Peace Research Institute working paper no. 36 (2000), Christopher Clapham, ‘Rwanda and the Perils of Peacemaking’, *Journal of Peace Research*, 35:2 (March 1998), pp. 193–210, François Debrix, *Re-Envisioning Peacekeeping: The United Nations and the Mobilization of Ideology* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), and William I. Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy: Globalization, US Intervention, and Hegemony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

peacebuilding missions are not merely exercises in conflict management, but instances of a much larger phenomenon: the globalisation of a particular model of domestic governance—liberal market democracy—from the core to the periphery of the international system.⁴ Most international organisations engaged in peacebuilding have internalised the broadly liberal political and economic values of the wealthy and powerful industrialised democracies (which comprise the core of the current international system), while nearly all of the countries that have hosted peacebuilding missions are located in the poor and politically weak periphery. Without exception, peacebuilding missions in the post-Cold War period have attempted to ‘transplant’ the values and institutions of the liberal democratic core into the domestic affairs of peripheral host states.

I do not claim that this kind of globalisation is necessarily undesirable—indeed, I have written elsewhere that peacebuilders should continue to promote the principles of liberal market democracy in war-shattered states.⁵ Rather, in this article I argue that students of peacebuilding have concentrated so intently on the operational details of these missions that they have tended to neglect the role that peace operations play in the diffusion of norms and institutional models from one part of the international system to another. Among other things, peacebuilders attempt to bring war-shattered states into conformity with the international system’s prevailing standards of domestic governance, or standards that define how states should organise themselves internally. In this respect, the contemporary practice of peacebuilding may be viewed as a modern rendering of the *mission civilisatrice*—the colonial-era belief that the European imperial powers had a duty to ‘civilise’ their overseas possessions. Although modern peacebuilders have largely abandoned the archaic language of civilised versus uncivilised, they nevertheless appear to act upon the belief that one model of domestic governance—liberal market democracy—is superior to all others.

Of course, the old and new versions of *mission civilisatrice* differ in many respects, not the least of which is the fact that European colonialism was practiced primarily to benefit the imperial states themselves, whereas the motivation behind recent peacebuilding operations is less mercenary. Nevertheless, like European colonialism a hundred years ago, today’s peacebuilding operations convey norms of acceptable or civilised behaviour into the domestic affairs of less-developed states. Thinking this way about peace operations—as compared with the prevailing tendency to conceive of these operations as technical (or non-ideological) exercises in conflict management—helps to situate the study of peacebuilding in a broader historical and analytical context. If peacebuilding is, as I argue, a modern version of the *mission civilisatrice*, then peace operations can be viewed as a new chapter in the history of relations between the developed and developing worlds.

This argument can be rephrased in terms that may be more familiar to some readers: Peacebuilding operations embody a type of globalisation that has gone

⁴ By liberal market democracy, I mean a system of governance that emphasises periodic and genuine elections, constitutional limitations on the exercise of governmental power, respect for basic civil liberties (including freedom of speech, assembly and conscience), and the principles and practices of market-oriented economics.

⁵ Roland Paris, ‘Peacebuilding and the Limits of Liberal Internationalism’, *International Security*, 22:2 (Fall 1997), pp. 54–89. On the other hand, I argue for changes in the *methods* that peacebuilders currently use in promoting liberalisation.

largely unnoticed in recent discussions on international affairs—not a globalisation of goods and services, nor of cultural products like films and television shows, but rather, a globalisation of the very idea of what a state should look like and how it should act. To the extent that peacebuilding agencies transmit such ideas from the core to the periphery of the international system, these agencies are, in effect, involved in an effort to remake parts of the periphery in the image of the core. Furthermore, this kind of globalisation does not have the effect of 'eroding the state', which is routinely cited as one of the characteristics of globalisation. On the contrary, peacebuilders work to buttress or re-establish effective and functioning government institutions in war-shattered states. Indeed, while peace operations promulgate the principles of liberal market democracy, these principles presuppose the existence of state institutions, and where no such institutions exist, they must first be built. The idea of an operative state, in other words, is no less a part of the modern *mission civilisatrice* than is the notion that the reconstituted state should be a liberal one. Consequently, the phenomenon of globalisation need not be destructive of state sovereignty, but may reinforce the effective sovereignty of certain states.

The first part of this article presents the empirical case that peacebuilding agencies are in fact biased in favour of liberal political and economic models, and identifies some of the mechanisms through which these agencies have attempted to transform war-shattered states into liberal market democracies. In the second part of the article, I draw a parallel between peacebuilding and the notion of *mission civilisatrice*, and then explore some of the connections between peacebuilding and globalisation.

The liberal bias of peacebuilding

Since 1989, international peacebuilding missions have been deployed to several countries that were just emerging from civil wars, including Namibia, Angola, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Cambodia, East Timor, and the former Yugoslavia. Most of the international agencies involved in these missions, particularly the most influential agencies, have supported the transformation of war-shattered states into liberal market democracies. The United Nations (UN), for example, has helped to prepare for, to oversee, or to administer elections in all of the countries mentioned above. The Organization of American States (OAS) has similarly assisted in democratisation efforts in both Nicaragua and El Salvador, reflecting the organisation's commitment to promote the principles of representative democracy among its member states.⁶ The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has also acted upon its pledge to encourage 'the development of societies based on pluralistic democracy and the rule of law' in overseeing the electoral process in Bosnia and Kosovo.⁷ The OSCE's peacebuilding partner in the former Yugoslavia, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO),

⁶ Peter Hakim, 'The OAS: Putting Principles Into Practice', *Journal of Democracy*, 4:3 (July 1993), pp. 39–49.

⁷ This pledge was part of a June 1990 declaration, which is reproduced in *International Legal Materials*, 29:5 (September 1990), p. 1307.

reaffirmed its constitutional promise to uphold ‘the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law’ by participating in an operation whose aims included the establishment of functioning democratic institutions in Bosnia.⁸ Further, the IMF and World Bank, both of which have participated in all of the missions listed above (primarily as providers of financial assistance and sponsors of specific development projects within the war-shattered states) have made their financial aid contingent on recipient states undertaking economic liberalisation and to a lesser extent political liberalisation and democratisation.⁹

In addition to these inter-governmental organisations, national development agencies such as the US Agency for International Development (USAID) have figured prominently in recent peacebuilding missions as providers of financial and other forms of assistance to war-shattered states. Since the early 1990s, USAID, along with the national aid agencies of Japan, Canada, Britain, France, the Nordic states, Belgium, Germany and Switzerland, have placed greater emphasis on democracy and human rights—including the holding of ‘free and fair’ elections—in their allocations of development aid to war-shattered states and other countries receiving such assistance.¹⁰ Moreover, many international NGOs involved in peacebuilding have supported efforts to transform war-shattered states into liberal market democracies.¹¹ Although some NGOs have sharply criticised particular aspects of peacebuilding, few have challenged the broader notion that liberal political and economic principles offer the most promising model for the reorganisation of war-shattered states. As David Williams and Tom Young explain, most non-governmental development organisations share a ‘common vision of what development means which is rooted in Western notions of the state, “civil society” and the self . . . [Although] the most radical part of the NGO discourse . . . is their emphasis on “grass roots” participation . . . this terminology is always to be understood entirely within Western preconceptions’ of political, social and economic organisation.¹²

⁸ Preamble of the North Atlantic Treaty. For a description of NATO’s changing mission since the end of the Cold War, see Steven Rader, ‘NATO’, in Trevor Findlay (ed.), *Challenges for New Peacekeepers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 142–58.

⁹ Nasir Islam and David R. Morrison, ‘Introduction: Governance, Democracy and Human Rights’, *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* (Special Issue, 1996), pp. 4–18; David Gillies, ‘Human Rights, Democracy, and Good Governance: Stretching the World Bank’s Policy Frontiers’, in Jo Marie Gresgaber and Bernhard G. Gunter (eds.), *The World Bank: Lending on a Global Scale* (London: Pluto, 1996), pp. 101–41; and Richard Jeffries, ‘The State, Structural Adjustment and Good Government in Africa’, *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 31:1 (March 1993), pp. 20–35.

¹⁰ Harry Blair, ‘Donors, Democratization and Civil Society: Relating Theory to Practice’, in David Hulme and Michael Edwards (eds.), *NGOs, States and Donors: Too Close for Comfort?* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1997), pp. 23–42; Stephen Commins, ‘World Vision International and Donors: Too Close for Comfort?’ in Hulme and Edwards (eds.), *NGOs, States and Donors*, pp. 140–55; David P. Forsythe, ‘The United Nations, Democracy, and the Americas’, in Tom Farer (ed.), *Beyond Sovereignty: Collectively Defending Democracy in the Americas* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 107–31; Joan M. Nelson with Stephanie J. Eglinton, *Encouraging Democracy: What Role For Conditioned Aid?* (Washington, DC: Overseas Development Council, 1992); Joan M. Nelson and Stephanie J. Eglinton, ‘Conditioned Aid and the Promotion and Defense of Democracy’, in Farer (ed.), *Beyond Sovereignty*, pp. 169–86; and Carolyn Baylies, ‘“Political Conditionality” and Democratization’, *Review of African Political Economy*, 65:22 (September 1995), pp. 321–37.

¹¹ For an overview of NGO efforts to promote democratic elections, see Vikram K. Chand, ‘Democratization From the Outside In: NGOs and International Efforts to Promote Open Elections’, in Thomas G. Weiss (ed.), *Beyond UN Subcontracting: Task-Sharing With Regional Security Arrangements and Service-Providing NGOs* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1998), pp. 160–83.

¹² David Williams and Tom Young, ‘Governance, the World Bank and Liberal Theory’, *Policy Studies*, 42:1 (March 1994), p. 98.

Given the characteristics of the principal international agencies involved in peacebuilding, the liberal bias of international peacebuilding agencies should come as little surprise. The most active and influential of these agencies—the UN, OAS, OSCE, NATO, the IMF and World Bank, the major national development agencies, and the largest international development NGOs—are headquartered in, and receive their primary funding from, the advanced industrialised democracies of Western Europe and North America. Their membership and decision-making procedures, moreover, tend to favour the interests of the industrialised democracies: NATO's membership includes only liberal market democracies (plus Turkey); the voting rules of the IMF give greater power to its richest members; the OAS is dominated by the United States; and three of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council are France, Britain and the US. Even the most independent and critical of these organisations—the non-governmental agencies engaged in development and aid activities—have tended to work towards 'facilitating the effective participation of the poor in the market economy, rather than providing alternatives to it'.¹³

The liberal bias of these international agencies became more pronounced at the end of the Cold War, when Western liberalism's main competitor—the communist Soviet bloc—suddenly disintegrated. Before the end of the Cold War, many of these organisations were less vigorous supporters of the principles and institutions of liberal market democracy. Within the United Nations during the Cold War, for instance, the very definition of democracy served as a lightning rod for ideological conflict between the Soviet and Western blocs, which effectively prevented the organisation from taking sides. Only after the demise of Soviet communism did the organisation begin to promote the Western or liberal conception of democracy, with its emphasis on free and fair elections.¹⁴ The General Assembly underscored the organisation's more active support for representative democracy by passing a resolution in 1991 declaring that 'periodic and genuine elections' are a 'crucial factor in the effective enjoyment . . . of a wide range of other human rights',¹⁵ and the UN subsequently created a permanent Electoral Assistance Division in order to provide countries making the transition to democracy with technical advice and outside observers for the holding of elections¹⁶—actions that would have been virtually unthinkable during the Cold War years of ideological polarisation.

The OAS underwent a similar transformation at the end of the Cold War. Even though the organisation was formally committed to the principles of electoral democracy since its founding in 1948, its efforts to uphold liberal democratic principles prior to 1990 were 'modest and episodic at best'.¹⁷ In June 1991, however,

¹³ Jude L. Fernando and Alan W. Heston, 'The Role of NGOs: Charity and Empowerment', *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (November 1997), p. 14.

¹⁴ Richard Falk, 'The United Nations and Cosmopolitan Democracy: Bad Dream, Utopian Fantasy, Political Project', in Daniele Archibugi, David Held and Martin Köhler (eds.), *Re-Imagining Political Community: Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), pp. 309–31.

¹⁵ UN General Assembly Resolution 46/137 (17 December, 1991).

¹⁶ As of June 1999, the unit had received some 180 requests from member states for electoral support, and had provided assistance in 128 of these cases. See the UN Electoral Assistance Division website, 'Member State's Request for Electoral Assistance to the United Nations System', <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/ead/website9.htm>, accessed on 23 March, 2001.

¹⁷ Larry Diamond, *Promoting Democracy in the 1990s: Actors and Instruments, Issues and Imperatives*, Report to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Violence (New York: Carnegie Corporation, 1995), p. 36.

OAS member states passed a resolution calling for ‘the immediate convocation of a meeting . . . in the event of any occurrences giving rise to the sudden or irregular interruption of the democratic political institutional process or the legitimate exercise of power by the democratically elected government of any of the Organization’s member states’.¹⁸ Since then, the OAS has monitored elections in Haiti, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Paraguay and Surinam, and imposed sanctions following anti-democratic coups in Haiti and Peru.

Like the OAS, both the OSCE and European Union (EU) also became active in upholding the principles of electoral democracy only after the end of the Cold War. Prior to 1990, members of the OSCE (then known as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) had agreed not to interfere in each other’s ‘political, social, economic and cultural systems’.¹⁹ Following democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe, however, the organisation declared its intention to promote electoral democracy and political liberties among its members, established an Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, and became involved in organising electoral assistance and the drafting of new constitutions in the newly emerging democracies of the former Soviet bloc. Meanwhile, in 1993, the EU announced that a principal objective of its Common Foreign and Security Policy would be the development and consolidation of ‘democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms’.²⁰ Since the end of the Cold War, the EU has also explicitly promoted civil and political rights in its bilateral trade and co-operation agreements with developing states.²¹

That these and other international agencies became more active proponents of liberal political and economic principles at the end of the Cold War (when the principal challenger to the dominance of the liberal market democracies suddenly disappeared) suggests that the observed relationship between the domestic values of the industrialised democracies on one hand, and the liberal bias of the leading peacebuilding agencies on the other hand, is not merely coincidental.

Transmission mechanisms

The mechanisms that international peacebuilders have used to promote liberal market democracy vary widely from one operation to the next, but can be divided into four broad categories. First, peacebuilders have shaped the content of peace agreements while they were being drafted. In all recent peacebuilding cases, former belligerents negotiated peace settlements in the presence of outside parties who encouraged local actors to incorporate the goal of political (and in some cases economic) liberalisation directly into their agreements. When the United Nations mediated an end to El Salvador’s civil war, for example, it successfully urged Salvadoran parties to include written plans for free and fair elections and the

¹⁸ Resolution AG/Res. 1080 (XXI-0/91).

¹⁹ Neil J. Kritz, ‘The CSCE in the New Era’, *Journal of Democracy* 4:3 (July 1993), p. 19.

²⁰ Treaty on European Union, which entered into force on 1 November, 1993. Quoted on http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/human_rights/intro/index.htm, accessed on 8 July, 2002.

²¹ European Union, *Annual Report on Human Rights* (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2000).

investigation of human rights abuses. The principal features of Namibia's peace settlement, which included provisions for democratic elections and the protection of civil liberties in the post-conflict period, were not drafted by Namibians at all but by a 'contact group' of outside states including France, Canada, Germany, Britain and the United States. Similarly, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council prepared and presented Cambodia's formerly warring parties with a draft peace agreement which called for Cambodia to adopt a 'system of liberal democracy' and which the local parties eventually approved with only minor modifications. In the case of Mozambique, outside mediators including a Catholic lay organisation in Rome (the Community of Sant'Egidio) convinced the country's government to incorporate plans for democratic elections in the peace settlement ending Mozambique's civil war.²² Rwanda's 1993 peace settlement between the Hutu-led government and Tutsi opposition groups—a settlement that ultimately disintegrated in the genocidal violence of April 1994—also included plans for political liberalisation that the Rwandan government reluctantly accepted (but later abandoned) in response to pressure from international mediators and aid donors.

International mediators were also instrumental in promoting democracy in Bosnia, where a war involving three ethnic communities—Serbs, Croats, and Muslims—was fought from 1992 to the end of 1995. Almost from the beginning of the war, outside negotiators attempted to bring the warring parties together and negotiate a peace; and international mediators simply asserted that any solution to the war would take place within the framework of the CSCE's 'Charter of Paris', which affirmed the intention of European states 'to build, consolidate and strengthen democracy as the only system of government of our nations'.²³ When Cyrus Vance and David Owen convened the Bosnian parties in London in January 1993, for example, they presented a set of basic principles for a possible peace plan, including that any post-war government of Bosnia would be 'democratically elected'.²⁴ At that time and for the duration of the war, two of the three Bosnian parties (the Serbs and Croats) were less interested in reconstituting a *democratic* Bosnia than in securing exclusive political control of territory occupied by their respective ethnic communities.²⁵ But in the lead-up to the final peace negotiations in November 1995, the Bosnian parties formally agreed—at the urging of the American mediator, Richard Holbrooke—to work towards a peace that would include democratically elected government. Even at this relatively late stage in the negotiations, however, the Bosnian Serb representatives attempted to remove the requirement of popular elections from the draft agreement.²⁶ Holbrooke's reaction to this ploy was to treat the principle of direct elections as non-negotiable.²⁷ In the end, Bosnia would hold elections, not because all of the major Bosnian parties came to the negotiating table

²² See Cameron Hume, *Ending Mozambique's War: The Role of Mediation and Good Offices* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1994).

²³ David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1995), pp. 31–2. For the text of the Charter of Paris, see <http://www.osce.org/docs/english/1990-1999/summits/paris90e.htm>.

²⁴ Owen, *Balkan Odyssey*, pp. 89–90.

²⁵ Steven L. Burg and Paul S. Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), p. 217.

²⁶ Elaine Sciolino, 'Enemies in Bosnia Devise Structure for a Government', *New York Times* (27 September, 1995); and Richard Holbrooke, *To End A War* (New York: Random House, 1998), p. 180.

²⁷ Holbrooke, *To End A War*, p. 183.

supporting the idea of democracy, but because international negotiators insisted from the beginning that any post-war Bosnian government be constituted by a ‘free and fair’ vote. As Holbrooke later commented more generally: ‘to the extent that Bosnia has been democratized, it has been the result of the constant pushing and prodding of the international community’.²⁸

A second way in which peacebuilders have promulgated liberal norms, in addition to shaping the content of peace settlements, is by providing ‘expert’ advice to local parties in war-shattered states during the implementation of these settlements. In many cases, outside experts have played key roles in guiding the process of political and economic liberalisation. In Namibia, for example, although the country’s newly elected constituent assembly had the formal task of drafting a new constitution, United Nations officials recommended specific language emphasising free and fair elections, civil liberties, judicial independence and due process, which the constituent assembly largely adopted.²⁹ In Bosnia, an unusual combination of international governmental and non-governmental agencies—including the USAID, financier George Soros’ Open Society Institute, and the British Broadcasting Corporation, among others—provided funding and training for the development of free media.³⁰ In these and other peacebuilding host states, including El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Cambodia, international agencies have sought to establish and train indigenous human rights NGOs in order to stimulate the growth of a domestic civil society that, it was hoped, would espouse liberal democratic values and thus support new governmental institutions. Peacebuilders have also developed programmes to teach police forces in war-shattered states how to conduct themselves in a liberal democratic society, and have provided advice on the legalities and logistics surrounding the holding of free and fair elections in every peacebuilding mission, assisting in such tasks as the drafting of electoral laws and other preparations for voting, teaching ordinary electors how to cast their ballots, and overseeing the elections themselves.

Third, several international agencies have imposed ‘conditionalities’ requiring states to undertake specific economic and political reforms in exchange for economic aid. All of the war-shattered states receiving aid from the IMF and World Bank, in particular, have been required to undertake market-oriented economic reforms including the privatisation of state-owned enterprises, the lowering of government subsidies, removal of wage and price controls, and the lifting of regulatory controls and barriers to foreign goods and investment. Even though Cambodia’s peace agreement, for example, made no reference to the economic policies that a future Cambodian government would pursue, in practice the IMF and World Bank called on Cambodia to undertake market-oriented economic reforms soon after the peace agreement was signed, and the new government quickly heeded the call.³¹ Similar

²⁸ Personal communication with the author, 20 September, 2000.

²⁹ Much of this language was derived from a document specifying principles for the constitution of an independent Namibia, approved by the UN Security Council in 1978; see Lionel Cliffe, *The Transition to Independence in Namibia* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1994, pp. 199–200.

³⁰ ‘Creating Professional Bosnian Media’, *New York Times* (30 April, 1998), p. A36.

³¹ See UN document A/47/285–S/24183 (June 24, 1992), annex; and George Irvin, ‘Cambodia: Why Recovery is Unlikely in the Short Term’: *European Journal of Development Research*, 5:2 (December 1993), pp. 128–32.

conditionalities were placed on international aid to Rwanda, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Bosnia, Croatia and Mozambique. Peacebuilding agencies have also required local parties to meet certain standards of political conduct in exchange for continued financial aid. During 1996, for instance, all major international donors in Bosnia withheld economic assistance from areas of the country controlled by ethnic Serbs because political leaders in those areas had failed to comply with key human rights provisions of the Dayton peace accord.³² It is unclear, however, how effective these 'political conditionalities' have actually been in altering the behaviour of local parties in Bosnia or elsewhere.³³

The fourth mechanism that peacebuilders have used to promote liberal norms is the performance of quasi-governmental functions in war-shattered states, or what Fen Osler Hampson calls 'proxy governance', which involves international actors serving as 'stand-ins for local authorities who are unable or unwilling to perform the needed administrative tasks themselves'.³⁴ In Namibia, for instance, the special representative of the UN secretary-general was given extensive review powers over the activities of the local South African administrator who governed the territory until its independence. In Bosnia, international authorities appointed the first governing board of the country's central bank as well as other important administrative positions. In Cambodia, the UN-led operation's civilian component placed international administrators in key government departments dealing with such sensitive issues as defence, foreign affairs, finance, public security, and information, education, agriculture, and transport. During the latter stages of the Cambodia mission, writes James Schear, international personnel could be found doing such things as 'probing into the country's penal code, investigating its defense procurement decisions, vetting editorials in state-run media, reviewing regulations on natural heritage preservation, scrutinizing admissions policies at public educational institutions, monitoring passport and visa procedures, managing monetary and fiscal decisions, and delving into a host of other civil administrative activities'.³⁵

Perhaps the most wide-ranging exercise of proxy governance, however, was in Kosovo and East Timor. 'What we are involved in', explained a Kosovo-based OSCE official in 1999, 'is nothing less than building up the whole state from scratch'.³⁶ International agencies control local governments, conduct economic policymaking, register motor vehicles, and even issue postage stamps. The 'state' that peacebuilders are seeking to build in Kosovo is unmistakably liberal in its design, based on the principles of 'democratic values and structures' as well as 'respect for

³² *Bosnia Peace Operation: Progress Toward Achieving the Dayton Agreement's Goals* (Washington, DC, General Accounting Office, 1997), p. 64.

³³ For an argument that aid conditionalities have had little influence on the political behaviour of local parties in conflict zones, see Peter Uvin, 'The Influence of Aid in Situations of Violent Conflict', Development Assistance Committee, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (Paris: September 1999).

³⁴ Fen Osler Hampson, *Nurturing Peace: Why Peace Settlements Succeed or Fail* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996), pp. 232–3; and Fen Osler Hampson, 'Can Peacebuilding Work?' *Cornell International Law Journal*, 30:3 (1997), pp. 707–8.

³⁵ James A. Schear, 'Riding the Tiger: The United Nations and Cambodia's Struggle for Peace', in William J. Durch (ed.), *UN Peacebuilding, American Politics, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s* (New York: St. Martin's, 1996), p. 158.

³⁶ Cited in Patrick Smyth, 'In Kosovo Everything From Teachers to Power Workers Must Be Provided', *Irish Times* (9 November, 1999), p. 14.

human rights' and a 'market-based economy'.³⁷ Similarly, in East Timor, the United Nations has worked toward establishing institutions of transitional government in preparation for the territory's eventual independence. These institutions include a justice system—comprised of judges, prosecutors and public defenders, police, and a prison staffed by international personnel—a public service commission, a border control service, and even a tax department, all created by international fiat. In addition, World Bank and IMF officials have advised the UN transitional administration in the creation of a central bank,³⁸ and at the time of this writing the United Nations has plans to organise a constituent assembly that will adopt a democratic constitution for the territory, thus enabling 'the East Timorese to conduct their own elections in the future'.³⁹

Efforts to transform war-shattered states into liberal market democracies, employing methods such as those described above, have had profound effects on several peacebuilding host states. Namibia, for example, had virtually no previous experience with democratic politics or market-oriented economics before the period of peacebuilding. The territory had been colonised by Germany in 1884 and remained a German possession until World War I, when South African troops seized control of Namibia (which was then known as South West Africa). The South African government continued to administer the territory in subsequent years as a League of Nations mandate. After World War II, however, South Africa refused to relinquish control of Namibia when the United Nations demanded that the territory be placed under the jurisdiction of the UN Trusteeship Council. In the early 1960s, several black nationalist organisations inside Namibia joined forces to form the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) which initiated a military and political campaign to oust South African authorities from Namibia and secure the territory's independence. SWAPO was openly hostile to the principles of liberal market democracy for most of its organisational life, declaring in its 1976 political programme that the group's primary goal was to unite 'all Namibian people, particularly the working class, the peasantry and progressive intellectuals into a vanguard party capable of safeguarding national independence and building a classless, non-exploitative society based on the ideas and principles of scientific socialism'.⁴⁰ Meanwhile, the South African-run government of Namibia also had little interest in promoting political liberalisation in the territory, given that the black majority resented the South Africans' presence and could be expected to agitate for independence.

When peace between SWAPO and South Africa arrived in 1989, the political and economic policies of SWAPO underwent a sea change that 'astonished many

³⁷ 'Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo', UN Security Council document S/1999/779 (12 July, 1999), paras. 79 and 103; and Bernard Kouchner, 'The Challenge of Rebuilding Kosovo', *NATO Review*, 47:4 (Winter 1999), internet edition: <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1999/9903-04.htm>, accessed on 19 April, 2000.

³⁸ Damian Milverton, 'IMF Advice Helping East Timor Plot New Economic Course', Dow Jones Newswires (21 February, 2000).

³⁹ 'Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (for the period 27 July 2000 to 16 January 2001)', UN document S/2001/42 (January 16, 2001), para. 5.

⁴⁰ Cited in Per Strand, *SWAPO and Nation Building in Namibia: Transfer of Power in the Post-Communist Era* (Windhoek, Namibia: Namibian Institute for Social and Economic Research, 1991), pp. 27–28.

observers, at home and abroad'.⁴¹ Instead of promoting a Marxist model of domestic governance, SWAPO suddenly began advocating the principles of liberal market democracy. Not only did the organisation endorse plans for a political reform including regular elections and civil liberties, SWAPO also emphasised the crucial role of the private sector and foreign investment in promoting economic growth. Conditionalities attached to international financial assistance appeared to contribute to this ideological shift. In the hope of soliciting additional support from international donors, the new Namibian government devised an economic plan in 1990 that centred around a 'free-market path to development' including non-discriminatory treatment of foreign investors and the freedom to repatriate profits and dividends.⁴² Peacebuilding agencies also provided guidance and expertise in the process of political liberalisation, including by helping to draft the liberal democratic constitution and organise elections, which SWAPO won. Since the end of the peacebuilding operation, Namibia has maintained its commitment to liberal principles in both the political and economic realms, holding new elections in 1994, and continuing its market-oriented economic policies. The country has also established an open and relatively amicable political and economic relationship with its neighbour, South Africa.

Nicaragua and El Salvador, too, appear to have adopted some of the norms of liberal market democracy. Neither country had a strong tradition of democratic politics in the period before their peacebuilding missions. Moreover, Nicaragua was resolutely opposed to market-oriented economics from the 1979 Sandinista revolution onwards. At the behest of the international financial institutions, Nicaragua first introduced market-oriented 'stabilisation' measures in 1988 in the hope of reducing an inflation rate that had exceeded 33,000 per cent in that year.⁴³ Yet it was not until a new Nicaraguan government was elected under the auspices of the UN and OAS-sponsored peacebuilding mission that the country began a radical programme of economic liberalisation, including privatisation of state-owned enterprises, lowering barriers to international trade and investment, and elimination of domestic price controls and subsidies.⁴⁴ These reforms were designed primarily by three international agencies participating in the peacebuilding operation—the IMF, the World Bank, and the USAID—all of which made their financial assistance contingent on Nicaragua's compliance with these economic reforms.⁴⁵ Further, as in the other cases of peacebuilding, international agencies also played a key role in guiding

⁴¹ Lauren Dobell, 'SWAPO in Office', in Colin Leys and John S. Saul (eds.), *Namibia's Liberation Struggle: The Two-Edged Sword* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1995), p. 171.

⁴² Cliffe, *The Transition to Independence in Namibia*, p. 230; and Roger Murray, *Namibia Through the 1990s: Turning Rich Resources Into Growth* (London: Economist Intelligence Unit), 1992, p. 34.

⁴³ Mario Arana, 'General Economic Policy', in Thomas W. Walker (ed.), *Nicaragua Without Illusions: Regime Transition and Structural Adjustment in the 1990s* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1997), p. 82; and Thomas W. Walker, 'Introduction: Historical Setting and Important Issues', in Walker (ed.), *Nicaragua Without Illusions*, p. 12.

⁴⁴ Rose J. Spalding, 'Nicaragua: Poverty, Politics, and Polarization', in Jorge I. Domínguez and Abraham F. Lowenthal (eds.), *Constructing Democratic Governance: Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean in the 1990s* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press), 1996, p. 20.

⁴⁵ William I. Robinson, 'Nicaragua and the World: A Globalization Perspective', in Walker (ed.), p. 31; and David R. Dye, Judy Butler, Deena Abu-Lughod, Jack Spence and George Vickers, *Contesting Everything, Winning Nothing: The Search for Consensus in Nicaragua, 1990–1995* (Cambridge, MA: Hemisphere Initiatives), 1995, p. 8.

the process of political transformation. A joint UN–OAS commission reviewed Nicaragua’s plans for national elections and concluded that these plans conformed with basic liberal democratic norms, including guarantees of freedom of association and expression.⁴⁶ Elections took place in February 1990 under the supervision of more than 2,000 international observers representing numerous international governmental agencies as well as a ‘smorgasbord of private interest and advocacy groups’.⁴⁷

El Salvador’s civil war ended in December 1991 with the signing of a United Nations-mediated peace settlement known as the ‘Chapultepec Accord’, which set out plans for regular elections, investigation of human rights abuses and professionalisation of the judiciary, among other things. Previous elections in El Salvador had been ‘merely propaganda’, rather than free and fair.⁴⁸ However, international agencies, most notably the United Nations, monitored all aspects of the 1994 election, including voter registration, the campaign, voting, and every stage of vote counting. The victorious party in the election—the incumbent Arena party—has subsequently lived up to its commitment to hold regular elections (new elections were held in 1997) and to ensure respect for civil liberties in a country with a long history of political repression. As noted earlier, the UN also initiated a programme to retrain the police in methods appropriate to liberal democracies. Other international agencies, including several international NGOs, worked to establish and strengthen politically-active local organisations in order to enhance the opportunities for ordinary citizens to participate in the newly democratised political system.⁴⁹ In the economic realm, Arena had long supported market-oriented policies before the end of the war, although the peacebuilding period coincided with a movement towards greater liberalisation of the Salvadoran economy, based on plans that the Salvadoran government devised in consultation with the IMF, World Bank, and Inter-American Development Bank, all of which offered financial aid to El Salvador conditional on the government pursuing further market-oriented reforms.⁵⁰

Mozambique also emerged from its peacebuilding operation with a new set of domestic political and economic institutions reflecting the principles of liberal market democracy. The country gained its independence from Portugal in 1975, and was subsequently ruled over by the Frelimo party,⁵¹ which explicitly rejected Western models of political and economic organisation, opting instead to pursue a programme of ‘pragmatic Marxism’. This meant, in practice, authoritarian government combined with anti-free-market economic policies emphasising large-scale, centrally planned, capital-intensive development projects in both industry and agriculture,

⁴⁶ Jack Child, *The Central American Peace Process, 1983–1991: Sheathing Swords, Building Confidence* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992), p. 75.

⁴⁷ Patricia Beyer Richard and John A. Booth, ‘Election Observation and Democratization: Reflections on the Nicaragua Case’, in Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth (eds.), *Elections and Democracy in Central America Revisited* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), pp. 205–6.

⁴⁸ Tommie Sue Montgomery, *Revolution in El Salvador: From Civil Strife to Civil Peace* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1995), p. 8.

⁴⁹ Nicole Ball with Tammy Halevy, *Making Peace Work: The Role of the International Development Community* (Washington, DC: Overseas Development Council, 1996), pp. 92–3.

⁵⁰ Development Group for Policy Alternatives, *Structural Adjustment and the Spreading Crisis in Latin America* (Washington, DC: Development Group for Policy Alternatives, 1995).

⁵¹ Frelimo is an abbreviation for the *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*.

including state farms and collectives along the Soviet model.⁵² During the 1980s, an indebted and destitute Mozambique turned to the World Bank and IMF for financial assistance, which it received in exchange for agreeing to liberalise its socialist economy, including the privatisation of state farms and other state-run enterprises, lowering government subsidies and eliminating wage and price controls, and lifting barriers to foreign investment and trade, among other things.⁵³ In order to shore up its support in the West, the Frelimo government renounced Marxism-Leninism as its official ideology and dropped the words 'People's Republic' from the country's name in 1989.⁵⁴ After peace talks began in July 1990 between the government and Renamo, the opposition group that had been waging a guerrilla war against the government for over a decade,⁵⁵ Frelimo took a surprising step towards the eventual liberalisation of political life in Mozambique, indicating its interest in holding multiparty elections and enhancing freedom of the press and the right to strike. These steps were surprising not least because the leadership of Frelimo had reiterated their strong opposition to multiparty elections as recently as December 1989.⁵⁶ The shift in Frelimo's position came in response to 'immense pressure from outside interests', including from the Western governments and international mediators who were urging Frelimo in the direction of market democracy.⁵⁷

A formal peace agreement was signed in October 1992, after which the United Nations again took on the principal task of assisting Mozambique in its transition from war to peace. One of the UN's responsibilities was to ensure that national elections would be conducted in a free and fair manner. In practice, this meant overseeing the design and implementation of electoral laws, and monitoring human rights and civil liberties, including freedom of the press and freedom of association. Approximately 2,300 international personnel from a variety of agencies including the European Union and Organization of African Unity monitored the elections when they took place in October 1994; while the international financial institutions continued to guide economic policy.⁵⁸ The peacebuilding mission, in other words, reinforced and expedited a process of political and economic liberalisation which had been ongoing since the early 1980s. Since the end of the operation, Mozambique has continued to liberalise its economy, while the Frelimo party and their former adversaries appear to have settled into a stable, albeit quarrelsome, relationship as parliamentary adversaries. Both the institutional structures and the guiding principles of Mozambique's polity and economy appear to have been profoundly transformed.

⁵² James Ciment, *Angola and Mozambique: Postcolonial Wars in Southern Africa* (New York: Facts On File, 1997), pp. 17 and 176; Chris Alden, 'Political Violence in Mozambique: Past, Present, and Future', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 8:4 (Winter 1996), p. 42; Chris Alden and Mark Simpson, 'Mozambique: A Delicate Peace', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 31:1 (March 1993), p. 123; and Merle L. Bowen, 'Beyond Reform: Adjustment and Political Power in Contemporary Mozambique', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 30:2 (June 1992), p. 44.

⁵³ Hans Abrahamsson and Anders Nilsson, *Mozambique: The Troubled Transition*, trans. Mary Dally (London: Zed, 1995), pp. 100–111.

⁵⁴ Ciment, p. 142.

⁵⁵ Renamo is an abbreviation for the *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana*.

⁵⁶ Hume, *Ending Mozambique's War*, pp. 29–30.

⁵⁷ Graham Harrison, 'Democracy in Mozambique: The Significance of Multi-Party Elections', *Review of African Political Economy*, 67:23 (March 1996), p. 20.

⁵⁸ Pamela L. Reed, 'The Politics of Reconciliation: The United Nations Operation in Mozambique', in Dunch (ed.), *UN Peacebuilding*, pp. 275–310.

International efforts to promote the principles and institutions of liberal market democracy have not always succeeded in fundamentally reshaping the domestic affairs of states that have hosted peacebuilding missions: Rwanda and Angola, for example, slipped back into war before democratisation plans could be fully implemented—indeed, many commentators argue that the internationally-sponsored democratisation process itself contributed to the resurgence of fighting in these two countries.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, peacebuilding agencies have routinely sought to transform war-shattered states into liberal market democracies, and have done so in a variety of ways, sometimes with lasting effects.

Peacebuilding as *mission civilisatrice*

One way of thinking about the actions of peacebuilders is to conceive of liberal market democracy as an internationally-sanctioned model of 'legitimate' domestic governance.⁶⁰ Peacebuilders promote this model in the domestic affairs of war-shattered states as the prevailing 'standard of civilization' that states must accept in order to gain full rights and recognition in the international community.⁶¹ If democracy has indeed become, in the words of David Held, 'the fundamental standard of political legitimacy in the current era', we should expect leading international organisations, including the agencies that have conducted peacebuilding operations, to internalise and promulgate this standard.⁶² In fact, this appears to be happening: peacebuilders are transmitting a set of internationally-approved norms of domestic governance into the internal affairs of war-shattered states.⁶³

⁵⁹ Roland Paris, 'Wilson's Ghost: The Faulty Assumptions of Post-Conflict Peacebuilding', in Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall (eds.), *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001), pp. 765–84. On Rwanda, see also Jack Snyder and Karen Ballentine, 'Nationalism and the Marketplace of Ideas', *International Security*, 21: 2 (Fall 1996), pp. 30–34; and Bruce D. Jones, 'Humanitarian Intervention in Rwanda, 1990–94', *Journal of International Studies*, 24: 2 (Summer 1995), p. 243. On Angola, see Marina Ottaway, 'Democratization in Collapsed States', in I. William Zartman (ed.), *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1995), p. 236.

⁶⁰ On the concept of 'legitimacy' in international relations, see Ian Hurd, 'Legitimacy and Authority in International Politics', *International Organization*, 53:2 (Spring 1999), pp. 379–408. On the 'collective legitimization' function of international organisations, see Inis L. Claude, Jr., 'Collective Legitimization as a Political Function of the United Nations', *International Organization*, 20 (Summer 1966), pp. 367–79.

⁶¹ On the 'standard of civilization', see Garrit W. Gong, *The Standard of 'Civilization' in International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).

⁶² David Held, 'Democracy and Globalization', in Archibugi, Held and Köhler, *Re-Imagining Political Community*, p. 11.

⁶³ Some scholars in the constructivist school of international relations theory, and others in the world polity school of sociology, make similar arguments about the ability of international organisations to 'teach' states how to behave as 'states'. See, for example, Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993); and Connie L. McNeely, *Constructing the Nation State: International Organizations and Prescriptive Action* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1995). The argument I am making here goes considerably further: international organisations involved in peacebuilding not only promote certain norms of domestic governance, but also take it upon themselves to *remake* the political and economic institutions of war-shattered states in accordance with these norms.

Put differently, peacebuilding seems to represent an updated version of the *mission civilisatrice*, or the colonial-era notion that the 'advanced' states of Europe had a moral responsibility to 'civilise' the indigenous societies that they were colonising. At the Berlin Conference on Africa in 1885, the European colonial powers agreed to 'bind themselves to watch over the preservation of the native tribes, and to care for the improvement of the conditions of their moral and material well-being', with the ultimate aim of 'instructing the natives and bringing home to them the blessings of civilization'.⁶⁴ Even some of the most ardent critics of colonialism, such as J.A. Hobson (whose 1902 book, *Imperialism: A Study*, was a pioneering attack on the exploitative character of imperialism) were willing to support European intervention in the periphery as long as this intervention was 'directed primarily to secure the safety and progress of the civilization of the world, and not the special interests of the interfering nation. Such interference must be attended by an improvement and elevation of the character of the people who are brought under this control'.⁶⁵ Hobson, in other words, strongly endorsed the *mission civilisatrice*—the Westernisation of the periphery—while condemning other aspects of colonialism. Although modern peacebuilders have largely jettisoned the language of 'civilization', they do not generally hide their views that liberal market democracy is most appropriate model of domestic governance for war-shattered states to adopt.⁶⁶

To be sure, expressions of moral responsibility by the European colonial powers to 'enlighten' the 'dark regions' of the world often misrepresented what was actually happening in African and Asia, where imperialism 'blazed a trail of brutality, exploitation and cultural dislocation'.⁶⁷ (One need only consider the behaviour of King Leopold II of Belgium, who ran the Congo as a private ivory and rubber factory for his own personal enrichment, terrorising the local population into servitude, and summarily executing or maiming thousands who failed to work hard enough, in what Joseph Conrad later described as 'the vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of human conscience'⁶⁸). Further, the *mission civilisatrice* was based not only in Europe's sense of its own cultural supremacy, but also in theories of racial superiority. In the eyes of many imperialists, the non-white natives of overseas possessions were 'not members of the same moral order' as their white-skinned rulers, and therefore deserved to be treated as children or savages,⁶⁹ or as Rudyard Kipling put it, 'half devil and half child'.⁷⁰ Even Hobson, arch critic of the exploitative character of imperialism, referred to the inhabitants of the periphery as 'the lower races'. This sense of racial superiority prepared the ground for the worst types of colonial cruelty, including the trade in human slaves.

⁶⁴ Cited in Robin W. Winks (ed.), *The Age of Imperialism* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1969), pp. 109–10; also cited in Gong, *The Standard of 'Civilization'*, pp. 76–7.

⁶⁵ J.A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study*, cited in Philip D. Curtin (ed.), *Imperialism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 326.

⁶⁶ For an argument that civilizational metaphors continue to punctuate the language of international agencies working in Bosnia, see Lene Hansen, 'Past as Preface: Civilizational Politics and the 'Third' Balkan War', *Journal of Peace Research* 37:3 (May 2000), pp. 345–62.

⁶⁷ Phillip Darby, *Three Faces of Imperialism: British and American Approaches to Asia and Africa, 1870–1970* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), p. 34.

⁶⁸ Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), p. 4 and *passim*.

⁶⁹ A. P. Thornton, *Doctrines of Imperialism* (New York: Wiley, 1965), p. 159.

⁷⁰ Rudyard Kipling, 'The White Man's Burden', *McClure's Magazine* 12 (February 1899).

Given this history, the comparison between peacebuilding and colonialism should not be taken too far. Contemporary peacebuilding missions have generally not sought to extract human or material resources from the peripheral states that have hosted these operations. (While it is true that certain peacebuilding personnel have been accused of corruption and malfeasance—the most notorious case is that of Nigerian contingent in Sierra Leone, whose officers and enlisted men were allegedly involved in illegally trading diamonds and supplying drugs to local rebel forces—these activities have not been sanctioned by peacebuilding agencies, which sets these transgressions apart from the colonial powers' systematic and deliberate exploitation of the territories they occupied⁷¹). Unlike the old colonialism, moreover, the ethic of modern peacebuilding is not built upon theories of racial superiority. (Racism has been an occasional problem in the ranks of soldiers who serve in field operations,⁷² and there may be a racial tinge to the notion that African countries are especially prone to civil unrest,⁷³ but peacebuilding, unlike historical European imperialism, is not premised on the notion that there is a natural relationship between skin pigment and mental or cultural advancement.) In further contrast to the old colonialism, peacebuilding missions have normally been deployed for limited periods, at the request of local parties, with the approval of international organisations, and with the goal of establishing conditions for war-shattered states to govern themselves.

Some observers claim that modern peacebuilding still involves subtle forms of economic exploitation. Michael Pugh, for example, asserts that international peacebuilders in the Balkans were motivated, in part, by a desire to integrate 'south-east Europe into the sphere of Western capitalism',⁷⁴ while William Robinson claims that the peacebuilding mission in Nicaragua served the interests of 'transnational capital' by opening the Nicaraguan economy to foreign investment and by limiting the power of anti-capitalist forces within Nicaragua itself.⁷⁵ These commentators are right to point out that contemporary peacebuilding is not a purely altruistic enterprise. Most obviously, the decision to deploy international peacebuilding operations cannot be separated from the national security interests of the world's most powerful states, particularly the permanent members of the UN Security Council, who have the power to veto the creation of new UN-sanctioned missions. Fears about refugee flows into the United States, for example, appear to have driven the international commitment to build peace in Haiti;⁷⁶ and it seems unlikely that NATO member states would have devoted billions of dollars to peacebuilding in

⁷¹ These accusations were presented in a report by the Indian commander of the UN mission in Sierra Leone, Major General Vijay Kumar Jetley. See Ewen MacAskill, 'UN Gets Warning Shot on Peacekeeping: Huge Corruption in Sierra Leone Shows the Need for Rapid Reform', *The Guardian* (9 September, 2000).

⁷² For example, see John Ward, 'Racism Rampant Among UN Contingents in Somalia in 1992–93', Canadian Press (22 August, 1997).

⁷³ Mark Duffield, 'Lunching With Killers: Aid, Security and the Balkan Crisis', in Carl-Ulrik Schierup (ed.), *Scramble for the Balkans: Nationalism, Globalism and the Political Economy of Reconstruction* (London: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 121–3.

⁷⁴ Michael Pugh, 'Elections and 'Protectorate Democracy' in South-East Europe', (undated manuscript, University of Plymouth). See also Pugh, 'Protectorates and the Spoils of Peace'.

⁷⁵ Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy*, ch. 5. These arguments build upon previous writings on the 'world system' and its expansion. See, for example, Terence K. Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein, 'Capitalism and the Incorporation of New Zones into the World Economy', *Review: A Journal of the Fernand Braudel Center* 10:5–6 (Summer-Fall 1987), pp. 763–79.

⁷⁶ William Safire, 'Much Ado About Something', *New York Times* (19 September, 1994), p. A17.

Bosnia if that war-ravaged country were in sub-Saharan Africa, rather than right next door in Europe. In addition, many countries that contribute troops to peace operations appear to have done so at least in part for self-interested reasons.⁷⁷ Argentina's participation in international peace missions, for instance, has served several domestic goals, including the professionalisation of that country's tarnished military;⁷⁸ and some poorer countries appear to provide personnel to peace operations as a means of subsidising their own militaries (since contributor governments are often reimbursed in hard currency for the use of their troops).⁷⁹

Yet the specific suggestion that peacebuilding has advanced the *economic* interests of wealthy states, or 'transnational capital', or the peacebuilding agencies themselves, is dubious. Peacebuilding missions have taken place in some of the poorest and most economically stagnant parts of the world—including Cambodia, Rwanda, Nicaragua and Angola—countries that, to put it bluntly, have little to offer international capitalists. In some abstract sense, perhaps, supporters of open markets may welcome the liberalisation of these destitute countries, but neither Robinson nor Pugh offers evidence that an expectation of, or desire for, economic gain drove the decision to launch peacebuilding operations in these countries. The mission in Cambodia, for example, cost approximately \$3 bn and generated few discernible economic benefits for the intervening agencies or their backers—which seems more like international charity than economic exploitation. The balance sheet of peacebuilding simply does not sustain the economic exploitation thesis.

In short, the practice of peacebuilding has been considerably more charitable and consensual than the behaviour of many colonial powers. There is, however, at least an echo of the *mission civilisatrice* in the contemporary practice of peacebuilding. As we have seen, the assistance that peacebuilding agencies offer war-shattered states tends to come with ideological strings attached. Recipients are expected to bring themselves into conformity with the prevailing international standards of domestic governance, which means holding 'free and fair' elections, respecting civil and political rights, placing constitutional limits on the powers of government, and undertaking market-oriented economic reforms, among other things. To the extent that these standards reflect the ideological predilections of the most powerful states in the world—the core of the international system—peacebuilding is not merely a tool of conflict management, but a new phase in the ongoing and evolving relationship between the core and the periphery of the international system, with the core continuing to define the standards of acceptable behaviour, and international

⁷⁷ Peter Viggo Jakobsen, 'National Interest, Humanitarianism or CNN: What triggers UN peace enforcement after the Cold War?', *Journal of Peace Research*, 33 (1996), pp. 205–15; Laura Neack, 'UN Peacekeeping: In the Interest of Community or Self?' *Journal of Political Research* 32:2 (1995), pp. 181–96; Kimberly Marten Zisk, 'Domestic Bureaucracies and UN Troop-Lending Decisions: The Cases of Canada, India and Japan', paper presented at the annual conference of the American Political Science Association (Washington, DC: September 2000); and Cindy Collins and Thomas G. Weiss, 'An Overview and Assessment of 1989–1996 Peace Operations Publications', Watson Institute, occasional paper no. 28 (1997), pp. 78–87.

⁷⁸ Deborah L. Norden, 'Keeping the Peace, Outside and In: Argentina's UN Missions', *International Peacekeeping* 2:3 (Autumn 1995).

⁷⁹ Dafna Linzer, 'Peacekeeping on the Cheap', Associated Press (10 May, 2000); and Alan Bullion, 'India and Its Rationale for Participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations', paper prepared for the 2000 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC (31 August–3 September, 2000).

peacebuilding agencies serving as ‘transmission belts’ that convey these standards to the periphery.

To put this point another way, peacebuilding missions serve as vehicles for a particular type of globalisation. Much of the recent literature on globalisation has emphasised the increasing transnational flows of money, goods, services, and people; and the commonplace observation is that these flows erode the effective sovereignty of states.⁸⁰ By contrast, the kind of globalisation that I associate with peacebuilding differs from the usual ‘globalisation story’ both in terms of *what* is being globalised and its *effect* on the state. What is being globalised is the very idea of what a state should look like and how it should act. As regards its effects, this particular form of globalisation does not undermine, but bolsters, the effective sovereignty of peacebuilding host states.⁸¹ Indeed, underlying the notion that war-shattered states should be transformed into liberal market democracies is the more fundamental conviction that these states should be reconstituted as ‘states’—that is, as political units with centralised administrations that exercise exclusive authority over a bounded territory, or what is sometimes called the ‘Westphalian’ state.⁸² There is no logical requirement for international agencies to resurrect failed states *as states*, rather than allowing war-torn regions to develop into some other kind of polity; a number of observers recommend that the areas of the world in which states are especially prone to civil conflict, such as sub-Saharan Africa, should be allowed to evolve new types of ‘non-state’ political structures.⁸³ Nevertheless, the conduct of peacebuilding appears to be guided by a conviction that is widely shared in the world today: that the Westphalian state is the ‘highest form of political organization in the international system’.⁸⁴

Further, the phenomenon of peacebuilding may be viewed as the latest chapter in the globalisation of the Westphalian state—or, in the words of Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, the ‘expansion of international society’—which started in the fifteenth century, at the beginning of the period of European overseas exploration and colonisation.⁸⁵ Those parts of the world that were not colonised by Westerners—including China and Japan, for example—eventually brought their own practices and institutions into line with the Westphalian state model;⁸⁶ and European colonies

⁸⁰ For example, Kenichi Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies* (New York: Free Press, 1996); Richard Barnett and John Cavanagh, *Global Dreams: Imperial Corporations and the New World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994); and Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999).

⁸¹ Other scholars are more critical of the effects of peacebuilding on state sovereignty. See, for example, Bob Deacon and Paul Stubbs, ‘International Actors and Social Policy Development in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Globalism and the ‘New Feudalism’, *Journal of European Social Policy*, 8:2 (1998), pp. 99–115; Pugh, ‘Protectorates and the Spoils of Peace’; and Béatrice Hibou, ‘Économie Politique du Discours de la Banque Mondiale en Afrique Sub-Saharienne: Du Catéchisme Économique au Fait (et Méfait) Missionnaire’, *Les Études de CERFI*, 39 (Paris: Centre d’Études et de Recherches Internationales, 1998).

⁸² Michael Barnett makes a similar argument in ‘The New United Nations Politics of Peace: From Juridical Sovereignty to Empirical Sovereignty’, *Global Governance* 1:1 (Winter 1995), pp. 79–97.

⁸³ Jeffrey Herbst, ‘Responding to State Failure in Africa’, *International Security* 21:3 (Winter 1996–97), pp. 120–44.

⁸⁴ Ronnie D. Lipschutz, ‘Reconstructing World Politics: The Emergence of Global Civil Society’, *Millennium* 21:3 (Winter 1992), p. 400.

⁸⁵ Hedley Bull and Adam Watson (eds.), *The Expansion of International Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).

⁸⁶ Gong, *The Standard of ‘Civilization’*, ch. 5–6.

generally took the form of discrete territorial units with central administrations, echoing some of the organisational characteristics of the Westphalian state.⁸⁷ During the period of decolonisation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, newly independent governments of former colonies did not reject, but rather, embraced the Westphalian state model—by claiming their rights as sovereign international actors with exclusive jurisdiction over a defined territory. But many of these decolonised territories gained their independence during the Cold War decades of the 1950s and 1960s, and were thus able to benefit from offers of financial and military support from one or both superpowers, who were seeking allies in the periphery to maintain their respective 'spheres of influence'. When the superpowers reduced these aid flows to many client regimes at the end of the Cold War, the underlying fragility of some of these states became apparent, and countries such as Somalia and Zaire, whose leaders had come to depend on foreign assistance in order to suppress local rivals and remain in power, disintegrated in factional violence and ceased to exercise 'empirical sovereignty', or *de facto* control, over their territories.⁸⁸

Viewed against the backdrop of this history, peacebuilders are performing a function that the United States and Soviet Union largely abandoned at the end of the Cold War—that of propping up the institutional form of the Westphalian state in parts of the periphery where the state lacks firm roots. Most post-Cold War peacebuilding operations have been deployed in the immediate aftermath of civil conflicts, and have sought (among other things) to restore the empirical sovereignty of the host states. By promoting the Westphalian model in these territories, peacebuilders have worked, in effect, to prevent a reversal in the historic expansion of the modern state from Europe to the rest of the world. The form of globalisation associated with peacebuilding, then, includes not only the spread of liberal norms and institutions from the core of the international system to the periphery, but also the ongoing reproduction of the Westphalian state model. Peacebuilders reconstitute the principal units of the international system itself—states—and, in doing so, they propagate and fortify the norm that the global political space *should* be divided into Westphalian states. This kind of globalisation, which is rarely noted by those who write on the subject of globalisation—and which is yet another aspect of the contemporary *mission civilisatrice*—serves to reaffirm, not erode, the power and importance of the state as a political unit.

Conclusion

One of the weaknesses of the existing academic literature on peace operations is that it tends to take too much for granted. Few contributors to this literature challenge the conventional notion that peacebuilding is merely a technique for managing violence. Instead of investigating the underlying assumptions of peacebuilding, most works on the subject have sought to provide practical recommendations aimed at

⁸⁷ Christopher Clapham, *Third World Politics: An Introduction* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), pp. 18–19.

⁸⁸ On the distinction between 'empirical' and 'juridical' sovereignty, see Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg, 'Why Africa's Weak States Persist: The Empirical and the Juridical in Statehood', *World Politics*, 35:1 (October 1982), pp. 1–24.

improving the ability of peacebuilders to control local conflicts. This is a worthy purpose, given the prevalence of civil wars at this moment in history, but it is also a relatively narrow focus for the scholarly study of peace operations—one that takes the purpose of peacebuilding at ‘face value’ rather than questioning the underlying assumptions of these operations.

This article has proposed an alternative way of thinking about the significance of peacebuilding. First, I made the case that peace operations are not merely exercises in conflict management, but that they are also vehicles for the promotion of a particular set of domestic governance norms. Specifically, I argued that most of the international agencies engaged in peace operations share the goal of reconstituting war-shattered states, first, as Westphalian states, and second, as liberal market democracies. I also identified four mechanisms through which these agencies promote such norms. Building upon these observations, I suggested that peace operations should be construed as a modern version of the colonial-era *mission civilisatrice*, at least insofar as these operations involve the transmission of norms of appropriate or ‘civilised’ conduct from the core of the international system to the periphery. Finally, using a different set of terms to make the same argument, I contended that peacebuilding represents a distinctive kind of globalisation process, because it involves the promulgation not just of liberal values and institutions, but of the idea of the state itself.