

External Democracy Promotion in Post-Conflict Zones Evidence from Case Studies

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Abstract

This essay summarizes the findings from nine case studies¹ on postwar democratic transitions. Many postwar countries develop into hybrid regimes. The hybrid character of these regimes stems from various sources, among them a lack of capacity, a lack of domestic demand for democracy, the negative fallouts of ethnic polarization, and the tutelage of external actors. The single most important factors that explain successful postwar democratic transitions are a high local demand for democracy, coupled with atypically low adaptation cost. The case studies identify two situations in which adaptation costs are atypically low. The first is in the context of a war for independence when democracy comes bundled with independence. The second is in settings in which democracy offers a way out of a damaging stalemate. The impact of peacebuilders on the democratic outcome is rather small.

Key words: Peacebuilding, post-conflict democratization, transition, intervention.

Outcomes of Postwar Transition

What regimes emerge from postwar transitions, and why? In order to explore these two questions, we collected a sample of case studies which comprises

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¹ These case studies are: Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Timor Leste, and Tajikistan. Except for Macedonia, all of these case studies are presented in this special issue. While no case study on Macedonia is included in this special issue, we do include insights drawn from this case in our general conclusions.

about one-fifth of all wars and about half of all major peacebuilding missions after 1989.² The high variation that our cases display urges some caution against making generalizations that are too broad about “the typical outcome” of a postwar democratic transition, but the empirical richness of the case studies allows the identification of causal mechanisms at work.

Perhaps the clearest finding emerging from our case studies is that postwar countries remain stable when peacebuilders have a robust mandate and enough troops. In Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Timor-Leste, and Tajikistan, the robust presence of military forces stopped violence, despite some backlashes in Timor-Leste and Kosovo. An exception is Afghanistan, where considerable international forces increasingly are drawn into a war against one faction of the civil war.

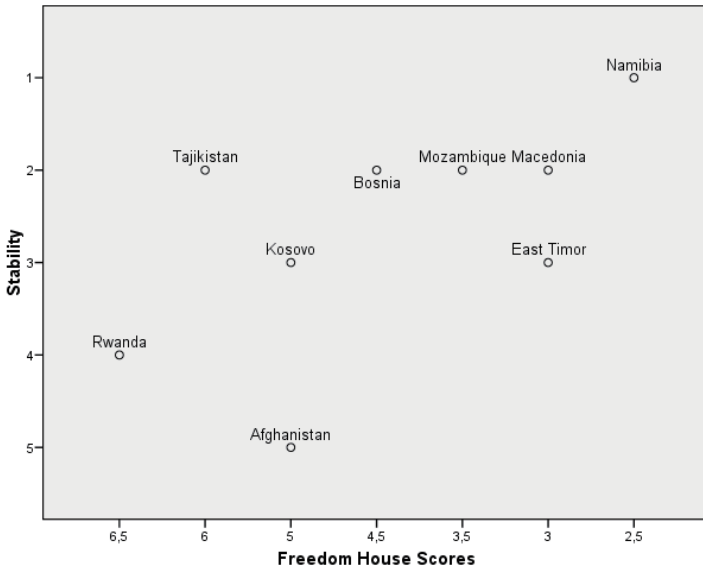
With regard to the democratic qualities of the postwar regimes, the clearest finding pertains to the large variance. Namibia is a stable electoral democracy with sound institutions. It is the only country that is rated as “free” by Freedom House and that meets the commonly applied democracy threshold of 6 or more points on the Polity IV scale. Macedonia, Timor-Leste, and Mozambique all meet the Polity IV threshold, but are rated as only partly free by Freedom House. Afghanistan moved from not free to partly free by 2006, but also has been drawn into a civil war. Bosnia and Kosovo are rated as partly free. On the other end of the spectrum are Rwanda and Tajikistan which are clearly authoritarian regimes, although with very different characteristics. Figure 1 illustrates these outcomes in terms of democracy and stability based on the Freedom House scores and a stability index derived from our case studies (both five years after the war ended).

Despite the large differences that our cases display with regard to Freedom House and Polity IV assessments, we find some similarities, which we think are fairly typical for most regimes undergoing a postwar democratic transition. In sum, postwar regimes tend to be dependent on foreign actors; the democratic process is not associated with mass mobilization or participation; and rule of law is constrained, in addition to political competition taking place only among the elite.

Mozambique, Rwanda, and Timor-Leste depend on international actors for the basic functioning of their state apparatus, and the bulk of public services is provided by international donors. In the case of Bosnia and Kosovo as well as Afghanistan, it is international actors who also provide basic security (with a dramatic lack of success in Afghanistan). Only Macedonia, Namibia, and Tajikistan seem to be less dependent on international actors, although the first two show quite high ODA per capita rates.

² We exclude missions with fewer than two hundred military personnel. See Roland Paris and Timothy D. Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations, Security and Governance* (Milton Park, Abingdon Oxon: Routledge, 2008).

Figure 1. Democracy and Stability



Sources: Freedom House Scores: Freedom in the World Index, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=25&year=2008> (accessed May 11, 2009). Stability: Coded by the authors, scale from 1 (stable) to 5 (relapse into war); combined score based on the cases study assessments, UCDP conflict intensity levels, COSIMO conflict intensity scores, and the Political Terror scale, both scores measured in the fifth year after the start of the intervention.

We also find that the postwar democratic process is rarely accompanied by mass mobilization. This is perhaps not surprising—the population in war-affected countries is first and foremost preoccupied with survival. Participation in politics is not high on the public agenda. Mass mobilization occasionally flares up around “founding” elections (for example, Afghanistan’s first presidential election) or in the context of a struggle for independence (e.g., around Kosovo’s parliamentary elections in 2004 and 2007). In general, however, public participation in the political process is very low. This is not so much a result of limited political space, but rather of a population’s having other priorities, of weak civil society foundations, and of a largely disconnected and marginalized rural population. The only countries which actively and massively limit political participation are Tajikistan and Rwanda. These overall low participation rates are in contrast with the high participation rates usually associated with democratic transitions in countries without violent conflict.

This is a reminder that postwar democratic transitions are often very different from nonwar democratic transitions. A nonwar democratic transition,

in essence, is an opening of existing political institutions, a process which is often prompted by mass mobilization. A postwar democratic transition, however, more often than not involves, first, the establishment of political institutions, which is a process that is neither prompted by the demand of the public nor inspiring of its enthusiasm. Low participation seems to go hand-in-hand with little or no *de facto* political competition. The constraints of competition are informal more often than formal. With the exception of Rwanda and Tajikistan, no country in our sample has formal obstacles to political competition, and all countries in our sample have experienced one or more free and fair elections after the end of their civil wars. But the fact that a country is able to conduct free and fair elections with the help of the international community does not imply that there is substantive progress toward democracy or that there are no *de facto* restraints on political competition. In general, political competition in the countries within the sample suffers from the inertia of the population, from a weak civil society, and from a weakly institutionalized party system. It is the executives who dominate the political process, and there are few checks and balances and separation of powers to restrain these actors. Political competition, therefore, is reduced and played out mainly among the elites on a playing field with highly informal rules.

Finally, with regard to the rule of law and political competition, we find that the formal prerequisites are in place in most countries, the exception being Afghanistan. However, they are only weakly institutionalized, for different reasons. Whereas all countries lack capacity, some also lack political will. In countries where the central elite tightly control the political process, such as Rwanda and Tajikistan, political elites limit the implementation of the rule of law. In countries that are highly divided ethnically, such as Kosovo or Bosnia, the rule of law is not fully implemented because majority groups want to keep their leverage over other groups.

In short, our typical postwar state is characterized by low participation, little or no political competition, weakly institutionalized rule of law, a high dependence on external actors, and, in general, a medium to low level of democracy. Postwar transition states create the façade of democratic structures, but only rarely is there democratic substance behind that façade. The table below depicts the classification of the case studies, according to the various indicators of democratic and economic performance; the indicators are measured five years after the beginning of the intervention.

Explaining the Outcome

Demand for Democracy and Adaptation Costs

What explains the modest outcome of postwar democratization? The evidence from our cases studies suggests that among the factors which shape the outcome are the domestic demand for democracy, a range of exogenous factors, and how interveners played their hand.

Table 1. Classification of the Cases under Study

	Namibia	Macedonia	Timor-Leste	Mozambique	Bosnia	Afghanistan	Kosovo	Tajikistan	Rwanda
Time period—five years after intervention start	1989-1993	2001-2005	1999-2003	1992-1996	1996-2000	2002-2006	1999-2003	1997-2001	1993-1997
Freedom in the World score	2.5	3	3	3.5	4.5	5	5	6	6.5
Polity IV score	6	9	6	6	-66 (foreign interruption)	-66 (foreign interruption)	no data	-1	-6
Stability	1	2	3	2	2	5	3	2	4
Real GDP per capita, year of intervention start	2,595	1,941	404	226	1,039	234	743	195	442
Peace-keeping troops, peak strength	4,439	3,500	6,281	6,625	54,000	33,250	40,000	25,636 ⁷	5,200
Peace-keeping troops per 1,000 inhabitants	3.0	1.7	7.2	0.5	15.5	2.7	21.1	4.0	0.9
Intrusiveness of intervention	Low	Low	High	Low	High	High	High	Low	Low
Aid per capita	143	122	168	77	312	76	271	4	86
Democracy aid	No data	44	66	No data	7	No data	52	1	5
	Democratic				Hybrid			Autocratic	

Sources:

Time Period: Data provided by the authors. The UN Mission in Tajikistan (UNMOT) started in December 1994, when there was a substantial number of CIS peacekeeping forces in the country. However, substantive peacebuilding activities took off only after a peace agreement had been signed in June 1997, therefore, 1997 was chosen as the starting year.

Freedom in the World Scores: Freedom in the World, measured in the fifth year after the beginning of the intervention, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=25&year=2008> (accessed May 11, 2009). Polity IV Annual Time-Series 1800-2007, measured in the fifth year after the start of intervention; Integrated Network for Societal Conflict Research, <http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/inscr.htm> (accessed May 11, 2009).

Stability: Scale from 1 (stable) to 5 (relapse into war); combined score based on the cases study assessments, UCDP conflict intensity levels, COSIMO conflict intensity scores, and the Political Terror scale; measured in the fifth year after the start of the intervention.

GDP: Data from the UN Statistics Division, National Accounts Main Aggregates Database. The database information is provided in current prices in U.S. dollars. We converted it to 2006 constant U.S. dollars for comparability with the aid data.

Peacekeeping Troops: Data provided by the case study authors. For Tajikistan, this refers to the CIS/PKF; UNMOT itself was an observer mission.

Intrusiveness: Data are taken from the case studies. “Intrusiveness” is a composite variable with dichotomous values. It is based on the formal and informal competencies that the external actors took when executing their mandate, such as whether they assumed some or most legislative power for a certain time, whether they decisively shaped the new constitution and/or the legal codex, whether they assumed some or most of the executive powers, whether they decisively shaped economic policies, and whether they participated in executive policing.

Aid: Data provided by the case study authors; five-year postwar averages; in 2006 constant U. S. dollars per capita. Aid data for Tajikistan refers to the nine main donors only.

Let us first consider domestic demand for democracy. Democratization will stand a better chance when there is a real demand for democracy by the elites and by the population, and when the adaptation costs for the regime are low. Elites and population may desire democracy for normative reasons. For example, they may believe that it is more just and stable than any other political system. Or they may desire democracy because it offers a solution to a problem, for example, a way out of a damaging stalemate for elites, or promises economic opportunities, welfare, and participation for the public. Various factors contribute to the adaptation costs of the regime. One is the fear among the ruling elite that they might lose what they have won in battle at the ballot box or in a power-sharing agreement. Other costs stem from moving from a patron-client system of governance to a transparent and accountable system of democratic governance. There are two types of costs involved in this move. First, modern and rational bureaucracies require an infrastructural base which is expensive, and, second, patronage creates opportunities for private gains, which are lost when the regime adheres to transparent governance standards that are part of the democracy package.

Our case studies provide ample empirical evidence that demand for democracy and adaptation costs are factors that, to a large extent, explain democracy’s varying fate in postwar societies.

The democratic champions of our sample, Namibia, Timor-Leste, Mozambique, and Macedonia, show both high elite and popular demand for democracy and low adaptation costs, whereas neither elites nor the public demanded democracy in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Rwanda, or Bosnia. Only Kosovo, as a hybrid regime that experienced a high local demand for democracy coupled with independence, diverts from this pattern.

The best example for high local demand for democracy is Namibia. Universal suffrage was the rallying cry in the racially dominated system of South African apartheid rule in Namibia because it equaled sovereignty and independence. Democracy was seen as a by-product of the long-desired

independence, and therefore gladly embraced by elites and the public. Clearly, it was the participatory and instrumental aspect of democracy which allowed Namibia's rebel movement and the majority population to accept a liberal constitution and a set of democratic institutions. Furthermore, adaptation costs for the new regime were extremely low. Gaining independence also meant that the armed liberation movement could take over the state, and as the previous administrators were "foreign," they simply left and did not become a major obstacle for the peace or democratic process. The armed liberation movement, surfing a wave of popular support and legitimacy, consequently had no difficulties winning the elections, and international donors were happy to bankroll this successful case of peacebuilding. Namibia's success is clearly a product of a particularly fortunate coincidence of favorable conditions, which resulted in meeting popular demand with zero adaptation costs.

Timor-Leste is similar to Namibia in many ways. A highly articulated and organized popular and elite-driven demand for independence and democracy was the key factor in bringing about the end to Indonesian occupation. For many members of the new regime, both the demands for a "Free East Timor" and *Demokrasi* went hand-in-hand. With the occupation regime gone, the rebels could take over the state. Because no major player was against either independence or democracy and international donors were keen on supporting a democratic peacebuilding process, the adaptation costs for the new regime were minimal. There are no veto players in Timor-Leste who oppose democracy, and while the respective opposition parties tend to give the incumbent a hard time and vice-versa (including use of methods of dubious legality, to say the least), there is an overall consensus to remain within the bounds of the constitutional order.

Similar to Namibia and Timor-Leste, democracy in Kosovo was more of a derivative of the local demands for independence. With the ultimate objective of independence, the Kosovo Albanian national elites unanimously and vigorously pushed for an acceleration of the transfer of powers from the UNMIK administration to national institutions. International actors initially attempted to repel local demands for independence by pursuing a strategy of maximum intrusiveness, but were later forced to give in to the demands of the increasingly frustrated Kosovo Albanians in order to secure stability and relative peace in Kosovo. Apart from these momentary security pressures, the national elites generally demonstrated an attitude of "obedience" toward the international presence and a collective willingness to take part in the democratization process in exchange for independence. However, independence was a Kosovo Albanian project, as was the democratization process attached to it. The Serb minority in Kosovo boycotted the independence and democratization process, but it was too weak to act as a veto player, even with massive backing from Belgrade. Kosovo Serbs remain largely excluded from the political process, which severely limits the quality of democracy.

In Mozambique, adaptation costs were higher than in the cases of Namibia

and Timor-Leste. The two warring parties assented to a peace agreement and a democratic institutional framework because they were locked in a debilitating stalemate; hence both parties had strategic reasons to support democracy. The war fatigue of society supported the process. The system that emerged benefited Frelimo, because it won the election and continued to rule the country. However, the cost of the failure of the democratic transition to each party would have been far higher. Renamo successfully transformed itself into a political party and participated in the political process, a move which was greatly sweetened by generous assistance and support from international donors.

The main issue for the elites of all parties to the Bosnian war was ethnicity, not democracy. Consequently, the ethnic-based system that was part of the Dayton Peace Agreement was acceptable, as it guaranteed the positions of those ethnic-based parties that had dominated during the war. The power-sharing guarantees that were attached to “democracy” lowered adaptation costs considerably. Thus, among elites, there was a substantial interest in *limiting* democratic competition, as is exemplified by the enormous difficulties of “moving beyond Dayton” in terms of reforming the ethnic-based constitutional principles. The role of the international community in some ways actually worked against a local interest in democracy. With the Office of the High Representative (OHR) as a last-stop executive, it was often much more rational for domestic political actors to leave unpopular decisions for the international community. While the opportunities for participation and for competition technically exist, there are few incentives to use them. The ethnic-based system that largely entrenched the dominant position of the war-time elites, and the overruling power of the “internationals,” largely prevented initiatives to use these democratic spaces. Additionally, the existence of the Bosnian state itself was the result of a compromise and substantial international pressure. Identification with the Bosnian state as a whole remains low. If there is a local demand for democracy, it is found at the entity or sub-entity level. Finally, in the case of Macedonia, the Ohrid agreement that ended the armed conflict between the Albanian rebels and the Macedonian security forces set the groundwork for improving the rights of ethnic Albanians, especially with regard to language policy, education, and communal self-government. This required some concessions of the Macedonian majority. But because many Ohrid provisions were part of the EU accession process anyway, which was the strategic objective of both Macedonians and Albanians, the adaptation costs for the regime were relatively low.

Let us now take a look at those countries where democracy clearly is not emerging: Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Rwanda. One would be hard pressed to find signs of popular or elite demand for democracy in Afghanistan. After three decades of devastating civil war, the population first and foremost craves basic security and protection from violence. There is no grass-root demand for democracy (or, for that matter, there are no grass-root movements at all). There is also no clear demand for democracy among the ruling elite. The current

regime emerged from the Bonn Agreement, which in essence was a brokered power-sharing agreement whose main objective was to broaden the base of the victorious Northern Alliance by incorporating other elites, particularly Pashtu from the south of Afghanistan. Unlike the peace agreement which ended the war in Mozambique, the Bonn Agreement was not a solution to a disruptive stalemate, but rather an internationally sponsored attempt to cobble together a ruling coalition that could hold together a highly fragmented postwar country. Despite successful presidential and parliamentary elections, Afghanistan has not moved toward more democracy since Bonn, and the odds for future democratization look bleak. The adaptation costs for the regime are rising because its survival depends on its capacity to manipulate complex patronage networks. Also, there will not be popular pressure for democratization as long as democratization is not seen as a viable solution for the pressing needs of the population, which remain physical security and livelihood.

Tajikistan is also stony ground for the blossoming of democracy, a concept that has a very limited appeal among Tajik elites and Tajik society. One of the main reasons for this is that the horrors of the civil war are associated with failed attempts at experimenting with democracy in the early 1990s. The lesson that the public and the regime learned was that democratization can unleash chaos and expose divisions in the society which can rip the country apart.

Rwanda shares with Tajikistan a historically grown mistrust of democracy. Until 1990, Rwanda was ruled by an authoritarian regime. In 1990, President Habyarimana agreed to open the way for multiparty politics, and a number of new parties were formed. These tended to be regionally or ethnically based rather than ideologically distinct. As the civil war continued, extremist factions emerged within several political parties, playing a key role in destroying the peace process and unleashing the genocide. Consequently, for many Rwandans, democracy is associated with ethnic-based violence, and many express their preference for a consensus mode of politics. This explains to some extent the quirks of Rwanda's political system. The 2003 constitution, approved by popular referendum, includes several clauses aimed at promoting inclusion. These include a strict power-sharing arrangement for the cabinet, in which only half of posts can be filled by representatives of the majority party in parliament. All political parties must participate in the Forum of Political Parties, which aims to promote dialogue and consensus, with equal representation between small and large parties. The ruling elite's main concern is to avoid new ethnic division within society, and a frequently repeated argument is that Western-style competitive democracy would widen these divides. As a result, there is hardly elite-driven demand for more democracy, and the population is prompted to participate in only the institutions, which the regime provides. Donors' calls for more democracy are subdued by the regime by pointing out that this might endanger the fragile stability.

These examples, we think, clearly demonstrate that adaptation costs and demand matters. Countries that did not emerge as democracies display

a lack of elite-driven demand for democracy, and the adaptation costs for democracy are high. The evidence from our sample suggests that there are two situations in which adaptation costs are atypically low and demand for democracy is atypically high. The first such situation is in the context of a war for independence, when democracy comes bundled with independence. Elites and the population are prepared to accept the adaptation costs for democracy because they desire independence. Also, struggle for independence tends to build high elite coherence and a considerable popular support for the leadership. Both are prerequisites for the course of state-building and better the chances for a successful democratization process. When elites enjoy widespread support from the population, this further reduces the costs of a democratic transition because elites can safely assume that they will prevail in elections. Accordingly, in the case of Kosovo as a highly divided society, the postwar democratization process appeared to offer something to the Kosovo Albanians but not so much to the Kosovo Serbs. Second, adaptation costs for democracy also are low when democracy offers a way out of a crippling stalemate. If the parties to a war are convinced that neither can win on the battlefield, they might be inclined to accept the costs that are associated with the adaptation of democratic rules of the game. By contrast, as the examples of Afghanistan, Rwanda, and Tajikistan show, adaptation costs are high and demand low when previous experiences with democracy were unsuccessful, when there are deep divisions among different groups, and when democracy does not offer a solution to the pressing needs of either the elite or population, but rather threatens the survival of a regime that is dependent on its capacity to rule by patronage.

Neighborhood Effects

Clearly, domestic demand for democracy is a key determinant for successful democratization. But are there external factors that have an impact on either the demand or the capacity for democracy? Gleditsch and Ward have shown that there seems to be a strong association between a country's institutions and the extent of democracy in the surrounding region.³ Based on our case studies, we could not detect a causal mechanism that would explain "democratic contagion." There seems to be no positive demonstration effect. However, there is evidence of an autocratic demonstration effect, which, in the case of Tajikistan, clearly contributes to the very limited appeal of democracy. Tajikistan's neighbors, Russia and Kazakhstan, demonstrate examples of functioning alternatives to democracy. Compared to Tajikistan, the provision of public goods and services in these countries is phenomenal, the state apparatus resilient to challenges, and the population, while fairly passive, seemingly prepared to get along with

³ Kristian Skrede Gleditsch and Michael D. Ward, "Diffusion and the International Context of Democratization," *International Organization* 60 (Fall 2006).

the regime. In the eyes of the Tajik population, Russia and Kazakhstan are clearly cases of success.

In addition, a fairly direct neighborhood effect stems from the fact that Russia, the only state with some leverage over the Tajik regime, is not interested in pushing for a democratic opening, and other international actors make little effort to bring Russia into their camp. As a result, Rakhmon's regime is not pressured for reforms.

Another indirect neighborhood effect stems from the spillover of violence. Negative spillovers from neighboring countries can affect the security situation in a country and, hence, indirectly hamper the democratization process because democratic institutions can hardly evolve when the country is engulfed in violence. The prime example is the destabilizing effect of transborder violence on Afghanistan. However, this is an indirect effect, and it does little to add to a theory of external factors for postwar democratization.

Positive spillovers that have a favorable impact on democratization include integration into an international regime which requires democratic standards. Integration refers to an official entry of a country into a regional (or exceptionally global) political, economic, or security community membership, which may entail a host of democracy-promotion mechanisms (from requirements to adopt specific institutions and rules, to monitoring and official sanctioning for violation of democratic principles). The most successful case of democratization (and arguably the only case also!) via integration is EU accession.⁴ In the case of Macedonia, prospective EU membership, which was seen by elites and the public as highly beneficial because of the economic opportunities and the security guarantees it offers, unleashed a transformative power that led to the successful implementation of the Ohrid Agreement. Arguably, the possibility of future EU accession also has a taming influence on ethnic politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo.

The Peacebuilders: How They Play Their Hand

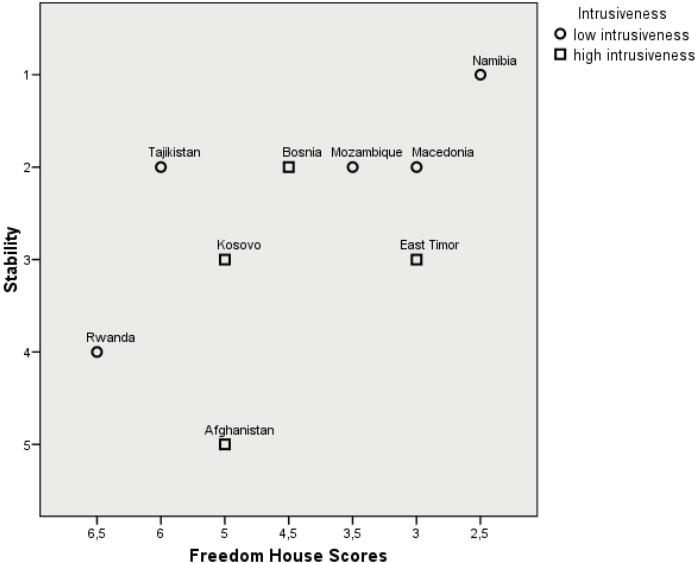
Finally, what is the impact of peacebuilding missions on a democratic outcome? As we have seen, peacebuilding missions are reasonably successful in ending wars when they operate with a robust mandate and have adequate resources and muscle, but they rarely deliver on their additional objective: building a liberal and democratic state. As we have argued above, domestic demand for democracy is an essential ingredient for success but, as our cases clearly show, there often is little demand for democracy and high adaptation costs for the ruling elites. We know that peacebuilders can increase the cost for violence and, hence, contribute to peace. But can the tools and policies that peacebuilders

⁴ Frank Schimmelfennig, Stefan Engert, and Heiko Knobel, *International Socialization in Europe: European Organizations, Political Conditionality, and Democratic Change*, Palgrave Studies in European Union Politics (Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

have at their disposal increase local demand for democracy, and can they lower the costs for a democratic transition? If this were the case, we would expect that postwar countries which experienced a more intrusive mission with a robust mandate would end up more democratic and more stable than countries in which peacebuilding missions were much weaker, all other things being equal. Obviously, the level of objective difficulties should be considered in order to assess the net effect of the peacebuilding mission. Previous studies have not found that more intrusive missions lead to more democracy.⁵ What is the evidence from our sample? Figure 2 adds the level of intrusiveness to the distribution of cases presented earlier.

Three of our four champions of democracy—Namibia, Macedonia, and Mozambique—received light-footprint missions (the mission in Timor-Leste was substantially more intrusive). In Namibia, peacebuilders never assumed direct legislative powers or administrative authority. The UN mission operated under a Chapter VI mandate, and its main role was military observation and preparation for elections. The democratization process, as far as elections and constitution-making were concerned, did not need particularly persuasive

Figure 2. Intrusiveness



⁵ Virginia Page Fortna, “Peacekeeping and Democratization,” in *From War to Democracy: Dilemmas of Peacebuilding*, ed. Anna Jarstad and Timothy D. Sisk (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), and Christoph Zuercher, *Is More Better? Evaluating External-Led State Building after 1989* (Stanford: CDDRL Working Papers, Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, Stanford Institute on International Studies, 2006).

additional efforts from external actors. Besides, more ambitious aims such as promoting democracy were not part of the aims of UNTAG.

Peacebuilders also never assumed executive power in the case of Macedonia. The task of the military missions and later European police forces was to monitor, mentor, and advise Macedonian state institutions, and domestic sovereignty was never suspended. However, the Ohrid Framework Agreement and the EU accession process provided a stringent framework for reforming Macedonian state institutions. NATO, OSCE, and the EU facilitated and monitored the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. Because the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement became linked *de facto* to the fulfillment of the Copenhagen Criteria required for EU accession, the adaptation costs for elites were rather small. We should also note that in Macedonia, democratic structures already were in place before the conflict, but the Ohrid Agreement made them more inclusive.

In Mozambique, the international footprint was clearly larger than in Namibia and Macedonia, but nowhere as intrusive as in the Balkans or in Afghanistan. At its peak, the mission deployed less than seven thousand military personnel and the total gross expenditure of the mission was U.S. \$492.6 million. At the time these were impressive figures, but compared to the subsequent peacebuilding missions in the Balkans, the Mozambique mission is still rather modest. Domestic sovereignty never was formally suspended, but donors provided massive incentives in exchange for participation in the peace process. Especially effective were the long-standing relations that bilateral donors had developed over many years with both parties. As a result, they had more leverage over the parties than the multilateral UN mission, and they used it to push the parties toward participating in the peace process.

The cases of Namibia, Macedonia, and Mozambique show that targeted, tailor-made support by a moderate peacebuilding mission can provide the extra fuel that keeps the peace process going, provided there are sufficient demand and relatively low adaptation costs in place. Both factors, it seems, are largely independent from the policies of the peacebuilders.

When there are low demand and high adaptation costs, a moderate peacebuilding mission does not seem to have a noticeable effect on the democratic outcome. Two cases in point are Rwanda and Tajikistan. Here, too, the missions were not very intrusive. In Rwanda, international actors never have taken over administrative or legislative tasks, and, with a maximum of 5,500 military personnel in 1995, military deployment was small. Due to Rwanda's dependency on external aid and technical assistance, donor agencies were actively engaged in many aspects of policy formulation in the country, but this never amounted to a *de facto* or *de jure* suspension of Rwanda's sovereignty. In Tajikistan, the international footprint outside the humanitarian sector was small as well. The international community provided legislative advice, which was largely ignored by the government after the Peace Accords were signed. Donors exercised influence on constitutional reform largely through civil-

society projects. The UN military contingent of observers was extremely small; the Russian forces kept a low profile and did not use their leverage to influence polices. In both cases, the regimes stabilized as authoritarian regimes. The trajectory of Tajikistan's development resembles more and more those of its authoritarian Central Asian neighbors.

Let us now take a look at the impact of highly intrusive peacebuilding missions. Very comprehensive, heavy-foot-printed missions were deployed to BiH, Kosovo, Timor-Leste, and Afghanistan. In Bosnia, the Office of the High Representative exercised executive and legislative powers. Fifty-four thousand troops supported the mission, and an estimated U.S. \$22 billion was spent until 2000.⁶ In Kosovo, UNMIK took on the complete range of state functions, the mission was supported by 50,000 troops, and an estimated \$3 billion in official development assistance (ODA) was spent. Likewise, in Timor-Leste, during the most intrusive phase between 1999 and 2002, UNTAET was in charge of administering the territory. At its peak, 6,200 troops supported the mission. Since 1999, Timor-Leste has received over \$4 billion in external assistance. In Afghanistan, currently there are well over 50,000 deployed troops, and the international community has pledged to support the mission with \$12 billion through 2012.

The track record of these highly intrusive, high-cost missions is mixed. With the exception of Afghanistan, such missions brought an end to large-scale violence, although instances of small-scale violence in Kosovo and Timor-Leste prompted the peacebuilders to adjust their agendas. But despite these achievements with regard to security, none of these states is a self-sustained, liberal democracy.

The "democratic leader" of countries with such missions is Timor-Leste. Timor's Freedom House political rights rating improved from 5 to 3 due to the holding of the country's first direct presidential election since independence. Five years into its independence, Timor-Leste faced the task of building viable democratic institutions from scratch. Governmental institutions were inexperienced and largely untested, having been built quickly from the ground up by UN administrators and Timorese leaders. The further democratization of Timor-Leste, it seems, is constrained by a lack of capacities rather than by the absence of political will among local elites. It also must be noted that much of the progress made so far is attributable to the capacity-building programs of the peacebuilders and their temporary takeover of state functions.

In Kosovo and Bosnia, the massive and year-long international engagement may have pushed the countries from violent conflict back to stability, but the regimes seem to be locked in a hybrid form of government because the international community has assumed administrative control, leaving little

⁶ Zarko Papic and Lada Sadikovic, "International Dimensions of Democracy," <http://www.soros.org.ba/en/novost.asp?id=61> (accessed February 26, 2008).

space for further democratization. Furthermore, ethnic tensions are an obstacle to progress, as are corruption, a weak legislature, and organized crime. In Afghanistan, the massive international intervention so far has not brought peace to the country, and despite the fact that Afghanistan conducted reasonably free and fair elections under international guidance, the country still lacks not only capacity but also elite and popular demand for democracy.

In sum, robust and highly intrusive missions may be successful at ending wars, but unless there is a high demand for democracy, they seem not to be successful at pushing the regimes toward moderate or high levels of democracy. A lack of capacity, negative fallout of ethnic polarization, little or no political will of ruling elites to move toward more democracy, and the intrusive tutelage of external actors itself provide serious barriers to democratization.

In addition to these barriers, our cases also reveal that peacebuilders are rarely prepared to play their hand well. The considerable leverage that peacebuilders have over local regimes thanks to their resources and military muscle is only in rare cases put to use. Rather, we find that peacebuilders often are willing to compromise on their noble goals.

As predicted by Barnett and Zuercher,⁷ peacebuilders are often tempted to settle with an outcome which leaves the immediate postwar status quo largely intact and, hence, perpetuates a nondemocratic mode of governance. They do this because they depend on a secure and stable environment, and because they are highly dependent on domestic actors, whose cooperation is essential for a smooth and stable implementation of the many peacebuilding projects. Without the consent and the support of local elites, peacebuilding programs cannot be implemented, and security for international personnel cannot be guaranteed. This explains why peacebuilders engage in peacebuilding missions with highflying and noble visions of a liberal, multiethnic, and democratic society but may soon be willing to compromise and settle for much less ambitious goals.

Our cases provide some evidence for such an implicit “peacebuilders’ contract.” In all cases except Namibia and Mozambique, elites were able to revise the “contract” substantially, until the liberal vision of the peacebuilders was compromised. The main “trump” that elites had for revising the contract was security. Peacebuilders agreed to a revision in Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda, Afghanistan, and to some extent also in Timor-Leste because of the threat of a deteriorating security situation. The argument that local elites repeatedly made was that further democratization might destabilize the fragile stability and the balance between ethnic groups.

⁷ Michael Barnett and Christoph Zuercher, “The Peace-Builders Contract: How External Statebuilding Reinforces Weak Statehood,” in *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations*, ed. Roland Paris and Timothy D. Sisk (London: Routledge, 2008).

In Bosnia and Kosovo, the peacebuilders vision of a democratic and multiethnic polity soon proved to be unfeasible. The tremendous resources that peacebuilders brought to Bosnia and Kosovo were not enough to overcome the main obstacle to a democratic peace: ethnic politics. The ethnic parties in Bosnia continued to treat their territory as a fiefdom and were unwilling to defer authority to the central-government level. In Kosovo, the riots of March 2004 prompted the international community to grant Kosovo independence, thereby abandoning the “standards before status” doctrine, which foresaw that Kosovo would receive more autonomy in accordance with its progress in good governance. In Bosnia and in Kosovo, the peacebuilders continue to support *de facto* ethnic separation. In Afghanistan, perhaps the bluntest case of a revision of the peacebuilders contracts, the ruling elite seems less and less committed to democratization, corruption is increasing, and good governance remains a distant dream, yet the international community continues its engagement because it fears losing the support of the ruling elite. The revisions in Timor-Leste had been much smaller. After a series of riots in 2006, however, the international community revised its approach toward economic liberalization and the local elite achieved a greater say in domestic politics.

Finally, in Tajikistan and Rwanda, peacebuilders accepted that local elites decided to rule their countries in an authoritarian way. In the case of Tajikistan, the resources, which the peacebuilders committed, were modest, and peacebuilders had little or no leverage over the regime. By contrast, donors did have some leverage in Rwanda, because the functioning of the state depends to some extent on donors’ contributions, but they did not use their leverage because local elites argued that democratic reforms might endanger the precarious post-genocide stability.

Another indicator for the peacebuilders’ hesitance to use their leverage is that peacebuilders rarely use aid in a conditional way. Many postwar countries are highly aid-dependent. In Afghanistan, aid accounted for 40 percent of GDP and for 90 percent of domestic spending in 2004. The figures for Bosnia, Kosovo, and Rwanda are similar. In all cases, aid accounted for around 40 percent or more of GDP, at least in the first years following the conflict. Clearly, aid has been vital for building state capacities in these cases and aid also has prevented humanitarian disasters in Timor-Leste, Mozambique, and Afghanistan. But aid has done little for democratization. None of our case studies reports a direct effect of aid on democratization. Aid earmarked for democratization typically has not been large, although the share of democracy aid has been growing recently, a trend, which we think is driven by the latest fashion within the development community rather than by its proven effectiveness. Also, international actors have not tried to use high dependence on aid as a reason to push for more reforms. The only case in which conditionality was a key component of the international community’s policies is Bosnia. Some aid programs were made conditional on compliance with the Dayton Agreement. Frustration over the lack of war crimes cooperation

and prosecution also led to conditionality. Most significantly, the United States made international financial institution (IFI) decisions dependent on cooperation in the process of war crimes prosecution. Overall conditionality has been most effective as a punitive tool rather than as a means to create incentive. In all other cases, aid was distributed unconditionally. Summing up the evidence from our case studies, we find that aid plays an important role in rebuilding state capacities, but seems to have little impact on democracy. One reason for this might be that peacebuilders are reluctant to use the leverage of aid dependence to push for reform.

Our cases thus suggest that more intrusive missions, in fact, do not lead to better democratic results than less intrusive missions, and most often produce hybrid regimes. On top of lacking capacity and/or lacking demand for democracy, the barriers posed by external tutelage, and the limited willingness of the interveners to use their leverage, appear to account for this outcome.

Conclusion

Clearly, postwar democratic transitions are highly contingent processes, and there is no predetermined path to either success or failure. One of the few patterns that emerges is that, in many postwar settings, democratization leads to hybrid regimes. The hybrid character of these regimes stems from various sources, among them a lack of capacity, a lack of domestic demand for democracy, the negative fallouts of ethnic polarization, and the tutelage of external actors. Despite the many idiosyncratic features of each and every postwar state, most postwar regimes are characterized by low participation, little or no political competition, weakly institutionalized rule of law, a high dependence on external actors, and, in general, a medium to low level of democracy. Despite the fact that the international engagement typically leads to elections which are reasonably fair, there is very little genuine demand for democracy from both elites and the population.

As we have seen, domestic demand for democracy is a key factor. Unfortunately, such demand is the exception rather than the rule. In Mozambique, democracy was seen as indispensable for ending the confrontation between two warring parties. In Namibia, Kosovo, and Timor-Leste, democracy came attached to the real objective of the elites, which was independence. In Macedonia, democratic institutions already were in place. The peacebuilding missions ensured that these institutions became more inclusive. Since these reforms were required for EU accession, the ruling elite was willing to implement the reforms.

In all other cases, there was small or no domestic demand for a fully democratic system. Little demand often goes hand-in-hand with high adaptation costs. Many elites in postwar states fear adapting to democracy because this could imply an end of the dominance of one ethnic group, curb the ability to manipulate patron-client networks, or hamper the opportunities for private

profits. The success stories of Timor-Leste, Mozambique, and Namibia suggest that there are two situations in which adaptation costs are atypically low. The first is in the context of a war for independence, when democracy comes bundled with independence. The second is in settings where democracy offers a way out of a harmful stalemate. By contrast, as the examples of Afghanistan, Rwanda, and Tajikistan show, adaptation costs are high and demand low when previous experiences with democracy were unsuccessful, when there are deep divisions among different groups, and when democracy does not offer a solution to the pressing needs of either the elite or general population but rather threatens the survival of a regime that is depended on its capacity to rule by patronage.

Neighborhood effects also may influence adaptation costs. Most notably, the possibility of an EU accession has unleashed a transformative power that accounts for Macedonia's successful end to civil strife. Arguably, the possibility of future EU accession also has a taming influence on ethnic politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as in Kosovo. But whereas good neighbors are conducive to democracy, especially when they offer highly beneficial membership in a club such as the EU, bad neighbors may exercise a negative influence. In our sample, we find evidence of an autocratic demonstration effect, which in the case of Tajikistan clearly has contributed to the very limited appeal of democracy.

Finally, peacebuilders also influence the outcome of a postwar transition, but often they do not play their hand well. They succeed in providing stability when they deploy massively. Highly intrusive, high-cost missions bring an end to large-scale violence—but they do not bring liberal, self-sustaining peace. The tremendous amounts of aid that recent peacebuilding missions attracted proved to be vital for reconstructing state capacities, but there seems to have been little if no impact of the aid on democracy. Also, the amounts of specific democracy aid were typically rather small, and peacebuilders rarely make aid conditional on democratic reforms.

Furthermore, as Barnett and Zuercher predicted, peacebuilders often prioritize stability over democracy and conclude a tacit “contract” with the elites of the postwar country.⁸ Our cases provide evidence for such an implicit peacebuilders’ contract. In all cases except Namibia and Mozambique, peacebuilders readjusted their expectations with regard to democratic reforms and compromised with the local elites, who were pushing to keep the status quo. Peacebuilders yielded to the demands of the elites, without reducing support and aid. The main “trump” that elites had for revising the contract was security. Peacebuilders agreed to a revised “contract” in Timor-Leste, Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda, and Afghanistan because of the threat of a deteriorating

⁸ Ibid.

security situation. The argument that local elites repeatedly made was that further democratization might destabilize the fragile stability and the balance between ethnic groups.

In sum, we are tempted to conclude that the impact of peacebuilders on the democratic outcome is rather small. Within our sample, the two factors that most influence the local demand and the adoption costs—a struggle for independence and a detrimental stalemate—are beyond the influence of peacebuilders' policies. This is not to say that peacebuilders have nothing to contribute to a democratic outcome. As the cases of Namibia, Mozambique, and Timor-Leste show, the support of external actors provided an additional boost to a democratic transition underway. Peacebuilders also succeed in providing stability when they deploy personnel massively. But they do not plant democracy and self-sustaining peace when there is a lack of domestic demand for them.

