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# Globalization, Social Movements, and Peacebuilding

Edited by  
Jackie Smith and Ernesto Verdeja

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## Contributors

**James Bohman** is Danforth Professor of Philosophy and Professor of International Studies at Saint Louis University. He is the author of *Democracy across Borders* (2007), *Public Deliberation: Pluralism, Complexity, and Democracy* (1996), and *New Philosophy of Social Science: Problems of Indeterminacy* (1991). He is currently working on a book on why democracies have difficulties in solving particular kinds of problems, including obligations to future generations and to noncitizens.

**Catherine Bolten** is Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame. Her book, *I Did It to Save My Life: Love and Survival in Sierra Leone*, was published by the University of California Press in 2012. Her articles appear in *American Anthropologist* (2012), *Journal of Modern African Studies* (2009), and *Journal of Political Ecology* (2009).

**Rebecca Burns** is an assistant editor at *In These Times* magazine. She holds an MA in peace studies from the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame, where her research focused on global land and housing rights.

**Neil Cooper** is Professor of International Relations and Security Studies at the University of Bradford. He is coeditor of the refereed journal *International Peacekeeping* as well as coauthor of *War Economies in a Regional Context* (2004), coeditor of *Whose Peace?: Critical Perspectives on the Political Economy of Peacebuilding* (2008), and also coeditor of a special issue of *Contemporary Security Policy: Arms Control for the 21st Century* (2011). The latter has also been published as *Reconceptualising Arms Control: Controlling the Means of Violence* (2011). He is currently engaged in research for a monograph on the history of arms trade regulation.

**Dia Da Costa** is in the Department of Global Development Studies, Queen's University, Canada, developing research and teaching at the intersection of political

economy and cultural studies. She is the author of *Development Dramas: Reimagining Rural Political Action in Eastern India* (2010) and has articles in *Third World Quarterly* (2010), *Globalizations* (2007), *Signs* (2008), and *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (2007). She is working on a second book tentatively titled *The Work of Theatre in an Age of Precarious Labour*.

Isaac Kamola is currently an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. His scholarly work has appeared in *Third World Quarterly*, *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, *International Political Sociology*, *Polygraph*, *Transitions*, and the *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*. He received his PhD in political science from the University of Minnesota in 2010.

Cecelia Lynch is Professor of Political Science at the University of California, Irvine. She is the author of *Beyond Appeasement: Interpreting Interwar Peace Movements in World Politics* (1999), coauthor with Audie Klotz of *Strategies for Research in Constructivist International Relations* (2007), and coeditor of *Law and Moral Action in World Politics* (2000) and *On Rules, Politics, and Knowledge: Friedrich Kratochwil and the Study of International Relations* (2010).

Rachel Miller holds an MA in peace studies from the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame. She is a Senior Information Officer with USAID's Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA), where she reports on humanitarian emergencies, focusing on Sudan, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Rachel has also worked on land rights and gender justice issues in Uganda and the West Bank, environmental justice with indigenous communities in Latin America, and food security in Bolivia.

Valentine M. Moghadam is Professor of Sociology and Director of International Affairs at Northeastern University. Prior to this she was Professor of Sociology and Women's Studies, and Director of the Women's Studies Program at Purdue University. She is the author of *Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East* (1993, 2003, 2013); *Globalizing Women: Transnational Feminist Networks*, winner of APSA's Victoria Schuck Award for best book on women and politics (2005); *Globalization and Social Movements: Islamism, Feminism, and the Global Justice Movement* (2009, 2012); and coeditor of *Social Policy in the Middle East: Economic, Political, and Gender Dynamics* (2006).

Jackie Smith is Professor of Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh. She is the author of *Social Movements for Global Democracy* (2008), coauthor of *Social Movements in the World-System: The Politics of Crisis and Transformation* (2012), and coeditor of several books on transnational activism, including *Coalitions Across Borders* (with Joe Bandy, 2005) and *A Handbook of World Social Forum Activism* (with Scott Byrd, Ellen Reese, and Elizabeth Smythe, 2011).

Ernesto Verdeja is Assistant Professor of Political Science and Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame. He is the author of *Unchopping a Tree: Reconciliation in the Aftermath of Political Violence* (2009), and coeditor of volumes on genocide and mass atrocities. He has published articles in *Perspectives on Politics*, *Constellations*, *The Review of Politics*, *Contemporary Political Theory*, *The European Journal of Political Theory*, *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, *Metaphilosophy*, *Res Publica*, and *Contemporary Politics*.

# Introduction

Jackie Smith and Ernesto Verdeja

In the wake of the Cold War, the attention of much work in peace research shifted to the problem of postwar peacebuilding. This was largely in response to the efforts of United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to expand the work of the United Nations beyond its traditional peacekeeping functions. It also was a response to the proliferation of new democracies during this time. International intervention was seen as an important tool for helping establish durable democratic institutions in states affected by the Cold War thaw. The effect of this has been a tendency in the field to focus on violent conflicts and postwar settings, with less research on other phases of conflict (including social movements), a neglect of the problem of structural violence, and an uncritical acceptance of the notion that neoliberal models of economic development are best suited to advancing development and peace.

This pattern parallels the tendency of researchers, in the words of Rivage-Seul, to “[accept] the politicians’ vision of the best possible world,” rather than to articulate alternatives that confront unequal power relations and focus attention on basic human needs. Quoting Jonathan Schell, Rivage-Seul argues that the logic of deterrence “deter[red] debate about itself,” placing “sharp limits . . . on the definition of ‘respectable’ [and] so-called ‘realistic’ thinking about nuclear strategy” (1987, 153). In a similar way, the market ideology of neoliberal globalization has served to deter debate about itself throughout most of

the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>1</sup> Critics of global markets were marginalized from major policy debates as the global financial institutions took on more influential roles in national and global economic policy during the 1980s and 1990s. A “market epistemology” has “infected” disciplines such as development studies and international relations (Da Costa and McMichael 2007, 588). Indeed, a key element of the neoliberal globalization project was the depoliticization of core questions about economic and social policy (Brunelle 2007). This was accomplished largely through the establishment of an “apparent homogeneity of discourse” about global economic policies (Dagnino 2008, 69), leading to the “discursive demobilization” of a wide range of social movements (see Lynch 1998). Following Fetherston (2000), we argue that effective peacebuilding needs to transform discourses and modes of thinking, and it must begin with a rigorous critique of the dominant social and political order.

In the academy, neoliberal approaches in economics displaced other theoretical tendencies, thereby silencing alternatives to global markets by channeling resources toward growing and legitimating business schools and by purging economics departments of scholars who ventured outside neoliberal orthodoxy (Sklair 1997; Hayes 2007). Within national and international institutions, neoliberal-friendly economists found more employment prospects over this time period (Markoff and Montecinos 1993; Montecinos 2001; Babb 2001). Even within the United Nations, attempts to address persistent poverty and rising inequality through redistributive and nonmarket measures were marginalized from the key policy arenas—including peacebuilding—as the UN sought to cultivate more cooperative ties with corporations (Smith 2008; Knight and Smith 2007).

The influence of market ideologies on both theory and practice is also evident in the field of peace research. While recent work in the field identifies some of the ways neoliberal reforms can exacerbate conflict,

1. This has been changing since the late 1990s as popular resistance to economic globalization has expanded in intensity and geographic scope and as the world witnesses multiple and successive crises caused by financial globalization and excessive reliance on international trade and finance as a means to development. The global economic crisis beginning in late 2007 has contributed further to the delegitimation of neoliberal ideology.

the recommendations emerging from this work are to merely reduce the speed at which such policies are introduced in postwar settings, rather than to allow space for alternative paths to economic development (e.g., Collier et al. 2003; Paris 2004). More structural critiques of the interstate system and its orientation toward markets are largely absent from this work. This may be due in part to the fact that a good deal of this research is funded by governments or intergovernmental agencies (notably including the World Bank) and therefore is largely articulated within existing policy discourses and frameworks. This book challenges dominant assumptions in much of the literature on peacebuilding, arguing that economic globalization is a major source of the structural violence<sup>2</sup> underlying most contemporary violent conflicts. While much of the literature in the field of peace research focuses on violent interstate and intrastate conflict, it is becoming increasingly difficult to address the transnational dimensions of conflict that are often working to affect localized conflict dynamics. As economic globalization shifts economic and other important policy decisions to supranational institutions, the ability of local actors to affect conflict and peacebuilding processes within their borders is diminished. Moreover, as resources such as energy, land, and water become increasingly scarce, decisions about these resources are increasingly shifted away from local policy arenas. Thus, it is vital that scholars, analysts, and practitioners engage in more critical reflection on *global* structures of power to improve our understandings of how these structures affect both inter- and intrastate conflict.

We also contend that studies of peacebuilding and violent conflict can benefit from greater dialogue with the extensive literature on social movements. This literature has focused largely on civil society and its relationship to the state and, increasingly, the interstate system (for reviews, see,

2. According to Webster and Perkins (2001, 330), “structural violence occurs when political and economic systems are organized in ways that oppress, exploit, and dominate certain segments of a population while privileging others who hold power and wealth.” For Uvin, structural violence is the “denial, through the distribution of resources and opportunity, of people’s means of realizing basic needs and potential” (2003, 148). Scholars of economic globalization use the term “social exclusion” to refer to similar phenomena (see Munck 2002).

e.g., Snow, Soule, and Kriesi 2004; Tarrow 2011; McCarthy 1997; Smith and Kutz-Flamenbaum 2010; Smith and Wiest 2012). While virtually all analyses of peacebuilding processes stress the important roles civil society plays in building peace, much of the work fails to adequately problematize the relationships between states and civil society or the operation of power within civil society. Social movement theory addresses how state power and practices affect both the character of civil society associations and the opportunities diverse actors have to affect social change. It also is concerned with dynamics of conflict and cooperation *within* civil society itself, including the conditions (both national and transnational) that contribute to or obstruct effective alliance building and coordination among civil society groups. Both of these dimensions are essential to understanding what makes postwar peace processes durable and what sort of structures and policies can help prevent the outbreak of violent conflict in the first place. Thus, a key aim of our project is to expand attention to social movement theory in the field of peace research.

Authors in this volume draw from work in multiple disciplines to uncover how the predominant, global neoliberal models of economic development affect the dynamics of conflict and peace in a variety of local settings. While there may indeed be relationships between economic liberalization and the conditions that foster peace, and while open markets might be associated with more open political systems, there is considerable debate among social scientists about the nature of these relationships. Market liberalization can proceed in highly authoritarian contexts, and highly democratic countries may in fact limit their participation in global markets in response to democratic pressures. Moreover, some analyses show that economic liberalization can seriously undermine efforts to rebuild social institutions and foster political liberalization in war-torn societies (Uvin 1998; McGinty 2006; Paris 2004).

In addition to questioning some basic assumptions in much of the mainstream peace research literature, we also want to shift attention away from the political projects and discourses of elites and toward the efforts of popular groups to respond to and redress problems in specific contexts. Our bottom-up approach seeks to uncover the visions, demands, and political projects being advanced in local settings in response to—and

often despite—the constraints imposed by more powerful groups (Kaldor 2003). The case studies in this volume demonstrate how globalized models and norms can channel and constrain popular movements in ways that undermine emancipatory projects. Although global norms such as human rights and disarmament can legitimize challengers and provide opportunities for movements to mobilize transnationally, they can be a double-edged sword, for they can lead movements to engage with institutional processes that replicate power asymmetries and ultimately reinforce the interests of dominant powers (see Fetherston 2000).

Our perspective calls into question many assumptions about the nature of modern states. Peacebuilding missions have been described as “transmission mechanisms” of neoliberal models of the state, assisting the process of transforming national states into entities that facilitate the trade liberalization agenda of globalized capital (Paris 2002). In this sense, peacekeeping operations are a part of the “revolution from above,” that helped expand the global economy in recent decades (Robinson 2004). Under neoliberalism, states around the world have been restructured to deemphasize their welfare-providing and regulatory functions while simultaneously strengthening their coercive capacity, particularly in regard to the protection of private property and the disciplining of labor (O’Brien 2004).

The neoliberal state is thus “lean and mean” (Evans 1997, 85–86), trimmed of its social welfare components but with strengthened military, policing, and prison capacities (see also Harvey 2005). This revolution from above has been even more brutal for people in the global South, where states were hollowed out before they had developed effective systems of representation and distribution (Ferguson 2006; see also Tilly 1990). And its effects have been especially harsh for society’s most vulnerable groups, including women (Moghadam 2005; 2012). In more recent years, the “war on terror” has introduced new repressive tendencies in Western states, and traditional rights to political participation and assembly have been eroded there as well (della Porta et al. 2007). This has implications for future trajectories of violent conflict and therefore deserves more attention by peace researchers.

Clearly, countries experience different forms of violence, and this requires attention to their particular needs. Some nations are left with

little infrastructure following civil war or genocide (such as Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sierra Leone) and must commit significant resources to rebuild their economies and societies. Elsewhere, pervasive structural violence is a consequence of uneven international development and social and cultural practices of discrimination over generations, even under conditions of formal democracy (for example, India and Brazil). The specific needs of countries are a consequence of their particular histories and contemporary challenges, and certainly there is no universal model of reform. Nevertheless, neoliberal prescriptions call for a reduction of state capacity, services, and public welfare protections and for the opening of national economies to generate economic growth.

For countries with a long history of international exploitation and other forms of structural violence, such policies may only exacerbate social exclusion, making a return to violent struggle more likely (Silver 2003). Neoliberal reforms tend to strengthen the power of well-positioned domestic and international economic elites while providing only tangential if any benefits to the poor. At the same time, these reforms tend to subject historically disadvantaged groups to even greater economic vulnerability (Jaggar 2001; Rajagopal 2003; Rudra 2002; Kingfisher 2003). Measuring progress only by looking at gross economic indicators, common to many neoliberal economic development strategies, neglects the complex and reinforcing patterns of marginalization that often accompany the rapid scaling back of state services (Bergman 2009; Babb 2005).

Neoliberal policies may also destabilize fragile postwar societies. By requiring state restructuring along neoliberal lines, contemporary frameworks for peace agreements constrain the policy space available to states recovering from wars. Take two common requirements for external aid, privatization and liberalization. In theory, privatization increases the efficiency of corrupt, unproductive state enterprises by subjecting them to new incentives of profitability (which presumably reflects their accountability and responsiveness to consumer demands). In transitional settings, however, privatization may only widen economic disparities, for often the only domestic actors capable of purchasing newly privatized businesses are those who already enjoy significant economic and political power, and frequently they contributed to the violence in the first place (Mani 2002,

138–41; Boyce 2002). Under these conditions, privatization may “be impossible or merely involve the enrichment of senior government officials” (Fitzgerald 2000, 58). In Sierra Leone, for example, privatization resulted in placing many profitable enterprises “in a few oligopolistic hands and deepening a popular sense of grievance” (Keen 2000, 40), rather than expanding wealth to broader sectors of the population.

Liberalization focuses on reducing restrictions to foreign investment and minimizing barriers to foreign trade. The goal is to stimulate the domestic economy by permitting the introduction of needed capital and generating employment. In postwar countries with fragile economies, however, liberalization can be destabilizing. Liberalization combined with a weakened state can depress wages and promote export-led “growth” that leaves societies vulnerable to fluctuations in world prices of their primary exports (Carbonnier 2002; Uvin 1998). Most postwar settings require extensive state intervention to provide for social welfare and redistribution of land and other sources of wealth, often an original source of the conflict. Greater state protection from international market competition is also vital to rebuilding local and national economies. Local workers must have a stake in national economic recovery. Yet, policies designed to attract international investment do not necessarily help—and may even hinder—efforts to expand local economic opportunities and thereby build loyalty and commitment to peacebuilding processes (see, e.g., Pugh and Cooper 2004). Also, an active and participatory state is often necessary to protect minorities and women and ensure the rule of law (Dagnino 2008). Neoliberal states cannot effectively achieve these aims, and therefore undermine peacebuilding processes. In the aftermath of civil war, where political and ethnic divisions may run deep and populations enjoy little economic or material security, policies that limit social protections diminish the public’s stake in peace agreements and can further exacerbate tensions and conflict.

Of course, civil wars have many causes, such as elite radicalization, ethnic factionalization, and pervasive poverty in the face of growing inequality and politicization. We do not deny that there are numerous sources of civil wars, and that some of these are national or local (Fearon and Laitan 2003; Wood 2004; Collier and Sambanis 2005). What is remarkable, however, is the extent to which the peacebuilding literature focuses

on short-term and national-level causes and ignores broader global factors contributing to instability and violence.

A critical review of the peacebuilding literature suggests that much more attention must be paid to questions of how the inequities of the global economic and political order affect the prospects for peace and peace processes at national and local levels. The dominant “liberal peace” framework, with its emphasis on conflict termination and the promotion of individual human rights, formal democracy, and a market economy, fails to address the deeper global economic and material causes of violence (Paris and Sisk 2009). Global institutions and processes have privileged rich, Western countries, leaving many without much stake in the existing global order. As Peter Uvin observes, “current modes of globalisation provoke structural violence, and, as a result, acute violence. At this level, structural reform of the world economy is advocated—including the establishment of major redistributive mechanisms” (Uvin 2002, 19–20). Recent years have also drawn heightened attention to how environmental devastation caused largely by the development policies pursued under neoliberal globalization can cause or exacerbate violent conflict. In short, the legitimacy and stability of global agreements and institutions depends upon work to integrate more equitably actors on the periphery—that is, non-Western states as well as civil society—into policy agendas and decision-making processes.

Some contemporary social movements have mobilized explicitly in response to the conflicts generated by this larger world economy and interstate system (e.g., Macdonald 1997; Paffenholz and Spurr 2006). Many have been working at local, national, and transnational levels to resist the neoliberal state and to promote redistributive and welfare policies. Movements in Latin America in particular have been successful in this regard, and have as a result begun to challenge global power relations. Movement actors have also developed transnational networks and organizations capable of fostering communication and dialogue that can contribute to peacebuilding (Kaldor 2003). The World Social Forum (WSF) process, for instance, is a deliberate attempt to bring together multiple and diverse movements to develop alternative visions aimed at addressing the most challenging conflicts of our day. The WSF process consists of a linked series of encounters organized across space (from local to global) and time. It aims to foster new

forms of association and engagement that nurture mutual understandings, solidarity, and collective identities based on notions of equity and shared goals of a more just and ecologically sustainable global order. Such efforts help anticipate and give voice to conflicts over scarce resources *before* they escalate into organized violence. At the same time, they build support for nonviolent alternatives. More important for our purposes, the WSF process represents one of the largest and most sustained movements for the sort of large-scale systemic change that would address the structural violence fueling most major wars. As such, it deserves consideration as an essential part of the work of contemporary peacebuilding.

As noted above, most scholars of peacebuilding stress the crucial role that civil society actors play in postwar peacebuilding processes (Darby 2006; Mason and Meernik 2006). But few seriously consider questions about how to create the long-term structural conditions that can nurture strong and democratic (that is, tolerant and nonviolent) civil societies both in postwar settings as well as in contexts where conflict has not escalated into violence (but see Paffenholz 2010a). Indeed, part of the difficulty stems from the emphasis on what Michel Foucault (1991) referred to as “governmentality,” or the process by which the state and elites employ a host of strategies and techniques to make a society “governable.” Such a process often requires depoliticizing civil society, or at the very least reinscribing the domain of politics to draw a sharp distinction between legitimate and illegitimate policies and political ends.

In these contexts, critical civil society groups are redefined as spoilers, without careful distinctions between movements calling for greater democratic input and reactionary movements. This can exacerbate the discursive demobilization (Lynch 1998) of groups making legitimate claims and/or wielding significant, though nonmilitarized, influence in local settings. By delegitimizing critical local actors, conventional peacebuilding approaches undermine critical analysis and normalize state and elite interests (Fetherston 2000). As Neil Cooper has argued, “both the problematisation of war economies and the emphasis on the imperative of transformation can be understood as speech acts that securitise and pathologise the local in order to legitimise the extraordinary measures deemed necessary to bring about liberal governance” (Cooper 2006a, 87).



We examine in this volume the ways global institutions and practices affect the contexts in which contemporary peacebuilding efforts take place. In particular, we consider how global economic and structural forces serve to facilitate or constrain civil society actors, including humanitarian nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other social movements (see Paffenholz and Spurk 2010). We also explore the relevance of a major global mobilization of civil society actors, the WSF process, as a possible source of ideas about alternative models of social organization and as a space for experimenting with and developing practices that support peace and justice. What is required, therefore, is an alternative to the dominant “liberal peace” framework, one that deepens its commitment to human rights and democracy while eschewing damaging demands for privatization, liberalization, and weakened welfare states.

A more critical perspective on peacebuilding must be *systemic*: it must identify the underlying structural causes of violence, including their local, national, regional, and global sources, while also formulating a broader conception of peace that incorporates a wider set of actors. In this way, our conceptualization of peacebuilding returns us to Johan Galtung’s original articulation of this idea in 1975, which focused on cultivating what he called “positive peace” rather than simply on ending violence, or “negative peace” (see Paffenholz 2010b, 43). Specifically, peace scholarship and practice should move beyond its focus on elite, transnational expertise and knowledge and resituate social movements and civil society at the center of debates about durable and just peace. It is this juncture—between peace studies, social movement theory, and globalization—that this volume explores.

### Core Propositions

Based on the above analysis, we arrive at a set of core propositions that will guide the analyses that follow. Here, we briefly sketch these.

(1) The structural conditions that shape processes leading to violence or peace can be linked to the world capitalist economic system, and therefore attempts to prevent the outbreak of violence and to promote sustainable peace in postwar settings require attention to historic

and world-systemic factors (see Smith 2010; Silver 2003; Pugh et al. 2008a). Approaches to peacebuilding that focus strictly on the national level—such as those addressing problems of failed states, elite corruption, economic policies, and arms regulation—do not adequately address how those states’ relations to the larger world economy and their historic relations with other states are shaping these dynamics (see, e.g., Farmer 2004; Burawoy 1998; McMichael 1990). If peace research is to offer solutions for long-term peace, it must examine more critically the global and systemic constraints that fragile, postwar societies face. This requires a close look at how these states are embedded within the world economy.

Indeed, scholars such as David Harvey (2006) have argued that the global capitalist economy is itself based on a political economy of violence, or “accumulation by dispossession” (see also Escobar 2004). It follows that local and national struggles must be understood within a larger network of local, national, and global relations that are oriented around this global capitalist logic. Effective peace processes thus require a reversal of the processes of dispossession that are inherent in neoliberal policies and practices.

(2) The contemporary context is one in which the dominant model for organizing the world-system is in crisis and is being challenged by various contenders. Glasius and Kaldor (2002) have usefully, if rather schematically, categorized these various actors as (a) neoliberals, who wish to accelerate the processes of trade deregulation, dismantlement of state capacity, and insertion of “peripheral” countries into the world economy; (b) regressive antiglobalizers, who resist the pressures of economic and societal transformation by reverting to “traditional” cultural practices that may be explicitly hostile to human rights and democracy; and (c) democratic progressives, who seek to expand popular participation and deliberation about the fundamental ends of society (see also Barber 1995). The first two are often coercive and pursue top-down policies on the population. The latter cosmopolitan and democratic approach is largely a bottom-up approach to global integration. Our project privileges this bottom-up vision of global integration, without presuming any single outcome or model. The goal is to identify paths toward political and social emancipation while taking seriously the heterogeneity of needs and context-appropriate strategies.

(3) Institutional and structural factors privilege powerful actors—including states, hegemons, capitalists, etc. This affects how alternatives are articulated and advanced. If they are to succeed at transforming social conflict, peacebuilding processes must disrupt the means through which powerful actors can reproduce their interests despite challenges. In other words, we must better understand processes such as “discursive demobilization” or the entrenchment of power in the “deep structures” (Rajagopal 2006) of the economy and political institutions. Pugh, Cooper, and Turner (2008b) call for a “politics of emancipation” that can yield new, ecologically informed thinking about societal organizing logics and goals. Concepts such as “social emancipation,” “life welfare,” and “gender justice” seek to sensitize analysts to the operation of power and to orient our thinking toward alternative structures that are more likely to generate the sustained peacebuilding outcomes we seek. Because it lacks a vested interest in the dominant institutional order, civil society is a primary locus for thematizing, securing, and sustaining these various forms of emancipation from a world economic system based in inequality and violence (Alexander 2006; Bohman 2007; Habermas 1996).

### Concepts

The book is oriented around the exploration of a set of core concepts, discussed below. The authors’ contributions engage explicitly with these concepts, helping provide greater coherence to the project and uniting the various chapters in an ongoing and multiperspectival analysis. The concepts were originally chosen by the editors, but were refined through conversations and exchanges at an authors’ workshop at the University of Notre Dame.

#### *Neoliberalism*

We understand the term “neoliberalism” as a set of economic policies advanced by leading world economies and global financial institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization beginning in the 1970s and continuing through the

1990s and beyond. The primary goal is to reduce constraints on international trade and expand opportunities for foreign investment, thereby integrating national economies into the global capitalist economy. Key policies include trade and financial liberalization, privatization, deregulation, and reductions of public sector employment and expenditures. An important effect of neoliberal policies has been the redistribution of wealth and political influence from lower income to higher-income groups within and across societies (Babb 2005; Harvey 2006).

#### *Social Movements*

We understand the term “social movements” as *collections* of organizational and individual actors who “who engage in *sustained* political or cultural *contestation* through recourse to institutional and extrainstitutional forms of action” (Escobar and Alvarez 1992, 321, emphasis added). We stress that for most analysts and for our purposes here, social movements are collective, sustained, popularly based engagements with authorities. They also may engage with formal political procedures where these are available, but typically combine formal political actions with extra-institutional actions, including crime. While many movements cultivate explicit collective identities among participants, some movements are unified and defined more in terms of their shared social change goals. As will become clear in the following pages, not all movements are progressive or democratic. Furthermore, some of the “movements” we will explore in this book are somewhat nascent and less self-consciously organized. Examples of this sort of movement include the youth engaging in social leveling in Sierra Leone and the pirates off Somalia’s coast.

#### *Gender Justice*

Most analyses of postwar peacebuilding processes identify the vital importance of attention to gender inequities in sustainable peace processes. The term “gender justice” indicates efforts to reform legal institutions and practices to remedy gender inequalities and address gender-based violence and war crimes. It also includes structural reforms aimed at improving

women's access to resources and economic opportunities. The process of securing gender justice is a complex one that places a priority on the renegotiation of gender relations to prevent backlash against women in the aftermath of armed conflict (see Pugh, Cooper, Turner 2008). Given the significant redistributions of power required, explicit attention must be paid to the question of how gender justice might be achieved in particular contexts (both peaceful and postwar).

### *Globalizing Projects*

We might view our project as an exploration of contestation over different visions of how the world should be organized. Phil McMichael (2006) argues that neoliberal globalization reflects a particular "globalization project" that favors wealthy countries, corporations, and individuals at the expense of poorer countries, workers, and other people. Pugh and his colleagues refer to neoliberal peacebuilding as a "normative project," which imposes neoliberal policies on states attempting to rebuild after armed conflicts.

More recently, various actors have been articulating alternative globalization projects aimed at remedying the problems linked to neoliberal economic globalization. Many social movement activists represented in the WSF, for instance, stress the need to reorganize fundamentally global relations around the aims of inclusion, diversity, and participation.

Elite globalization projects are reflected in UN-led initiatives such as "Human Security." Pugh and his colleagues distinguish between "problem solving"<sup>3</sup> and "paradigm shifting" approaches, noting that the human security approach has been co-opted to justify military intervention and to help re-legitimize neoliberal agendas in the wake of failed structural adjustment programs (Pugh, Cooper, and Turner 2008, 393). They show

3. A problem solving approach is likened to what Paul Rogers (2010) refers to as "liddism"—i.e., keeping a lid on, or containing the problems emerging through the implementation of neoliberal reforms, without attention to the underlying causes of the problems. Pugh and his colleagues see analysts such as Joseph Stiglitz, Jeffrey Sachs, George Soros, and Amy Chua as offering such problem-solving approaches.

how the language of human security has failed to address the complexities of local geographies of power while privileging the atomized individual as the target of policy. Instead of "human security" they call for a "politics of emancipation" that helps create space for a "life welfare" approach that appreciates the importance of social relations and the ecology. For them, peacebuilding efforts must be "unsecuritized" and more attentive to local voices and power relations. In addition, they call for a shift in paradigms of peacebuilding that "rejects universalism in favour of heterodoxy, reconceptualises the abstract individual as a social being and limits damage to planetary life—in short, a 'life welfare' perspective" (393).

### **From "Empowerment" to Social Emancipation?**

Empowerment is the process whereby groups and individuals in a society gain greater control over their lives and destinies. Empowerment is seen as a key to peacebuilding, since it helps expand popular commitment to the peace process while also addressing some of the inequities that contribute to conflict escalation. Much of the research on peacebuilding suggests that this is one of the more neglected features of postwar peace operations (Paffenholz 2010a). Effective redistribution of the means of production and political influence rarely occurs, and this is clearly a part of the explanation for why so many peace agreements break down.

By understanding peacebuilding within the larger global political and economic context, we have given attention to the role that culture, ideas, and institutions play in reinforcing dominant power relations, even where actors aim to transform inequalities and related conflicts. Thus, we draw from the work of Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2007a) to argue for an approach to conflict transformation and peacebuilding that emphasizes *social emancipation* rather than empowerment. The latter term suggests that marginalized groups are essentially the addressees, or recipients, of reformist policies, and in many instances the term has been co-opted by external elites and institutions promoting neoliberal transformations (see Eliasoph 2011). We therefore use the term "social emancipation," which attributes more agency and control to those who are excluded from equitable participation in the economy, society, and polity. This emphasis on

the agency of the marginalized also elicits different strategies for peacebuilding than does the term “empowerment.” As Pugh, Cooper, and Turner have noted, “the political economy of post-conflict peace and statebuilding in a liberal peace framework has involved a simulacra of empowerment where peacebuilders transfer responsibilities to society without transferring power” (2008, 391). Thus, the social emancipation framework emphasizes the structural analysis of power relations and examines the possibilities for excluded groups to exercise agency, in contrast to less politicized forms of peacebuilding empowerment that focus more on charity toward the dispossessed.

### Chapter Summary

Part one of the book develops analyses of how discourses are used to reinforce dominant social relations, and how discourses are mobilized by social movements as they work to transform unequal social relations. Neil Cooper’s chapter leads off this discussion with a consideration of how the discourses surrounding arms regulation, including those of “human security,” have focused attention on the regulation of weapons systems and have not significantly impacted conventional arms trade or broader human security. He argues that peace movements and their supporters must look critically at the history of arms control campaigns in order to devise strategies that can reorient multilateral peace agendas and generate agreements that go beyond the token efforts to regulate international flows of weapons and move us more clearly in the direction of greater human well-being.

Cecelia Lynch explores the specialized and globalized discourses characterizing the world of humanitarian NGOs. Organizations working with grants or contracts from governments and intergovernmental agencies are increasingly required to document and demonstrate the effectiveness of their operations in postwar contexts. This results orientation, Lynch argues, has generated a set of benchmarks and criteria that are more linked with expanding a neoliberal economic agenda than with advancing peacebuilding.

Dia Da Costa’s chapter demonstrates how *Janam*, an organization of the cultural and political left in India, has used street theater to challenge dominant neoliberal discourses. She critiques the ways the group has articulated class within its satirical plays, uncovering the challenges to movements that aim both to contest the larger debates over neoliberal globalization and build unity among a diverse array of social and class actors. Her analysis offers insights into the particular strategies and tactics movements use as they seek to transform relations based in large-scale structural violence.

Part two of the book examines how globalized models and concepts are applied in local contexts, and considers their implications for the transformation of violent conflicts. Valentine Moghadam begins the section by identifying linkages between the world economy and the structural violence that underlies violent conflicts. She argues that war and militarism are both fueled by and reproduce gendered identities that help perpetuate violence. She illustrates this through an examination of the gendered consequences of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, developing an argument for a more explicitly *gendered* approach to the global “human security” and peacebuilding agenda that privileges the goal of *gender justice*. She explores the roles that transnational feminist networks have played in fostering peace and gender justice, offering insights into strategies for improving peacebuilding as well as preventing the escalation of conflicts into violence.

Isaac Kamola uses the case of the Somali pirates to uncover how the concept of “failed states” has been used to justify selective international interventions that reinforce the interests of Western powers in controlling access to natural resources. According to Kamola, the concept obfuscates the nature of conflicts, thereby inhibiting effective efforts to address underlying causes. He argues that piracy is not simply reducible to localized greed or state failure, but is also part of a larger struggle over the governance and policing of international commodity flows.

Catherine Bolten then offers insights into how humanitarian aid gets translated into historically structured social networks in Sierra Leone. She examines the “Pull-You-Down Syndrome” of social leveling employed by

local “big men” to shape the social distribution of resources. Large pools of undereducated and unemployed men are readily mobilized by would-be big men in the latter’s efforts to mobilize foreign aid resources in ways that enhance their power. If aid is to contribute to peacebuilding, efforts to understand the local social context and counter these sorts of internally competitive dynamics are necessary.

Finally, in part three of the volume we consider the possibilities for building peace from below by cultivating movements and practices conducive to nonviolent conflict resolution. James Bohman explores how processes of democratic deliberation enacted within social movements can promote the aims of peacebuilding by enhancing trust among participants and strengthening the legitimacy of decisions. He explores the possibilities for constructing and sustaining public spheres that can promote effective deliberation at a scale appropriate to the contemporary globalized context.

Jackie Smith, Rebecca Burns, and Rachel Miller then provide an in-depth look at the activities of activists working within the WSF process, demonstrating how the work in that arena reflects the practices and aims of peacebuilding, particularly those identified in Bohman’s chapter. They consider the lessons the WSF process provides for work in a variety of contexts to transform conflict and reduce violence.

We offer this volume as a contribution to important debates on how we might reimagine the possibilities for both preventing wars and violence and for securing and sustaining a just peace for fragile societies. We have endeavored to bring together certain scholarly literatures that have remained largely separated from one another—the social movements, peacebuilding, and globalization literatures—and thus generate a provocative conversation that can reframe the ways in which scholars and practitioners understand the work of peacebuilding.

## Part One

# Discourses of Conflict and Movement