Conclusion

The Paradoxes of Peacebuilding

There is a paradox at the heart of the international community's approach to transformative peacebuilding. Modern political order – rule-bound, effective, and legitimate government – is asserted theoretically and known practically to be optimal for achieving political stability, economic productivity, and collective social welfare. Yet the two essential components of modern political order – a capable state and a democratically chosen government – cannot be built at the same time and certainly cannot be transplanted from the outside over a short time period. This is true in the theoretical sense: state formation and democratization are long-term, messy processes, subject to reversals and contradictions. It is also true in the empirical sense, as demonstrated by the intervention experiences of post-conflict Cambodia, East Timor, and Afghanistan.

The simultaneous pursuit of statebuilding and democratization through the transitional governance approach embodies this paradox – and, as a result, this peacebuilding strategy has resulted in a great deal of disappointment in the countries in which it has been applied. The UN's peacebuilding approach is derived from international norms surrounding appropriate forms of statehood and governance, and holds that a stable and lasting peace is made possible specifically by the creation of the core administrative and political institutions of democratic governance. On the administrative front, the theory of peacebuilding privileges the construction of the rationalized bureaucratic state; on the political front, the theory emphasizes the construction of the institutions of representative electoral democracy. Most centrally, the international community's implicit theory of peacebuilding assumes that statebuilding and democracy-building can and should be undertaken in tandem toward the goal of consolidated peace. A great deal of formal institutional change takes place in post-conflict countries during interventions, through the exertions of the international community. In the aftermath of intervention, however, the cases of Cambodia, East Timor,

190

and Afghanistan demonstrate that powerful domestic elites reassert a neopatrimonial political order. These elites subvert the effective and legitimate governance sought by the international community, in large part by using the very resources bestowed upon them by peacebuilding interventions.

This conclusion reviews the core causal logic that underpins these findings and discusses its implications for the practice of peacebuilding and its future study. After a brief recap of the causal dynamics that play out over the peacebuilding pathway in Cambodia, East Timor, and Afghanistan, I probe the broader validity of the argument with some brief discussion of other peacebuilding interventions. Although this book has described and explained troubling outcomes for an endeavor as inherently optimistic as transformative peacebuilding, it should not be read as an outright indictment of the peacebuilding enterprise, nor should the evidence provided be seen as justification for simply dismissing peacebuilding out of hand. The bulk of this conclusion is devoted to a discussion of how peacebuilding might be improved upon to achieve more effective and more legitimate governance in post-conflict states. It does so by first disentangling the statebuilding and democratization imperatives that have been linked together in the pursuit of transformative peacebuilding. It then builds a series of targeted policy implications, along with one caveat, for improving peacebuilding practice. Finally, I reflect on the implications of the historical institutionalist framework applied here – with its emphasis on viewing "in time" the incentives facing domestic elites and the way they interact with internationally supported reforms – for research on peacebuilding and other issues central to the study of developing and fragile countries.

The Mirage of Modern Political Order in Post-Conflict States

Transformative peacebuilding attempts fall short of achieving their core objective of effective and legitimate governance in post-conflict countries because the interventions themselves enable, and are co-opted by, post-conflict elites intent on forging a neopatrimonial political order. This book has explained the disconnect between the formal institutional engineering undertaken by international interventions and the governance outcomes that emerge in their aftermath. It has done so through the lens of the incentives motivating domestic elites in those countries over the temporal sequence of three peacebuilding

phases: the elite peace settlement; the transitional governance period; and the aftermath of intervention. The international community advances certain forms of institutional design at each phase in order to achieve the goals of effective and legitimate governance. Yet, over the course of the peacebuilding pathway, powerful domestic groups co-opt the process to shape formal institutions and dominate the practice of governance within those institutions to their own ends. Subsequently, these elites consolidate their holds on power by both working through and actively subverting the very institutions intended to guarantee modern political order, thereby damaging the prospects for effective and legitimate governance. The significant resources brought to post-conflict settings via the liberal peacebuilding model – foremost among them legitimacy and enormous sums of foreign aid – become a new source and site of power for domestic elites.[1] One of the core insights of historical institutionalism is that "incremental shifts often add up to fundamental transformations."[2] This study has demonstrated, in a subtle twist, that the incremental shifts pursued by post-conflict elites undo what are intended by the international community as fundamental sociopolitical transformations to build lasting peace.

In undertaking peacebuilding through transitional governance, the UN acts on an implicit theory about how best to change the domestic political game in order to create the foundations for sustainable peace. Yet, in practice, at each phase of the peacebuilding pathway domestic political realities trump international objectives. The international community has pursued elite peace settlements through a process of institutional engineering without grappling adequately with the fact that this phase simply initiates the hyperpolitical experience of peacebuilding for those countries going through it. Peace settlements are viewed by the international community as elite pacts to end conflict and embark upon the business of post-conflict governance. Post-conflict elites, by contrast, treat these agreements as simply delimiting the grounds and terms of continued struggle. They do not bring an end to long-term conflict; instead they move it into the political arena.

In turn, the transitional governance phase of peacebuilding requires a domestic counterpart to help govern the country while embarking upon a time-bound process of statebuilding and democratization. This approach, paradoxically, enables certain domestic elites to take an

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[1] Richmond 2006.   [2] Mahoney and Thelen 2010: 2.

iterative series of actions to lock in their power and bestows legitimacy upon them through democratic elections along with the other power and patronage resources that come with control of the state.[3] As David Roberts observes, "Victorious elites are routinely overwhelming in postconflict spaces"[4] – such that an attempt to create a new, improved power balance usually comes up short. At the same time, the emphasis on consensus and power-sharing typically embodied by the intervention approach comes at the cost of governance efficacy. In the implementation of transitional governance, a specific tension lies between the statebuilding and democratization components of the peacebuilding model: whereas democratization involves the inclusion of many actors and, ideally, the construction of bottom-up representative institutions, statebuilding focuses on top-down efforts to strengthen the bureaucratic apparatus, including instruments used to control citizens. Neither political rebalancing nor improved governance is fully achieved through the transitional approach – let alone both together.

In the post-intervention phase, a neopatrimonial political order that rests on pervasive patron–client networks fortifies itself, blocking the effective and legitimate governance sought through interventions and forming a low-level political economy equilibrium. The institutions engineered through transitional governance are manipulated by domestic elites intent on remaining in power. The patterns of clientelism and even predation are familiar to observers of developing countries – especially those where there are large and exclusive benefits to holding power.[5] Time horizons are short in an environment where institutions are weak and the shadow of the future is of uncertain length. Elites benefit from neopatrimonial practices while in power – and, fearing the consequences of losing office, are motivated even further to distribute the resources of the state as patronage in exchange for political support. The hybrid political order becomes even more pronounced as leaders intent on such practices prevent the consolidation of autonomous state structures. The state, instead of becoming an arena of rational-legal authority and legitimacy, comes to mirror the clientelist political balance.

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[3] Barma 2007.   [4] Roberts 2011: 70.
[5] Hutchcroft 1997; Le Billon 2003; and Robinson 2001.

A neopatrimonial political order is a self-reinforcing and suboptimal equilibrium that is quite simply the norm in newly democratizing developing countries suffering from low commitment credibility and weak institutions. Yet transformative peacebuilding purports to build modern political order – and this book demonstrates that it fails to do so because domestic elites are intent on something else entirely. The resources conferred by international peacebuilding interventions upon these elites are co-opted in a neopatrimonial order that is extremely resilient to the attempts of the international community to achieve rule-bound, effective, and legitimate governance. Brief examples from two additional cases illustrate the generalizability of this causal logic. The US-led nation-building endeavor in Iraq re-emphasizes the inherent tension between statebuilding and democratization. The peace process negotiated by the international community in Burundi, in turn, reiterates the manner in which steady elite interests reassert themselves over the institutional trappings of the liberal peace, with post-conflict elites using the resources and legitimacy conferred by the peace process to reinforce a neopatrimonial political order.

Transformative Peacebuilding Elsewhere

It is a striking comment on the persistence of the international norms represented in the strategy of peacebuilding through transitional governance that the Bush Administration, having invaded and occupied Iraq in March 2003 without the consent of the UN Security Council, nevertheless implemented a transitional governance sequence parallel to that the UN pursued in the three cases examined in this book. Following its military victory in Iraq, the Bush Administration in April 2003 installed the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) overseen by Paul Bremer, vesting it with full executive, legislative, and judicial authority in Iraq and thereby making it the country's transitional government. Just like the UN transitional authorities examined in this book, the CPA consulted and worked with a handpicked semi-sovereign domestic counterpart, the Iraq Interim Governing Council headed by Ayad Allawi, which was intended to represent Iraq's various political, ethnic, and tribal groups. In June 2004, the CPA transferred sovereignty to the Iraqi Interim Government, also led by Allawi. National Assembly elections were held in January 2005 and a few months later the Iraqi Transitional Government assumed the reins of power in the

country, headed by Ibrahim al Jaafari. One of its main responsibilities – akin to those of the Afghan Transitional Administration – was to draft a permanent constitution for Iraq. After a constitutional referendum and new national elections, the first permanent government of Iraq, headed by Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki, came to power in May 2006.

In Cambodia, East Timor, and Afghanistan it is at least possible to point to some successes of the UN's peacebuilding operations. In Iraq, however, the overall failure of the reconstruction strategy and the decade-long civil war that followed overshadow small victories such as the ratification of a constitution or the holding of elections. The failure of peacebuilding in Iraq was over-determined and a complex causal chain led to deteriorating security and civil war.[6] Nevertheless, the Iraq experience also illustrates how the state- and democracy-building processes pursued simultaneously in peacebuilding acted at cross-purposes to each other and contributed to reinforcing a neopatrimonial political order. In post-invasion Iraq, too, the most powerful political elites – those at the head of the Shia parties – designed institutions that guaranteed the inclusion of their own support bases without acting to broaden political participation. The transitional governance arrangements meant, for example, that it was possible for Shia elites to avoid incorporating the Sunni voice meaningfully in the constitution-drafting process. Sunni negotiators walked out of the constitutional drafting committee and refused to be present at the signing ceremony of a document they viewed with deep suspicion; Sunni insurgents, in turn, used the noninclusive process as a pretext for ratcheting up their attacks against Shia civilians and the Shia-governed state.

In both the UN-led cases and in Iraq, furthermore, viewing elections as a primary sign of progress and a potential exit strategy led to a shortening of time horizons that further empowered those groups with pre-existing political organization, rather than focusing on broad political inclusion. The *ex post* power outcomes – conceived as "who governs?" – came, in each case, quite quickly to reflect the political and organizational power balance in place at the end of the conflict, instead

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[6] A great deal has written about what went wrong in Iraq. Chandrasekaran 2006 and Galbraith 2006 provide nuanced and persuasive accounts of the transitional government phase.

of a deliberated and elected outcome. Like the CPP's grab for the reins of government and political power in Cambodia, the political and administrative dominance of the de facto one-party FRETILIN government in East Timor, and the strength of regional power-brokers vis-à-vis the Karzai government in Kabul, organizationally powerful groups in Iraq – such as the Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), one of the two main Shia groups – managed quite easily to consolidate their hold on power through elections and subsequently to dominate the constitution-drafting process. The prior, much-criticized, Bush Administration policy of de-Ba'athification had previously stripped the Sunnis of representation in the state apparatus as a countervailing source of leverage as well as leeching the state of much of its institutional capacity.

Finally, as with the choice of the single non-transferable vote system in Afghanistan, a precipitous path toward elections in Iraq led to the choice of an electoral system with serious adverse consequences that were foreseeable. Many experts argued that the electoral system that likely made most sense for the January 2005 Transitional Assembly elections in Iraq was one of proportional representation (PR) in multi-member districts. This would have given constituencies strong ties to the assembly, with meaningful local connections for governance; and it would have been a worthwhile attempt to transcend the substantial sectarian identity divisions in Iraq. Yet party elites were writing the electoral laws and, in order to hold onto their power bases, they wanted a closed-list PR election in a single nation-wide district instead. The United States and the United Nations, running election logistics, agreed to the plan, since it made it easier to hold elections quickly. The result was that the elections became a blatant identity referendum. In turn, this ensured that constitutional negotiations would proceed along sectarian lines and contributed to setting in motion the ethnic security dilemma dynamic that spiraled into civil war.[7] Moreover, during and after the civil war, political order such as there was in the country rested upon sectarian and regional patron–client networks. Replicating the pervasive neopatrimonial rent distribution of the Saddam Hussein era, a small group of post-conflict Iraqi elites ensured their continued political dominance through the narrow, particularist distribution of

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[7] Kaufmann 2007.

spoils – including the country's oil wealth as well as foreign arms and money – to their supporters.[8]

Major UN peacebuilding interventions have been staged across the Great Lakes region of Africa – in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, and Uganda – with the support of regional and international power-brokers. Devon Curtis's analysis of the Burundian case illustrates that the liberal peacebuilding endeavor there interacted with domestic elite preferences in much the same manner as observed in Cambodia, East Timor, and Afghanistan.[9] The Burundian experience – which shares the characteristic transitional design of the interventions examined here, albeit without international governance – is often promoted as a peacebuilding success story. There, a domestic power-sharing approach to liberal governance, underpinned by carefully designed institutional engineering by the international community, is believed by many to have achieved a good measure of the political stability and effective and legitimate governance sought through peace operations. Yet Curtis demonstrates convincingly how Burundian elites, over time, have reinterpreted liberal governance, reappropriating its symbols and resources to build a political order where coercion and neopatrimonialism remain central to the country's stability. For those Burundian elites, "the practice of peacebuilding as control became dominant."[10] Traditional governance in the country functioned on the basis of clientelism and patronage, with elites seeking and distributing rents in order to ensure political support and to protect and advance their own economic interests.

The international community believed that Burundian elites, by agreeing to the power-sharing mechanisms negotiated in the Arusha peace process, would become socialized to the norms of liberal governance. But power-sharing was, in reality, a mechanism for these elites to pragmatically expand the spoils of neopatrimonial order among themselves, just enough to ensure stable governance. Mirroring how Cambodian elites also accepted power-sharing as a necessary way station on the path to asserting more hegemonic control, Burundian elites embraced the institutional designs advanced by the international community as a way to buy themselves time to adjust to the changing power

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[8] Erika Solomon. 2016. "Iraq's Parliament in Turmoil as MPs Battle Over Attempt to Curtail Patronage." *Financial Times*, April 14.
[9] Curtis 2013.   [10] Ibid.: 74.

balance in the country. Thus, "Power-sharing governance was a tool of control, not a break from neo-patrimonial logic."[11] The way in which government positions were divided and the state captured through the peace process was more akin to elite horse trading than a reflection of any meaningful compromise over the deeper social and political grievances that affected the population. Susanna Campbell notes that important attempts were made by peacebuilders to build meaningful local accountability into the process and these successes should not be diminished.[12] Nevertheless, as in the cases considered in this book, the overall impact of international intervention was to confer legitimacy on specific elites who had not earned that legitimacy in the eyes of the Burundian people. In so doing, it reinforced their grip on authority and perpetuated the neopatrimonial and hegemonic political order they preferred.[13]

Whither Peacebuilding?

Peacebuilding has gone through a remarkably fast cycle over the past 25 years: coming into its own as a major international undertaking in the immediate post-Cold War period with great optimism about the possibility of what interventions could achieve; moving on at the turn of the century to a big surge in peace operations, increasingly complex and ambitious, across the globe; and turning today to more humility in the scope and scale of interventions, with the retrospective recognition that much of this global endeavor has been filled with hubris. Yet the implicit theory that sociopolitical transformation is desirable and possible in post-conflict states has remained unchanged. The practice of peacebuilding has suffered from a lack of critical thinking about this underlying theory, abetted by two major assumptions. First, the implicit theory underpinning the transformative peacebuilding endeavor is highly normative. It reflects the consensus reached in the second half of the twentieth century on the logic of the appropriateness of the bureaucratic nation-state form rather than resting on any empirical case for the success of that form in achieving effective

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[11] Ibid.: 82.
[12] Susanna Campbell, 2015, "Global Governance and Local Peace: Accountability and Performance in International Peacebuilding," Unpublished book manuscript.
[13] Curtis 2013: 85. Also International Crisis Group 2012.

and legitimate governance. Second, the implicit theory of peacebuilding represented in the UN's transitional governance strategy for constructing a stable and lasting peace reflects the uncontested assumption that state- and democracy-building are complementary processes.

The scholarly approach to the topic of peacebuilding has, in many respects, abetted this faulty logic. The literature on peacebuilding has gone a long way toward conceptualizing peacebuilding practice and its various guises, identifying the contextual factors that support the probability of success of peace operations at their close, and developing technocratic lessons for improving interventions. Yet the almost exclusively short-term focus in the peacebuilding literature combined with the logic of appropriateness inherent in the "liberal peace" perspective regarding the Weberian state and electoral democracy has resulted in a narrow focus on the formal institutions transplanted through peacebuilding without any systematic attention being paid to outcomes in the aftermath of intervention.[14] I have sought to develop a logic of consequences by generating a theoretically informed and causally oriented explanation of outcomes to explain why the international community is not really building the peace it thinks it is in post-conflict countries.

The practical dilemma faced by international peacebuilders at the turn of the twenty-first century has been sharply articulated by Roland Paris.[15] On the one hand, peacebuilding operations were under pressure to expand their scope and duration in order to build the necessary state capacity and legitimate governance for sustainable peace to take hold. The evolution of the peacebuilding model from Cambodia to East Timor, where the latter was more all-encompassing and more intrusive into the sovereign affairs of the state, can be seen in this technocratic mindset. More recently, on the other hand, these interventions have also faced pressure to reduce the extent of international intrusion and increase local ownership. This sentiment is best captured in Lakhdar Brahimi's "light footprint" approach for the Afghanistan operation. As Paris observes pithily, neither the heavy nor the light footprint seems to have worked.[16]

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[14] Critical theorists have, of course, argued that the liberal objectives underpinning the model are an inappropriate imposition of externally generated ideals in post-conflict countries. See, for example, Chandler 2006; Hughes 2009a; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Pugh 2005.
[15] Paris 2010.   [16] Ibid.: 343.

The pendulum has swung back and forth on such questions of the "right" degree, scope, and modes of implementation of UN peacebuilding presence, with critics remarking upon the UN's tendency, like generals in war, to develop strategic plans that fight the last battle. The lack of critical thinking about peacebuilding theory has generated a series of policy prescriptions that address only a truncated subset of the problems with the international community's peacebuilding practice. Incremental adjustments of mandate and organization represent a series of decisions about the optimal *operational* structure for implementing the transitional governance strategy – they do not challenge the implicit *theory* of peacebuilding. The latter has remained constant, with the UN time and again attempting to pursue simultaneous state- and democracy-building in a manner that defines the state and democracy in normative terms and assumes that they are complementary.

Sequencing the Pursuit of Effective and Legitimate Governance

The key to improving peacebuilding rests in rethinking the theory that motivates and orients it, not in tinkering with the size of the footprint or the precise mechanisms of institutional engineering deployed by international peacebuilders. A major root of the disappointing consolidated outcomes of peacebuilding through transitional governance is that the UN and the international community writ large tend to see peacebuilding as a technocratic puzzle that can be solved with the right mandates and institutional design, rather than seeing it for the domestic political game it truly is. A sustainable post-conflict peace that rests on modern political order must be crafted from the inside, rather than delivered from the outside. In turn, this requires viewing the pursuit of modern political order as a sequence in time – and recognizing, therefore, that the process of strengthening the state must be separated from the process of democratization. Otherwise, the elites left most powerful at the end of the conflict period capture the nascent institutions of the state even as they ostensibly abide by the peace settlement. The make-up of the state comes to mirror the political balance and the long-term organic project of statebuilding is in turn hijacked by political maneuvering to stay in power.

The single most important implication of this book is that the international community must fundamentally change the way it perceives the peacebuilding enterprise if it is to achieve its goal of creating

effective and legitimate governance in post-conflict countries. Improving peacebuilding is a task worth undertaking in the interests of both human security in post-conflict countries and global stability. Paris has noted that "denunciations of liberal peacebuilding are both unwarranted and imprudent,"[17] a sentiment with which I concur. Transitional governance mechanisms are valuable and probably necessary for initiating peacebuilding processes in post-conflict countries because they provide much-needed international assistance in carrying out the functions of the state as well as the political space and incentives for elites to agree on a new institutional architecture. The question then becomes: how can transitional governance be improved? Since the strengthening of the state and democratization act at cross-purposes to each other when pursued at the same time, different elements of the two projects must be somehow separated and sequenced. What if the international community privileged either the statebuilding or the democratization side of the equation?

Focusing on the Leviathan

Leading peacebuilding scholars have emphasized the need to focus on capacity-building and institutionalization in post-conflict contexts, some even arguing that political liberalization through elections may have to be put off in order to achieve statebuilding goals.[18] This book's assessment adds the following insight: not only is capacity-building hindered by an emphasis on early elections, but it is also stunted by the very process through which transitional governance assumes state administrative functions and designates a semi-sovereign counterpart for day-to-day governance and post-transition planning. The strategy of transitional governance itself constrains the potential depth of capacity-building because international officials are more concerned with carrying out their immediate administrative tasks than transferring long-term skills to their local partners. In addition, because interventions focus on a specific subset of domestic counterparts, the potential scope of capacity-building is also constrained because the organizationally most powerful domestic group is essentially handed the reins of the administrative apparatus. The story of UNTAET's

[17] Ibid.: 338.   [18] For example, Caplan 2005; and Paris 1997, 2004.

travails with "Timorization" acutely distills both these patterns, which are also on display in Cambodia and Afghanistan.

Logically, then, deepening the statebuilding dimension of peace operations would entail two things. First, it would require devoting greater resources to skills transfer to local administrative officials over a longer transitional period that is better oriented toward effective international–domestic collaboration in governance. Skills transfer and capacity-building through technical assistance is a notoriously difficult endeavor. Despite a strong consensus on the notion that an effective state is an essential basis for setting post-conflict countries on the path toward sustainable peace, the international community has yet to devise a coherent strategy for reconstructing and strengthening administrative institutions in post-conflict settings.[19] Yet instances of institutional success in fragile and conflict-affected states offer important lessons about capacity-building, which include: identifying specific capacity obstacles to fulfilling an agency's immediate objectives; developing a building-block approach to deploy existing capacities more effectively and expand them more gradually; deliberately cultivating organizational identity and pride; developing monitoring tools and analytical skills for self-evaluation; and building implementation partnerships to tap into complementary capacity.[20]

Second, meaningfully reconstructing the leviathan would entail deferring the political contestation of electoral democracy to first build up the state as a countervailing arena of legitimacy and authority in the nascent polity. This complements the view that a push for early elections in peace operations has the adverse effect of destabilizing the political arena and hence that elections should be postponed until further institution building has been undertaken.[21] Following Samuel Huntington, scholars have focused on the need for greater political institutionalization before elections and argued that democracy can only serve constructive participatory and integrative ends following political stabilization and institutional consolidation. Roland Paris warns, for example, that elections, if held at the wrong time and in the wrong manner, can legitimize the power of elected politicians to subsequently sabotage the transition to democracy and never again face

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[19] OECD 2008a; and World Bank 2011.
[20] Barma, Huybens, and Viñuela 2014; and Cliffe and Manning 2008.
[21] See, especially, Chesterman 2004; and Paris 2004.

a democratic challenge.[22] The Cambodia case study sharply illustrates how such a dynamic can play out, while East Timor and Afghanistan also show signs of truncated democratization. To avoid this trap, Paris suggests a strategy of "institutionalization before liberalization" that would specifically postpone elections and concentrate on constructing a framework of effective state and political institutions before promoting political competition.[23]

Yet postponing elections to focus on statebuilding does not necessitate the wholesale rejection of the democratization objective. Instead, statebuilding can itself comprise approaches to trump political fissures. In this view, the international community should consider alternative mechanisms of political participation that could be complementary to enhancing state capacity – because concerns that UN transitional administrations can be dictatorships, even if benevolent ones, are worth heeding.[24] In addition to the suggestions I outline further below, Charles Call and Susan Cook appeal, for example, for moves toward democratization that better integrate legitimate local voice and participatory practices into post-conflict governance institutions, recognize the multiplicity of legitimate governance models, and exercise patience in building representative institutions.[25] In Afghanistan, the use of the traditional consensus-building institution of the *loya jirga* for outlining the transitional administration arrangements and ratifying the constitution was an intelligent choice that went a long way toward balancing competing political groups and fostering a sense of inclusion in an otherwise externally mandated process. Andreas Wimmer and Conrad Schetter suggest that the *loya jirga* format should have been institutionalized as a traditional consensus-building system among bureaucrats, warlords, and tribal chiefs over the medium term, instead of deployed only for the purposes of transitional governance.[26] Susanna Campbell shows that what measure of peacebuilding success was achieved in Burundi can be attributed to the local accountability mechanisms that the international presence put in

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[22] Paris 2004: 164. Diamond 1996 called the sabotage and manipulation of democratic procedure and legitimacy by elected strongmen "pseudo-democracy"; Levitsky and Way 2002 characterized the outcome as "competitive authoritarianism"; and Zakaria 2003 termed it "illiberal democracy."

[23] Paris 2004.

[24] Caplan 2005; Chandler 2006; Chesterman 2004; and Chopra 2000.

[25] Call and Cook 2003.   [26] Wimmer and Schetter 2003: 530.

place.[27] In East Timor, by contrast, lost opportunities to incorporate subnational political participation and the failure to widen political inclusion at the center while UNTAET still governed had lasting adverse consequences for the statebuilding dimension of the peace operation and the country's longer-term stability.

Letting Democracy Make the State?

The less obvious insight that can be drawn from this book is that it may be possible to achieve greater success in building sustainable peace in post-conflict countries by focusing on democratization and leaving aside the statebuilding dimension in the immediate term. Such a strategy would follow the United States' path to nationhood and democracy, where statebuilding was purposefully retarded and central administrative institutions kept deliberately weak to allow the flourishing of democracy, albeit at the cost of a high level of patronage.[28] In turn, robust democracy and the civil society it nourished led eventually to the Progressive Era of successful state and administrative institution building. A number of scholars have advanced the perspective that enabling democratization first can even play a significant role in the development of state capacity, especially if a basic state infrastructure exists – which is almost invariably the case in the twenty-first century, even in fragile states.[29] In particular, where competitive elections lead to party-building, those parties encourage elected governments to enhance their ability to deliver programmatic and collectively oriented policies and public services.[30] Even in competitive authoritarian regimes there is evidence that experience with elections can result in "liberalizing electoral outcomes," especially when opposition elites mount a strategically coordinated challenge to the incumbent.[31]

Could a sequence of putting democracy before the state work in post-conflict developing countries, as contrarian as it might seem? Alex Bellamy and Paul Williams have argued, from a critical theory perspective that deconstructs the international norms of statehood, that it may be desirable to de-emphasize the state during the course of

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[27] Susanna Campbell, 2015, "Global Governance and Local Peace: Accountability and Performance in International Peacebuilding," Unpublished book manuscript.

[28] Shefter 1994; and Skowronek 1982.

[29] Carbone and Memoli 2015; and Mazzuca and Munck 2014.

[30] Reilly 2013; and Slater 2008.   [31] Howard and Roessler 2006.

peacebuilding in order to "help open up the space for conflict resolution within civil society."[32] If this tactic had been implemented in Afghanistan, for example, an emphasis on democracy in lieu of central statebuilding could have been pursued in a decentralized, even federal manner. This might have successfully given the voters the voice in governance they still crave by making local strongmen accountable to them for providing security and public services rather than being able to blame an illusory central government. In practice, patches of better governance in Afghanistan have emerged on an ad hoc basis when certain local strongmen undertook this contract with their societies.[33]

For the goal of building a democratic process that encourages accommodation between groups of elites rather than the reach for hegemonic control, Philip Roeder and Donald Rothchild suggest that "power-dividing" solutions are better placed to ensure democratic consolidation in post-conflict countries than the typical power-sharing solutions favored by the international community.[34] Michael Barnett raises the same notion in his suggestions to build a "republican peace."[35] One of the hallmarks of the power-dividing approach – also pursued through institutional design, especially via constitutional constraints – is the elevation of civil liberties instead of a state-centric orientation, along with the support of civil society and bottom-up governance mechanisms. This approach potentially opens opportunities for dynamic, issue-specific majorities to form, thereby moving away from the reification of the social cleavages upon which power-sharing is predicated and from the static power freezes that often result. The caveat is that the utility of the power-dividing approach may be hampered in post-conflict peacebuilding efforts because it is, to some extent, predicated on reasonable degrees of state capacity, rule enforcement, and norm adherence that do not often exist in many developing countries, let alone those that have undergone violent conflict.

Six Principles and a Caveat for Modifying Peacebuilding Practice

In reality, it is unlikely that thinking on or the practice of peacebuilding will shift in a wholesale manner such that it moves toward

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[32] Bellamy and Williams 2004: 13.   [33] Migdal 1988; and Mukhopadhyay 2014.
[34] Roeder and Rothchild 2005.   [35] Barnett 2006.

separating statebuilding and democratization in the attempt to build lasting peace in post-conflict countries. The international community has a strong normative commitment to the rationalized bureaucracy and electoral democracy that define modern political order – and pursuing effective *and* legitimate governance resonates more with international norms than pursuing effective *or* legitimate governance. As a result, peacebuilders face a basic practical conundrum: they need counterparts for the purposes of statebuilding but they must attempt to be neutral in initiating democratization. The UN transitional governance process essentially takes a shortcut on the statebuilding side by relying on specific elites as local governing counterparts and agents of progressive change – and, as a result, privileges those elites in the run-up to electoral competition.

Giuseppe Di Palma observed that social scientists have blind spots that lead them to consider democratic regime transitions "as a kind of black box – interchangeable steps to a foreclosed outcome – rather than open processes of interaction."[36] I now offer six complementary principles – each with some specific, incremental suggestions – for attempting to modify the transitional governance approach to peacebuilding, along with one important caveat. Each principle emerges from the recognition that state- and democracy-building are indeed open processes of interaction between international interventions and domestic elites.

Keep the Power Balance Fluid

The mutating nature of domestic elite incentives over the peacebuilding pathway becomes apparent when we view this pathway as a series of concrete phases. Critics of power-sharing solutions attempted through institutional engineering have observed that while they may seem necessary for the *initiation* of a peace settlement, they adversely affect the *consolidation* of peace and democracy.[37] In other words, power-sharing may be necessary to reach agreement at the time an initial peace settlement is being negotiated but subsequently the dominant political group's impetus to share power is much lessened. The international community undertakes institutional engineering with the intention of making politics a non-zero-sum game. In the unstable,

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[36] DiPalma 1990: 10.   [37] Rothchild and Roeder 2005: 12; also Licklider 2001.

disequilibrated reality of post-conflict states, however, these choices of institutional architecture can freeze a stalemated and typically quite arbitrary political balance over the longer term. The transitional governance process in each of the cases examined – albeit to varying degrees – facilitated the entrenchment of already powerful groups rather than ensuring the dynamic political contestation over time that is the hallmark of a consolidated democracy. Thus, the power-sharing approach is of questionable utility as a means to building peace and democracy in highly conflictual political environments where power-holding is seen as zero-sum. Any power-sharing concessions that are necessary to reach a settlement should be bounded in time and later renegotiated so as to allow more fluid power dynamics to manifest themselves and be accommodated.[38]

The international community must, quite simply, avoid picking winners during the transitional period and thereby avoid locking in a particular domestic power configuration. Elections, too, can reinforce the strength of the already powerful and lead to anti-democratic outcomes. Considerable care must thus be taken at the outset in designing democratic procedures. The goal should be, perhaps counterintuitively, to enforce uncertainty rather than inevitability about who will take the reins of power at transition and thereby align competing elite incentives toward moderation in institutional design. If elites are uncertain about their prospects, they will be more willing to agree on institutional arrangements that make elite alternation more likely and increase overall political inclusion and participation. For example, Jeremy Weinstein argues that in an excessively centralized and therefore zero-sum political system, Mozambican elites unsure of the results of the next election should have supported electoral decentralization that would have diffused political power away from the elected government and made some degree of power-sharing possible.[39] Similarly, the one-shot game of constitution-writing introduced by the transitional governance process is problematic because elites with short time horizons

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[38] Du Toit 2003 discusses the notion of coming to "post-settlement settlements" to deal with the changing incentives over time in democratic transitions. The same would apply to post-conflict settlements and transitions. On the recognition that power-sharing deals may not have the desired consequences for the longer-term project of creating a sustainable peace, see also Jarstad 2008; Rothchild 2002; and Sisk 2013.
[39] Weinstein 2002.

will write rules that entrench themselves in power. The possibility of revising the rules of the game at several defined future intervals could, by contrast, encourage more moderate institutional choices. A genuinely participatory constitution-writing process could be mandated *before* national elections. The benefits would be twofold: preventing powerful groups from dominating decisions about institutional architecture; and encouraging a nascent democratic participatory culture.

Charles Call's fascinating account of security and justice sector reforms in El Salvador offers the insight that major and rapid state transformation is possible in a context in which the "prior state is not victorious" – with the proviso that the window of opportunity for formal institutional reform is short, while informal attitudes are difficult to change so quickly.[40] This is the flipside of the coin to the argument I have advanced here, which holds that the UN transitional governance model's need for a domestic counterpart perversely enables specific elites to get that precious grip on the state. Echoing the insight that the fluid uncertainty of transitions creates moments of extraordinary agency, Call points out that the window of opportunity can be seized in the service of lasting reform instead of captured by status quo forces – but that antecedent context determines how likely this will be. Another possible, albeit difficult, adaptation of the transitional governance model would be to ban elites central to the transitional process and its attendant institutional decisions from taking elected office for some specified period of time post-transition – for example, in the first five or ten years. This approach would turn the cadre of domestic elites who act as counterparts in transitional administration officials into a caretaker government – like Ayad Allawi's Iraqi Interim Government, which was term-limited in this manner. It would, importantly, meet the UN's practical need for collaboration with domestic elites while preventing those particular elites from entrenching themselves in power through the transitional governance process.

Focus on the Non-Electoral Ingredients of Democratization

To similarly prevent state capture by anointed elites, a gradual and more expansive course of peacebuilding that defers elections and focuses on institutionalization seems inescapable. Roland Paris's

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[40] Call 2003: 859–860; also Wood 2003.

call for a strategy of "institutionalization before liberalization," for example, is echoed by Francis Fukuyama, who argues that democratization before statebuilding is often a recipe for patronage and corruption.[41] Moreover, both the peacebuilding and democratization literatures hold that the transition to democracy in post-conflict states is inherently more destabilizing than stabilizing, especially as elites seek ways to mobilize popular support in thinly institutionalized contexts.[42] Thus, a gradual and expansive course of democracy-building that defers elections seems most desirable, together with processes of political accommodation and institution building to strengthen political and governance arrangements at national and subnational levels.

In particular, postponing elections does not mean that participation has to be attenuated. Non-electoral forms of national- and local-level input can be brought into policymaking and accountability mechanisms – through, for example, traditional consensus institutions such as the Afghan *loya jirga*, or grand council meeting, or the Timorese *nahe biti bo'ot* system of conflict resolution handled by village elders.[43] But it is almost invariably the case that the various UN agencies and partners associated with multidimensional peace operations view elections as the main end point and goal of the transformative peacebuilding effort, even if they are not explicitly mandated as an exit strategy.[44] Hastily designed and held elections from Bosnia to Afghanistan to the Congo have further polarized political groups and reinforced the authority of political entrepreneurs with non-moderate viewpoints.

Traditional sources of authority, by contrast, while certainly often arbitrary and parochial, typically serve some of the objectives associated with effective and legitimate governance, especially when customary forms of participation and consultation are built in. This is not to propose traditional authority in lieu of democratic legitimacy, nor to suggest that the traditional is intrinsically desirable; it is simply to note that the innovative coexistence of different forms of governance is possible and can be constructive. Indeed, transformative attempts that ignore customary governance practices typically find major obstacles to constructing effective and legitimate governance.[45] Even kinship-based patrimonial networks, in this view, might serve as important

[41] Fukuyama 2005, 2011; and Paris 2004.
[42] Mansfield and Snyder 1995; Paris 2004; and Snyder 2000.
[43] Anderson 2014b.   [44] Caplan 2012; Lyons 2002; and Zaum 2012.
[45] Bowles and Chopra 2008; and Boege, Brown, and Clements 2009.

building blocks of effective and legitimate political order – in particular, neopatrimonial networks can serve a crucial function in binding local elites to a center-driven statebuilding process.[46] Attempts to incorporate traditional forms of authority into a peacebuilding strategy must, of course, be rooted in locally contextualized knowledge and engagement. Caution and even skepticism are certainly warranted as to the notion that international actors could properly interpret traditional practices and incorporate them into interventions – but peace operations could and should at least create political and institutional spaces in which traditional practices could assert themselves more organically. This would constitute a peacebuilding approach very different from the technocratic norm managed by international agencies from on high.

In a similar vein, instead of relying simply on a centralized semi-sovereign body to provide local input and validation, peacebuilding interventions can emphasize and foster broader political involvement during the transitional process at both the central and subnational levels. Here, I am echoing Oliver Richmond's call to view peace formation as a bottom-up process emerging from non-elite sites of legitimate authority.[47] In East Timor, the UN failed to capitalize on an ambitious community empowerment project that could have helped it to generate and incorporate political participation at the provincial level, thereby paving the way for FRETILIN to consolidate its power at the center. In Cambodia and Afghanistan, too, the focus of transitional governance was squarely on the capital city and a small strata of urban political elites, with little attention paid to subnational participation even as peacebuilders recognized the importance of state–society and political ties at the local level. In Afghanistan, and probably also in Cambodia after the defection of the Khmer Rouge, this approach was due in part to the security situation – but it also reflected the elite-oriented nature of the theory underpinning these interventions.[48] In all three countries, the elites empowered by the UN as key counterparts were able to rely on and build upon their existing subnational infrastructure – and, in each case, that strategy deepened after the first election. The policy implication is straightforward: more attention must be paid to

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[46] Kelsall 2012; Migdal 1988; and Smith 2014.
[47] Richmond 2005, 2014.
[48] Autesserre 2010 delivers a vivid indictment of the capital- and elite-centric strategy of the UN's peace operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

subnational political dynamics and potential power balancers outside the capital.

Political Parties are the Key to Programmatic Policy

The political arena closes down very rapidly during and after transitional governance interventions, as the case narratives in this book have made clear. This recognition points to the broad imperative to introduce the space and mechanisms necessary to encourage legitimate political opposition and healthy political dialogue during transition. Transformative peacebuilding approaches have quite simply lacked the space for opposition. Governments of national unity are convenient counterparts for peacebuilders but breed an absolutist form of power.[49] A major plank of the deeper political institutionalization that is necessary is a nonpartisan process of party-building. Benjamin Reilly observes that "there is an increasing focus in the policy world – which has yet to be adequately digested by scholars – on the need to build broad-based, programmatic political parties in new democracies, and to avoid the narrow, personalized and sectarian parties and party systems that have undermined so many democracies."[50] Developing a nonpartisan program of party-building as part of peacebuilding interventions is thus an important area for both policy experimentation and further scholarship.

In terms of the political economy perspective advanced in this book, party-building is essential toward achieving effective and legitimate governance because it cuts into the vicious circle of weak credibility that enables neopatrimonialism to thrive. Parties serve as institutionalized mechanisms to enhance the credibility of the political elite and thus reorient their incentives toward providing broad-based programmatic policies and public goods rather than distributing narrow patronage spoils.[51] To be sure, partisan political mobilization is not without its dangers in conflict-affected countries. Leaders in all three countries studied here have expressed a fear of political parties as a vehicle for hardening lines between political factions. They offer their countries' experiences – Cambodia's civil war factions, East Timor's antagonistic independence parties, ethnoregional

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[49] Thier and Chopra 2002.   [50] Reilly 2002: 134.
[51] Joshi and Mason 2011; Keefer and Vlaicu 2008; and Reilly 2013.

factions in Afghanistan – in maintaining that political parties draw lines between social groups that contribute to rigid and escalating conflict between them. More cynically, however, powerful individuals dislike parties because they undermine their own political advantages. Privileged elites will be more dominant where there are no powerful parties; and the absence of programmatic parties appealing to collectivist values makes it easier for them to perpetuate the particularist and instrumental logic that underpins neopatrimonial political order. Political parties also enforce discipline and compliance within their organizations;[52] in turn, therefore, they offer an opportunity to weaken opportunistic and parasitic elites who exploit formal institutions.[53] The key to the party-building imperative is to emphasize the value of programmatic approaches to policy and governance.

Expand and Extend International Post-Conflict Engagement

There is no doubt that the short timeframe of transitional governance interventions, typically two to three years, contributes to some of the perverse outcomes on display in the countries examined here. The logical implication would be to extend the transitional period and international assistance in order to enhance the prospects of both state capacity-building and political institutionalization. The practical limitations facing suggestions to lengthen the transitional process are simple and twofold. First, most external actors are simply unwilling or unable to accept the enormous human and financial responsibilities of extended transitional support. The desire of foreign stakeholders to disengage from the Cambodian civil conflict was instrumental in reaching the Paris Peace Agreement but also meant that there was no will to extend the UNTAC mandate. Second, would-be recipient countries have become increasingly concerned, even resentful, regarding the sovereignty implications of extended international tutelage. The early enthusiasm of Timorese elites for an extended transitional period quickly evaporated in the face of their frustration with UNTAET's approach to shared governance. Nevertheless, the costs associated with premature international exit have become all too clear, not least in the attenuated peacebuilding experiences discussed here. The international community must develop pragmatic mechanisms through which to

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[52] Keefer 2011.   [53] Mahoney and Thelen 2010: 24.

remain constructively involved in recovering post-conflict states. Some scholars have gone so far as to suggest extended co-governance periods of neotrusteeship or shared sovereignty.[54] David Lake and Christopher Fariss have cautioned, however, that trusteeship-type models fail due to the mismatch between international and domestic incentives, in a perspective complementary to that in this book.[55]

The more promising strategy lies in what Aila Matanock character-izes as "governance delegation agreements," whereby host countries enter into arrangements with external actors to exercise joint authority over specific statebuilding tasks.[56] Mark Baskin, for instance, encour-ages the substitution of the idea of "engagement" for that of "exit" to prevent would be domestic spoilers from simply waiting out the international intervention.[57] A strategy that emphasizes international engagement could lengthen the shadow of the future, allowing the evo-lution of combined international–domestic forms of authority in which various agents are responsible for those tasks they can implement effec-tively. Similarly, Jarat Chopra advocates an approach of peace mainte-nance, where transitional administration is seen as a "brokerage frame-work" in which ministries and departments are contracted out for some period of time to those agents who can best provide the service or perform the function, be they international organizations, development agencies, nongovernmental organizations, or private companies.[58]

The notion that transitional administrations could perform better by serving brokerage or coordinating functions is crucial for three addi-tional reasons. First, there is a need to improve domestic capacity-building through governance that is truly joint. As was clear in East Timor, too high a degree of international involvement stifles the build-ing of the effectiveness, legitimacy, and accountability the state needs going forward. Astri Suhrke aptly named this the international com-munity's "too tight embrace" of post-conflict countries.[59] Second, there is a need for better harmonization of international assistance toward the pursuit of collaborative strategic goals. Devon Curtis illustrates vividly how fragmented and contradictory international assistance in the Burundian case increased the leverage of domestic elites;[60] much the same can be seen in the three cases considered in this book. The

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[54] Fearon and Laitin 2004; and Krasner 2004.
[55] Lake and Fariss 2014; also Krasner and Risse 2014.   [56] Matanock 2014.
[57] Baskin 2004.   [58] Chopra 1999.   [59] Suhrke 2009.   [60] Curtis 2013: 82.

international development community has devoted a great deal of attention to this issue over the past decade, resulting in frameworks of aid coordination principles.[61] Aid harmonization of this sort has two major inter-related benefits: it allows strategic coordination, preventing donors from working at cross-purposes to each other; it also emphasizes "country ownership" in a manner that should enhance capacity building. Third, a major test of any state-building experiment should be the extent to which it enhances the ability of the governing regime to deliver on the state–society compact and thereby generate at least a process-based form of legitimacy, if not normative legitimacy. If domestic elites know they will be penalized for failing to continue to deliver on that compact, they might even moderate their extractive behavior at least enough to remain in power.

View the State–Society Compact as Multidimensional

In addition to considering longer timeframes to elections, the international community would do well to emphasize alternative, non-electoral mechanisms for building the state–society compact, particularly from the ground up. Séverine Autesserre has noted the persistence and effects of the post-conflict peacebuilding culture and framework orienting international interventions in her study of the extensive UN peace operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.[62] Two of the faulty elements of this framework are that international peacebuilders view the national level as the appropriate forum for intervention and tend to believe that holding elections is the suitable and effective route to peacebuilding, instead of finding local mechanisms and forums for statebuilding and peacebuilding endeavors. This is a particularly problematic set of blinkers since a great deal of conflict across the world emerges from micro-level contestation over traditional, kinship-based claims to authority as well as land and other resources.

Moreover, this bias in international intervention is difficult to overcome because, as Autesserre demonstrates, individual habit as well as organizational culture and narrative in international agencies is reinforced by the need to implement practical, workable solutions on the ground that can be linked to log frames and exit strategies.[63] But

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[61] OECD 2005, 2008b.   [62] Autesserre 2009, 2010.   [63] Autesserre 2014.

the local level is a crucial site for reform of international peacebuilding practice.[64] In addition to the conflict resolution systems identified above, potential locally oriented service delivery models include decentralized development programs like Cambodia's Seila community program, aimed at increasing local-level participation; and Afghanistan's National Solidarity Program, a similar community-level block grant initiative. The risk with such programs may be that they fail to build state institutions – but at least they enhance participation and ensure some element of programmatic, non-instrumental service delivery. A complementary tactic could be the contracting out of service delivery to the agents that can best perform the function – be they enclaves within government or a range of external providers, both public and private.[65] The goal is for international donors to focus their partnerships with post-conflict governments on providing public services to the collective – thereby undercutting the value to elites of providing particularistic benefits to targeted groups of supports.

Focus on Institutional Function, Not Form

Finding ways to improve peacebuilding means recognizing that institutionally engineered, "ideal" forms of governance are the enemy of "good enough governance," a concept first articulated by Merilee Grindle that has become increasingly popular in the field of international development.[66] The notion centers on discarding best-practice governance recommendations for good-fit approaches, or contextually grounded and feasible institutional arrangements that achieve a *de minimis* degree of quality sufficient to enable government agencies to fulfill their purpose.[67] Scholars of development and governance have, more generally, asserted the importance of focusing on the development of functional ability to execute core administrative activities instead of focusing on specific institutional forms, arguing, for example, that the latter can create a "capability trap" instead of enhancing capacity.[68] The core insight is the importance of finding heterodox means of working with elite and social incentives to achieve specific

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[64] Autesserre 2008 emphasizes the importance of "thinking local, acting local" in the Congo.
[65] Chopra 1999.   [66] Grindle 2004, 2007.
[67] Barma, Huybens, and Viñuela 2014; and Levy 2014.
[68] Pritchett, Woolcock, and Andrews 2013.

ends, instead of butting up against those incentives by blindly attempting the orthodox.[69]

The transitional governance model of peacebuilding, with its institutional engineering approach to building modern political order and its static emphasis on institutional form as outcome, becomes co-opted in implementation by post-conflict elites. Yet I have also shown, as the historical institutionalist paradigm would suggest, that some institutional outcomes were not sought by any particular actors, coming about instead as the unintended consequences of distributional battles.[70] Over time, too, these institutions become "multi-purpose tools" that can be used to different ends and continue to have contested functions.[71] The peacebuilding literature, especially the large body of practitioner work on the subject, typically treats institutional choice as bounded, rational, and technical. This study has instead demonstrated that the institutions that emerge from the design process engineered by peacebuilding interventions represent a series of "messy contradictions abounding with inconsistencies and contradictions based on coalitions of convenience."[72]

This institutional mismatch between what domestic political actors want and what outcomes actually obtain represents an important opportunity. A more subtle peacebuilding approach attuned to institutional function would instead focus on reforming and building the facets of the state that serve and resonate with elite incentives. Timorese elites invested a great deal of energy into building the capacity of the Ministry of Social Solidarity in the aftermath of the 2006 political crisis because it was central to the new coalition government's strategy of delivering a peace dividend to the population through social transfer programs.[73] As Cambodia faces the prospect of a unified market within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, government and party officials have elevated the importance of enhancing education service delivery.[74] The insight here is that surprising governance improvements can be achieved if the puzzle is approached through the lens of the governance challenges and problems that domestic elites must solve, instead of through the typical international intervention approach of

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[69] Rodrik 2014.   [70] Mahoney and Thelen 2010: 22–23.
[71] Hacker, Pierson, and Thelen 2015: 185.
[72] Ibid.: 192.   [73] Anderson 2014b.
[74] Author interviews with donor officials and Cambodian analysts; Phnom Penh, Cambodia, October 2014.

offering to these elites predesigned solutions and institutions that, in reality, challenge their interests and incentives. Function obviously dictated form in these ways in the long-term, organic processes of state formation and democratization in Western Europe and the United States.

Cutting-edge work in the field of the political economy of development pushes this line of thinking one step further. Borrowing concepts from physics and evolutionary biology, Owen Barder asserts that all human systems – political, social, economic, government – are "complex adaptive" systems, which do not display linear properties of change.[75] As a result, attempting to deliberately engineer these systems is folly. Instead, the inherent adaptiveness of political systems should be exploited for its advantages – and the way to do this is through processes that encourage innovation and experimentation. As unwelcome, even threatening, as such recommendations may seem to technocratic international peacebuilders, this book's account of the causal logic that unfolds along the peacebuilding pathway certainly supports a more adaptive, incentive-based, and experimental approach to attempting to build effective and legitimate governance in post-conflict states.

The Caveat: A Neopatrimonial Peace?

These half-dozen suggestions for improving the pursuit of modern political order notwithstanding, it is dangerous to view neopatrimonial political order as a way station to more effective and legitimate governance. It is much more realistic, both intellectually and pragmatically, to view neopatrimonialism as an extremely persistent, even default, equilibrium – as evidenced over time and across the world. What is surprising, in light of this insight, is not that peacebuilding fails but that that any elements of the institutions transplanted by transitional governance prevail at all – and yet they do. The political and institutional spaces in which limited successes are achieved illuminate what incremental movements toward better governance may continue to be

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[75] Owen Barder. 2012. "Complexity, Adaptation, and Results." *Center for Global Development* blog, September 7. www.cgdev.org/blog/ complexity-adaptation-and-results (accessed on May 7, 2015). See also Ramalingam 2013.

gained. Yet international interventions are not immune from neopatrimonial dynamics – on the contrary, they in part enable and are co-opted by them. The transitional governance strategy provides new sources of patronage, power, and legitimacy to domestic elites, even rewarding those who begin with the strongest patron–client networks, because they are the elites the international community must have on board. The international community's relative failure in fully meeting its goals of rationalized bureaucracy and electoral democracy can be equally viewed as the success of domestic elites in serving their own governing vision and objectives much more concretely.

The hybrid political order logic reminds us that modern political order hardly exists outside the advanced, industrialized world – and that statebuilding in post-conflict developing countries could be better achieved if combined with traditional modes and customary practices of governance and legitimacy, which show considerable adaptiveness and resilience.[76] It is possible to argue that the political economy of patronage is simply to be expected in post-conflict states, that collusive rent-seeking among elites and the distribution of benefits through patron–client networks are simply the price of peace and are preferable to outright conflict.[77] In this line of thinking, moreover, neopatrimonial political order represents a secular improvement in the post-conflict country's journey from war to sustainable peace, with patronage systems representing a form of routinization of politics and governance in a thinly institutionalized environment. Post-conflict elites have co-opted transitional governance to put in place a neopatrimonial peace – and great care must be taken with regard to any further decisions that would disrupt what measure of stability and order that equilibrium affords.

Future Research and Theoretical Implications

Although the foregoing discussion has focused on the practical implications of this study, the six principles advanced for modifying peace-building practice, as well as the caveat, each point to potential

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[76] Boege, Brown, and Clements 2009; and Smith 2014.
[77] I am indebted to Ed Aspinall for this point. Cheng and Zaum 2012 outline this logic and illustrate how international assistance can become complicit due to the rapid disbursement of aid, a reliance on local elites, an emphasis on stability, and the push for quick elections.

agendas for problem-driven research. This final section reflects on how rethinking peacebuilding in the manner I have suggested also opens up new lines of theoretical inquiry.

Indigenous Statebuilding and Peacebuilding

Given how widespread is the consensus that statebuilding is a crucial element of peacebuilding, there is a significant intellectual lacuna in the lack of attention paid to how the construction of effective states and the achievement of lasting peace are related to each other.[78] The experiences of post-conflict Cambodia, East Timor, and Afghanistan illustrate that different types of elite bargain are necessary at different critical junctures on the pathway to peace. In particular, the nature of the elite settlement required to achieve a peace agreement is very different from that required to sustain peace and build state capacity in the long term. The former requires locking in elite commitments to peace maintenance and stability such that they are credible. The latter, by contrast, requires creating an incentive structure that institutionalizes uncertainty and hence encourages elites to build intertemporal credibility, accountability, and state capacity by delivering programmatic policies and collective public goods.

A crucial avenue for future research thus lies in problematizing the relationship between statebuilding and peacebuilding – with the goal of better understanding the trade-offs and complementarities between the two processes, along with empirical investigation of the conditions under which those trade-offs and complementarities hold.[79] An important element of this research program is to gain a better understanding of how countries that have *not* been the targets of ambitious peacebuilding interventions have, nevertheless, achieved significant gains through their own, autonomously driven and implemented statebuilding programs. There are numerous instances of indigenous efforts by domestic actors to pursue reforms to achieve sustainable peace and improvements in state capacity in the relative absence of coordinated international intervention: a partial list would include, at different points in time, Angola, Eritrea, Indonesia, Laos, Lebanon,

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[78] Jones and Chandran 2008 and Paris and Sisk 2009 are notable exceptions that have helped to identify the problem.

[79] Barma, Levy, and Piombo 2015 outline the conceptual motivation for such a program of research, along with one proposed method for undertaking it.

Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Somaliland, and Uganda.[80] Yet surprisingly little comparative research has been undertaken on the similarities and differences between international peace operations and what can be thought of as autonomous or indigenous processes of statebuilding and peacebuilding.[81] It seems likely that the establishment of neopatrimonial political order by post-conflict elites will be a recurring theme. Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, for example, defines "illiberal peacebuilding" experiences in Angola, Rwanda, and Sri Lanka as processes of post-war reconstruction by hegemonic elites who structure the political economy of rent extraction and distribution in their favor.[82] Ironically, the neopatrimonial outcomes in post-conflict countries that have gone through international interventions, such as those described and explained here, may come to reflect, in large part, how post-conflict elites structure political order when left entirely to their own devices.

Peacebuilding, Historical Institutionalism, and Political Science

A number of the principles for modifying peacebuilding discussed above bring to bear accumulated knowledge on the comparative political economy of development on the pressing policy issue of post-conflict peacebuilding. Some of the conclusions of this book also have implications for theoretical debates in political science. Peacebuilding through transitional governance is, for example, part of a broader post-Cold War trend in which the international community has increasingly emphasized liberal interventionism to protect individual human rights. In tandem with the material challenges to international order that resulted from the increasing incidence of internal conflict immediately after the Cold War, thinking around the sovereignty norm has begun to shift away from the inviolability of borders and the presumption of nonintervention in the internal affairs of a state.[83] The UN's

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[80] A number of revealing single-country case studies indicate that this would be a fruitful research effort. On Angola, see Soares de Oliveira 2011; on Indonesia, see Smith 2014; and, on Uganda, see Weinstein 2005.

[81] Weinstein 2005.   [82] Soares de Oliveira 2011.

[83] Krasner 1999 examines the ways in which sovereignty has always been compromised in the modern international system. International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001 articulates the "Responsibility to Protect" doctrine, which is emblematic of the rethinking of the sovereignty norm.

peacebuilding strategy is built on an internal contradiction regarding Westphalian sovereignty: the transitional governance approach is predicated on and designed to replicate and preserve the foundations of Westphalian order by emphasizing the formal trappings of nation-statehood, but it implements these international norms by violating in part the state sovereignty that is the most fundamental Westphalian assumption.[84] As peacebuilding theory and practice evolve, they will necessarily continue to impact international relations scholarship on the sovereignty norm.

One major insight I take from this study of building the institutions of the modern state is the need to construct multiple centers of legitimate authority in post-conflict and developing countries. Legitimacy is, of course, not solely a function of the electoral process. Non-elected branches of government, such as the bureaucracy, judiciary, and military, must also embody legitimacy and authority to function effectively– and these attributes come from systematic attention to institutional capacity-building. A strong state, in turn, can exist "only with a tremendous concentration of social control";[85] otherwise, fragmented social control weakens the state and poorly institutionalized governance reinforces fragmentary social control. We know that the state and society disintegrate together in the course of state failure, so it is only reasonable that they must be reconstituted together for a successful process of state regeneration. A promising avenue of research would be to widen the historical institutionalist lens adopted here to investigate how the nature of the state–society compact evolves over the course of the peacebuilding pathway.

This book has tried to improve our understanding of peacebuilding by bringing to its study insights from the political economy of development literature on how institutions and resources shape elite incentives to deliver political order, economic development, and a collectively oriented state–society compact. In their landmark volume, *Bringing the State Back In*, Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol believed that "comparative and historical examinations of watershed periods in which state apparatuses are constructed or reconstructed may be the most promising approach" to sharpen our understanding of the state while allowing us to grapple with substantive problems.[86]

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[84] Zaum 2007. [85] Migdal 1988: 262.
[86] Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol 1985: 361.

A deep, contextualized analysis of transformative events that is centered on cases adds much that cannot be determined by probabilistic analysis resting on variable-based coding of cases.[87] The causal theoretical framework of this book, which focuses on how post-conflict elites could be expected to respond to transformative events, is generalizable to other subsets of contemporary governance challenges, such as international–domestic forms of collaboration around natural resource governance or public goods provision. In particular, development interventions would be fruitfully viewed in time, with the specific goal of understanding the path-dependent and endogenous change they bring about – and through which their outcomes affect the sociopolitical context in developing countries in deep and lasting ways. The case-centered, conjunctural logic of this study is also amenable to the comparative analysis of development interventions, typically studied with a variable-centered evaluative logic. Moreover, the practice of international development assistance offers a promising issue area in which to make advances on historical institutionalist theory itself. Scholars working in this paradigm have focused mostly at either the comparative or the international level. Although they have examined, as in this book, how international–domestic interaction occurs, political science scholarship would benefit from deeper theorizing about how feedback loops of such interaction across different levels of analysis occur around critical junctures of transformation.

Conclusion

The fact that it is difficult, if not impossible, to refashion post-conflict states in the guise of modern states, effectively governed and democratically legitimate, has become a truism – and yet we still do not fully know why. The historical institutionalist lens applied in this book has contributed to a better understanding of why peacebuilding typically falls short of its aspirations. It has done so by combining an analysis of exogenously imposed transformative peacebuilding interventions, conventional in the literature, along with a unique examination of the more gradual and endogenous processes of institutional change that occur during their implementation and in their wake. Viewing

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[87] Thelen and Mahoney 2015: 13–14.

international interventions in this temporal manner leads to the important recognition that peacebuilding comprises a series of critical junctures, each with its own distinct set of challenges and incentives. The approach illuminates how international interventions and domestic elites approach the peacebuilding puzzle of how to construct post-conflict political order in two very different ways. The peacebuilding pathway represents a series of connected phases over time in which competing local and international visions of political order are manifested through the contestation of governance institutions. The bad news is that the international community's peacebuilding approach is, at least in part, itself responsible for the eventually disappointing governance outcomes that emerge in post-conflict countries. The good news is that – if we are prepared to rethink the theory that motivates and orients peacebuilding – there is still much that could be done to improve the prospects of interventions that aim to contribute to political order in post-conflict states.