

Can hybridized statebuilding create a sustainable post-conflict state? Lessons learned from Rwanda's post-conflict statebuilding.

Susan Dobson

University of South Australia

Abstract

Externally driven liberalization strategies shaped by the liberal peace agenda have proliferated across post-conflict African states since the end of the Cold War, often inadvertently preserving pre-existing social and political divisions. Subsequent hybrid liberalization models have been designed to engage more deeply with grassroots post-conflict populations to address inconsistent outcomes. This paper argues that whilst these strategies remain fundamentally externally driven and hence western-centric, they will garner limited support from the domestic arena, and therefore remain intrinsically weak. In this paper I critically examine the emerging hybridized statebuilding model, and apply it to Rwanda's post-conflict statebuilding process, during the transitional phase between 1994 and 2003. This paper identifies how Rwanda has, in the wake of violent conflict successfully implemented state-centric political structures to address a deeply divided state according to the liberal peace agenda. I argue that the hybrid post-conflict statebuilding process needs to be more contextualized through greater autonomy, relegating external influence to financial support and conscientious conditionality. This paper concludes that successful post-conflict statebuilding, when based upon locally conceived and implemented ideals are more likely to create post-conflict state sustainability aligned to global liberal norms, when compared to existing liberal and hybrid liberal models.

“Rebuilding Rwandan society requires responses to conflict that draw upon our own culture. Efforts to achieve justice, peace, healing and reconciliation must derive from concepts and practices that the Rwandan people can own.” Paul Kagame, 2008.¹

Introduction

Post- Cold War strategies designed to create stable post-conflict states aligned to a liberal peace agenda have given way to hybrid post-conflict statebuilding to address failed peace agreements and continued post-conflict tension.² Externally implemented western-centric democratization structures increasingly seek greater domestic support to improve post-conflict outcomes. In spite of these attempts to increase local ownership of the process, I argue that because hybrid strategies remain intrinsically bound by western-centric concepts and motivation, they will continue to perpetuate unsustainable post-conflict states.³ In

¹ Paul Kagame, “Preface” in *After Genocide: Transitional Justice, Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Reconciliation in Rwanda and Beyond*, ed Phil Clark and Zachary D. Kaufman, (London, Hurst and Co., 2008), xx

² See Roberto Belloni, “Hybrid Peace Governance: Its Emergence and Significance,” *Global Governance*, 18:1 (2012):21-38.

³ Tangible differences in traditional liberal peace strategies and hybridized models of the liberal peace can be seen in the different operations mandated in East Timor and Bosnia. In East Timor, state rule was completely overwhelmed by the international community in 1999 in a top-down intervention, whereas the Bosnian post-conflict transition was characterized by an externally negotiated constitution process and peace agreement

order to create sustainable post-conflict states, post-conflict statebuilding must be autonomously driven by a political relationship between a state and its population. When compared to other post-conflict processes, Rwanda's unique post-conflict transition evolved without external political influence, underpinned by generous financial support.⁴ By examining this process through a hybrid post-conflict statebuilding lens, this paper seeks to identify successful Rwandan post-conflict strategies which emerged, and may be applied to post-conflict statebuilding in a more general setting. My investigation focuses on Rwanda's political transition from 1994 to 2003, using theoretical hybrid strategies such as the legitimization of post-conflict authority and a re-oriented peace ontology.⁵ I posit that domestic leaders are better placed to identify and address state-specific post-conflict needs than external actors, who lack local contextual insight and face extraneous limitations. Although hybrid statebuilding models increasingly acknowledge the importance of public participation in the post-conflict environment, it remains flawed. Rwanda's long-term stability following a domestically-driven process suggests that it provides an alternative narrative to existing hybrid models of post-conflict statebuilding.⁶

The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) overtook Rwanda in a military coup, inheriting a state which was politically, economically and socially devastated. Over half of the population had been affected by the genocide; around 800,000 (mainly Tutsi) had been massacred and an additional two million (mainly Hutu) fled across neighbouring borders.⁷ An invading force returning from generations in exile from Uganda, the RPF's symbolic representation of the severely depleted Tutsi minority was undermined by its 'outsider' status. Amidst ongoing insurgencies, the RPF's representation of genocide survivors and newly arrived Burundian

before the violence ended. In an attempt to harness local political motivations, party divisions were externally instituted along ethnic lines. External perceptions of local tensions were badly perceived in both states, and have in both cases perpetuated societal and political divisions. Violence in East Timor retuned within seven years, and the Bosnian post-conflict environment remains inherently unstable; it is reliant on external support to maintain tenuous stability almost two decades later. See Oliver P. Richmond and Jason Franks, *Liberal Peace Transitions, Between Statebuilding and Peacebuilding*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009). In particular Chapters 2 and 3.

⁴ International indifference to Rwanda's post-conflict politics have been discussed extensively elsewhere, and remains outside the scope of this paper, however it is important to acknowledge that the international community extended unprecedented amounts of financial aid to Rwanda with little political support, contrary to externally-driven post-conflict strategies of the time.

⁵ These elements of hybrid post-conflict building have been central to theoretical hybrid models put forward by Richmond and Roberts. See Oliver P. Richmond, "Reclaiming Peace in International Relations," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies*, 36:3 (2008): 439-70; David Roberts, "Post-Conflict Statebuilding and State Legitimacy: From Negative to Positive Peace?" *Development & Change*, 39:4 (2008): 537-55.

⁶ This paper refers to Rwanda's post-conflict environment as stable in relation to other post-conflict states engendered throughout the past two decades, based upon its maintenance civil peace. The focus of the research presented here remains on the transition period between 1994 and 2003, when Rwanda's transitional government implemented domestically-driven liberalization strategies which were unique to the post-conflict statebuilding arena. Reference to a 'peaceful' Rwanda does not reflect the increasing authoritarian overtones adopted by the RPF since 2003, which shall be discussed later in the paper. For a list of major post-civil conflict peace operations, see Roland Paris and Timothy D. Sisk, "Introduction" in ed Roland Paris, and Timothy D. Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding, Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations*, (London: Routledge, 2009) 2.

⁷ See Gerard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide*, (London: Hurst and Co, 1995), 312.

Tutsi was tenuous.⁸ Furthermore, the outgoing *ex-Forces Armées Rwandaises* (ex-FAR) militia dominated neighbouring refugee camps, determined to thwart repatriation efforts and compromising RPF attempts to create a transitional government. International donors inadvertently fuelled the militia's efforts to undermine RPF strategies by directing vast amounts of humanitarian aid directly into the refugee camps, and hence, into the hands of the militia.⁹ Therefore, when Rwanda faced seemingly insurmountable odds, it is pertinent to ask how Rwanda's transitional government created political and social cohesion in the relatively short space of 9 years. By 2003 the transitional government had constitutionalized a framework for a unified social identity, and held democratic elections which saw the RPF legitimately elected as leaders.¹⁰ Rwandan state stability has endured for almost two decades, contrary to predictions made about Rwanda's post-conflict future, and against the trend of post-conflict statebuilding in general. This paper argues that Rwanda's political recovery demonstrates how post-conflict structures need not be bound by externally-driven emancipation strategies. By combining theory with empirical evidence, I argue Rwanda's post-conflict state stability can provide insight into the creation of stable, sustainable post-conflict states.

Hybrid Statebuilding

Post-conflict statebuilding strategies have changed since the emergence of the liberal peace agenda.¹¹ Externally-driven hybrid statebuilding operations increasingly seek popular support as part of the post-conflict statebuilding process, which "allows external and domestic actors to collaborate whilst working towards different goals... .¹²" However there is little evidence to support this claim. Ongoing insurgencies and weak political structures in post-conflict states demonstrate a lack of political and social cohesion associated with

⁸ Burundian Tutsi fled across the Burundi/Rwanda border at the end of the genocide, escaping persecution of Tutsi in Burundi and lured by the opportunities of acquiring land and property left by the massacred Tutsi and fleeing Hutu. See Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*.

⁹ The International Community were initially sceptical of the new Rwandan leaders, and their ability to form a fair, unbiased transitional government. Unlike other post-conflict statebuilding processes of the time however, (where political negotiations were dominated by the west, such as Bosnia and East Timor), in lieu of political support, massive amounts of financial aid poured directly into the refugee camps in an effort to address refugee repatriation issues. This was mainly played out through UN agencies. Not understanding the political and social domination of the genocidal regime within the refugee camps, the international community were inadvertently fuelling the militia-based subversion of post-conflict statebuilding in Rwanda. See Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*.

¹⁰ In 2003 the constitution was voted in by 93% of the population, and presidential elections were held the same year. Priscilla Ankut, "The Role of Constitution-Building Processes in Democratization; Case Study, Rwanda," *International IDEA Democracy-building and conflict Management (DCM)*, <http://www.idea.int/conflict/cpb/> (accessed 1 October 2013)

¹¹ According to Chandler, the liberal peace agenda seeks to create post-conflict state stability through the "export of liberal frameworks of 'good governance', democratic elections, human rights, and the rule of law and market relations." David Chandler, "The uncritical critique of 'liberal peace,'" *Review of International Studies*, 36:1, Supplement S1 (2010): 137-155, 138.

¹² Anna K. Jarstad, and Roberto Belloni, "Introducing Hybrid Peace Governance: Impact and Prospects of Liberal Peacebuilding," *Global Governance*, 18:1 (2012): 1-6, 1. Post-conflict statebuilding in Afghanistan represents external and domestic actors collaborating whilst working towards different goals, and lack of tangible stability and sustainability in that state suggests a weakness that external action in this case fails to perceive suitable strategies to implement sustainable peace.

hybrid statebuilding.¹³ Roberts states that “the importance of local legitimacy ... is underemphasized.”¹⁴ Building on this, Richmond claims that externally driven post-conflict statebuilding has relied on western-centric norms which should be repositioned according to the needs of the state and its population.¹⁵ The hybrid model assumes an externally-driven emancipatory agenda can attract support from a post-conflict population, however I argue that western-centric mechanisms are difficult to transfer to a post-conflict environment. Lack of cultural consideration and weak democratic traditions after long-term social and political turmoil may impede grassroots adoption of western-centric liberalization structures. Furthermore, externalities such as fiscal prudence and domestic political motivations all impinge upon the motivations driving external post-conflict statebuilders. In questioning the role of external actors, I suggest that external influence should be limited to financial support. According to Mac Ginty hybridized statebuilding brings external incentive and compliance powers of liberal agents (the west) together with post-conflict leaders to limit possible deviation from political democratic liberalization.¹⁶ Thus, external incentives remain essential to ensure compliance to democratic norms in domestically-driven post-conflict state liberalization.

The importance of popular legitimacy for domestic authority

Although popular support for domestic authority is an inherently democratic notion, it is often contradicted by externally driven post-conflict statebuilding. A “legitimacy deficit”¹⁷ in many externally-driven post-conflict statebuilding processes demonstrates that in spite of (or because of) influential external support, popular support for domestic leaders is compromised.¹⁸ Externally supported post-conflict leaders have often remained disconnected with the population as “(C)ultural considerations – the content of everyday life itself – has often been regarded as less significant than results in building the institutional, security, political and economic architecture of a liberal peace.”¹⁹ Due to externally-motivated limitations such as timeframes, exit strategies and financial restraint, a

¹³ These weaknesses can be seen in post-conflict trajectories of Cambodia, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan where external intervention with or without adopting a participatory process has fallen short of creating sustainable liberalization strategies.

¹⁴ See Oliver P. Richmond and Audra Mitchell, “Introduction – Towards a Post-Liberal Peace: Exploring Hybridity via Everyday Forms of Resistance, Agency and Autonomy,” in *Hybrid Forms of Peace – From Everyday Agency to Post-Liberalism*, ed Oliver P Richmond and Audra Mitchell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Oliver Richmond, *Peace in International Relations*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008); David Roberts, *Liberal Peacebuilding and Global governance: Beyond the Metropolis*, (London: Routledge, 2011)

¹⁵ David Roberts, “Post-Conflict Statebuilding and State Legitimacy: From Negative to Positive Peace?” *Development & Change* 39:4 (2008):537-55, 538.

¹⁶ Roger Mac Ginty, “Hybrid Peace: The Interaction between Top-Down and Bottom-up Peace,” *Security Dialogue* 41:4 (2010): 391-412, 391.

¹⁷ A legitimacy deficit occurs when externally-driven political engineering creates a gap between a locally legitimized authority, and an authority which has been installed from above, in the absence of local support. This can be observed in Bosnia, which has led to ongoing reliance on external support for authority. See Roberts, “Post-Conflict Statebuilding and State Legitimacy,” 545.

¹⁸ This was evident in post-conflict statebuilding in Cambodia, Timor-Leste and Bosnia. Transitional leadership most widely regarded by external actors as most suitable (and hence imposed upon the population) often had limited local support and were often unable or unwilling to garner further local support.

¹⁹ Oliver P. Richmond, *A Post-Liberal Peace?* (London: Routledge, 2011), 86.

results driven process has often overseen hastily installed and inefficient democratic structures in post-conflict states.²⁰

Post-conflict leaders have a vested interest in seeking legitimization, both internationally and domestically. International support (or sympathy) may minimize compliance obligations to conditionality associated with financial aid. Domestic legitimization ensures increased domestic support, which in turn promotes state sustainability. State leaders are better placed to implement small-scale measures designed to facilitate pluralism, rather than external actors who often lack local political and social insight. Post-conflict states offer much scope for potential leaders to garner domestic support, as political action is crucial in promoting political, social and economic security in a post-conflict environment. The provision of state-based infrastructure and mechanisms for political participation offers opportunity for potential political leaders to attract widespread support. Associated benevolent action would be more likely to attract domestic support which would progressively lead to the legitimization of authority than an externally-driven process.

Attracting domestic support by Rwanda's transitional government occurred unhampered by external expectation and it was underwritten by unprecedented amounts of international aid.²¹ This promulgated a post-conflict transition free from externally implemented western-centric liberalization structures. The Rwandan transitional government's immediate priorities underwritten by external aid, were the provision of food, healthcare, basic infrastructure, and the repatriation of refugees. Attention to the immediate needs of Rwanda's post-conflict population generated increasing support for a leadership whose roots remained largely alienated from the population.²² Fear of retributive attacks felt by returning refugees associated with their role in the genocide (from the transitional government and genocide survivors) potentially threatened Rwanda's social and political

²⁰ In East Timor, UN agencies have been accused of implementing democratic structures after completely overwhelming the transitional process, often contrary to potential leaders' calls for a robust participatory process. Working towards a quick exit strategy, the UN implemented a top-down process in which within three years, a peace negotiation was signed, a constitution was written and elections were held. "In East Timor, despite the clear demand from diverse leaders in civil society for public participation and a representative and inclusive process, pressure from the international community and a few elite actors who wanted to take power quickly resulted in a process that focused on hastily producing a constitution and not establishing democratic practices and precedents." Louis Aucoin and Michele Brandt, "East Timor's Constitutional Passage to Independence," in *Framing the State in Times of Transition*, ed Laurel E. Miller, (Washington DC, United States Institute of Peace Press, 2010), 265. Leaders who were in charge of democratic structures in Bosnia, Cambodia, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan attracted little or much fractured domestic support. They often had international support for a variety of political and geo-strategic reasons, and were legitimized by premature, externally-driven elections, with scant politically lobbying and power garnering typical of electoral process in western states. This makes authority vulnerable to ongoing insurgencies and tension, compromising attempts to consolidate a sustainable state based on positive peace.

²¹ To compensate for lack of direct action to acknowledge and end the genocide, and wanting to remain politically distant from the post-conflict restructure process, the international community extended unprecedented amounts of aid.

²² Originating in neighboring Uganda as a Rwandan Tutsi military force, the RPF returned to Rwanda as a separate political, ethnic and social entity, causing tension between genocide survivors and the returnees. See David Newbury, "Returning Refugees: Four Historical Patterns of "Coming Home" to Rwanda," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 47: 2 (2005):252-285.

restructure. However, by reconceptualising the ‘Rwandan identity,’ the transitional government not only allayed returnees’ fears, but also generated a social solidarity which addressed deep ethnic tensions and political division. This enabled Rwandans to move beyond the genocide ideology and towards a socially and politically sustainable state.

Reoriented peace ontology

Western-centric notions of peace and its implementation are often at odds with a post-conflict state leader’s obligations to its population due to the disparity between stable and post-conflict contexts. Galtung defines two types of peace; negative peace as a condition where no violence exists between potential protagonists (but may exist elsewhere), and positive peace which describes a sustainable peace brought about by the removal of the causes of violence through mechanisms which promote cooperation between different groups.²³ Externally dominated post-conflict processes indicate a predisposition towards creating a negative peace where violence ends, but not the cause of violence. Hybrid statebuilding models collectively assume that popular support for western-centric political institutions would reduce the risk of creating a negative peace by increasing local ownership of the post-conflict process, however in the absence of popular support, the mechanisms for violence remain. Rwanda’s experience demonstrates that political structures informed by re-oriented peace ontology and domestically supported authority may engender sustainable democratic institutions in line with the state’s social and political needs.

The concept of peace is contextual and embodies the underlying problematique of external action in the domestic sphere. Western-centric democratic structures imposed onto a society with little democratic tradition have been often been unsuccessful. State inspired political loyalties sometimes remain subordinate to patrilineal, clan and culturally inspired loyalties.²⁴ In some cases peace negotiations are implemented before violence ends or alongside external military intervention promoting scant association between a formal peace agreement and the possibility of continued violence.²⁵ This may denigrate the concept of peace and risks discouraging popular engagement. Post-conflict Rwanda suggests that if social and human security needs are addressed in the immediate aftermath of violence, transitional strategies designed to engage and unify a divided society are more likely to engender sustainable peace.

Between 1994 and 1997 the Rwandan transitional government was successful in curtailing insurgencies which threatened the post-conflict environment. During this time, human

²³ Johan Galtung, quoted in Vincent Chetail, “Introduction: Post-conflict Peacebuilding – Ambiguity and Identity,” in *Post-conflict Peacebuilding; A Lexicon*, ed Vincent Chetail, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1.

²⁴ This can be seen clearly in Afghanistan where loyalties outside the political arena take precedence. These have often been overlooked or misunderstood in the western-centric democratization paradigm.

²⁵ Bosnia’s Dayton Peace Agreement was negotiated before the violence ended. It was NATO’s military action which ended the violence, rather than the peace agreement therefore there was little association between the agreement (and the constitution it implemented), and the cessation of violence. The agreement took place with no public consultation or democratic approval. See James C. O’Brien, “The Dayton Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina,” in *Framing the State in Times of Transition*, ed Laurel E. Miller, (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2010). In particular Chapter 12.

security was prioritized with reconstruction of basic infrastructure which was financed generously by international aid.²⁶ Rwanda's transitional government implemented a re-conceptualised peace ontology through the 'Rwandan identity' to address social divisions. Reference to ethnic terms such as Tutsi and Hutu were replaced with 'Rwandan.' Revisionism laws discouraged the preservation of genocide ideology in an attempt to move beyond the negative peace which prevailed in other post-conflict environments. Thus, a crucial difference between other externally-dominated statebuilding processes and Rwanda's experience is the implementation of 'home-grown' state-centric liberalization structures designed to address social cohesion.

Rwanda's constitution-building process.

In 1997 the transitional government embarked upon its constitution-building process.²⁷ In hybrid post-conflict statebuilding this has been the domain of external and domestic negotiation, but there has been little evidence that this approach has overcome post-conflict social and political division.²⁸ Rwanda's constitution-building process and 'home-grown' liberalization strategies helped unify the state and engender widespread support associated with domestic ownership. This changed the way Rwandans interacted with each other and the state.²⁹

From its beginnings, Rwanda's constitution-building sought "a social contract that binds elites and populations."³⁰ In 1997 the transitional government formed the Legal and Judicial Constitution Committee (LJCC) which drafted the constitution over four years.³¹ An awareness campaign in 2001 was aimed at educating Rwandans; helping them understand the impact of a democratic constitution and their political rights.³² The president of the LJCC, Rutaremara stated that they were "surprised to discover that even some of the so

²⁶ Between 1994 and 1996 emergency humanitarian aid to Rwanda reached US\$700 million, which stabilized to between an estimated US\$250million-US\$350 million in 1997. Levels of development aid rose again in 2005 to almost US\$400 million. See Rachel Hayman, "'Milking the Cow': Negotiating Ownership of Aid and Policy in Rwanda," Global Economic Governance Programme, Managing Aid Dependency Project, GEG Working Paper, June 2007, <http://www.globaleconomicgovernance.org/wp-200726-milking-the-cow-negotiating-ownership-of-aid-and-policy-in-rwanda>, (accessed 25 October 2013).

²⁷ The accepted role of a post-conflict constitution is the provision for a framework of law and order, eclipsing pre-conflict rivalries and providing boundaries for political competition

²⁸ This can be observed in Bosnia and East Timor, where constitutions remain intrinsically weak. Bosnia's constitution, endorsed by the Dayton Peace agreement relies on protracted external support from the EU. Previously it was presided over by NATO.

²⁹ Today, the Rwandan identity displays major anomalies. It has been subjected to manipulation and amendments in order for the RPF to maintain power, and has been used as a tool for stymying political dissent. However, I argue that in its initial stages, the unifying element of the Rwandan identity brought together a divided community which profoundly changed the way in which former enemies thought and acted towards each other and the state.

³⁰ The International Crisis Group, "Rwanda at the End of Transition: a Necessary Political Liberalization," Africa Report No. 53, Nairobi/Brussels, 13 November, 2002, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/central-africa/rwanda/rwanda%20at%20the%20End%20of%20the%20Transition%20A%20Necessary%20Political%20Liberalisation.pdf> 99 accessed 1 November 2013.

³¹ Zachary Pall, "Light Shining Darkly: Comparing Post-conflict Constitutional Structures Concerning Speech and Association in Germany and Rwanda," *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*, 42:5 (2010):5-54, 12.

³² The International Crisis Group, "Rwanda at the End of Transition," 7.

called elite had no understanding of what a constitution was and its importance in the life of a nation.”³³ Trained consultants circulated questionnaires on issues such as land ownership, marriage, justice, and reconciliation mechanisms. Group discussions were facilitated at every level of society, and literate assistants filled in questionnaires for the illiterate.³⁴ Writing of the draft text was based on these results, which was made publically available in a specifically created database. Feedback was encouraged through a free telephone and email system and an interactive website. Data was compiled into a book and circulated among the population. A two month draft-writing process followed, culminating in a seminar attended by eight hundred invited guests from the Rwandan diaspora and international constitution experts from Belgium, South Africa, Europe and the US.³⁵ A draft constitution was then presented to the Rwandan parliament followed by two months of debate, prompting further amendments and re-drafting. The final constitution was presented to the Rwandan population, and was overwhelmingly voted in by 93% in a referendum in May 2003. In June 2004 it was ruled by the Supreme Rwandan Court into law.³⁶

Rwanda’s constitution was a “product of the people,”³⁷ based on widespread engagement with all sectors of society. By re-orienting Rwanda’s post-conflict peace ontology away from a western concept and towards a Rwandan-centric concept, it addressed the dichotomy between external emancipatory ideals, popular principles and state needs.³⁸ In the absence of external domination, coupled with external financial support, post-conflict states can move beyond western-centric institutionalism to devise political institutions according to their own needs, and in turn create an environment conducive to promoting a more sustainable state.

Potential dangers of hybrid post-conflict statebuilding

The re-oriented peace ontology and ability to domestically legitimize authority had a profound impact on the way Rwanda’s post-conflict environment engendered stability. Evidence suggests however that Rwanda’s elected RPF leaders have become increasingly authoritarian.³⁹ Whilst this paper focusses on Rwanda’s transitional stage between 1994

³³ Ankut, “The Role of Constitution-Building Processes in Democratization,” 20.

³⁴ Traditionally in western-centric liberalization models, marginalized members of a population risk being unheard in the political policymaking process due to high illiteracy levels leading to lack of voice and lack of financial relevance. Ankut, “The Role of Constitution-Building Processes in Democratization,” 17.

³⁵ This is the extent of external technical assistance in the constitution-building process which was sought by Rwanda’s Legal and Judicial Constitution Committee. It remained purely advisory, and had no influence in the final draft of the Constitution. Ankut, “The Role of Constitution-Building Processes in Democratization,”; Colin M. Waugh, *Paul Kagame and Rwanda: Power, Genocide and the Rwandan Patriotic Front*, (Jefferson: McFarland and Co., 2004), 188.

³⁶ Takele Soboka Bulto, “The promise of new constitutional engineering in post-genocide Rwanda,” *African Human Rights Journal*, 8: 1 (2008):187-206, 188; Ankut, “The Role of Constitution-Building Processes in Democratization,” 18.

³⁷ Ankut, “The Role of Constitution-Building Processes in Democratization,” 27.

³⁸ Oliver P. Richmond, “Understanding the Liberal Peace,” 2004, http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/intrel/media/Richmond_understanding_the_liberal_peace.pdf (accessed 12 December 2012).

³⁹ Filip Reyntjens, “Rwanda, Ten Years On: From Genocide to Dictatorship,” *African Affairs* 103: 411 (2004): 177-210.

and 2003, my argument is not whether Rwanda currently exemplifies a democratic ideal. However, it is important to understand the implications of Rwanda's authoritarian backsliding as it highlights the potential dangers associated with domestically-driven political liberalization.

Initial international scepticism of the RPF was gradually replaced with acceptance, and extended to praise as Rwanda displayed signs of rapid political, social and economic recovery. The international community accepted "at face value the government's argument that no alternative to the RPF rule exists, only a return to insecurity and violence."⁴⁰ Capitalizing on "genocide credits,"⁴¹ the RPF engineered their international image as genocide 'victims' to attract international support and avoid criticism. Based on a blanket approval of Rwanda's social, political and economic progress international financial conditionality became increasingly ambiguous, leading to the emergence of a 'shrouded' democracy where political competition and dissent was impeded without international censure.

The recasting of Rwanda's political and social discourse has been progressively exploited by the RPF. Increasing ambiguity surrounds Rwanda's constitutionalized identity laws. Introduced to address social and ethnic division, they have become a political tool for stymying political dissent. The negation of *any* facet of the genocide is now regarded as revisionist, and referral to ethnicity other than Rwandan is interpreted as divisionism, placing extreme limits on freedom of expression.⁴² Journalists and foreign reporters are routinely dismissed, exiled or go missing after criticizing authority. Ongoing constitutional amendments and exploitation of identity laws demonstrate how a re-oriented peace ontology is vulnerable to corruption and misinterpretation when a legitimate authority is not held accountable to democratic norms and external conditionalities.

Conclusion

A domestically-driven re-orientation of peace ontology together with the ability to domestically legitimize authority in Rwanda promulgated recovery from a deeply divided society through a state-centric political and social discourse. This contradicts externally driven processes which rely upon western-centric liberalization strategies and have essentially failed to create sustainable post-conflict states. That authoritarian backsliding has overwhelmed Rwanda's democratization process since the transition period suggests that more rigorous financial conditionality is needed. As benevolent political action relies upon external financial support, adhering to global democratic norms would be closely associated with attracting domestic support. In light of inconsistent post-conflict statebuilding in the past, greater understanding of the potential of autonomous strategies in a post-conflict setting is an area which deserves more research.

⁴⁰ Stephen Brown, "The rule of law and the hidden politics of transitional justice in Rwanda", in *Peacebuilding and rule of Law in Africa, Just Peace?* ed Chandra Lekha Sriram, Olga Martin-Ortega and Johanna Herman, London: Routledge, 2011), 192.

⁴¹ Reyntjens, "Rwanda, Ten Years On: From Genocide to Dictatorship," 177.

⁴² Revisionism and divisionism has become a political tool for the RPF, which has effectively outlawed any sympathetic reference to the genocide, or the politics which preceded it. Any reference to Hutu or Tutsi is actively discouraged, and incurs severe penalties.

This paper has argued that Rwanda's domestically-driven post-conflict statebuilding, when informed by state-centric strategies resulted in a sustainable, stable state. Rwanda differs from other post-conflict statebuilding processes in terms of process and outcome; its post-conflict environment evolved free from external political domination, and has resisted a return to violence caused by perpetuated political division. Whilst acknowledging the negative outcomes in Rwanda's political arena, which highlight the vulnerability of a state-driven process, this paper argues that Rwanda's transition period from 1994 to 2003 provides an alternative narrative of hybrid post-conflict statebuilding.

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