Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding

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Published online: 26 Mar 2010.

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This essay offers an explanation for how and why women's rights are included in contemporary peace agreements. I identify six causal mechanisms by which women secured participation and women's rights in the peace processes of Burundi (1998–2000) and Northern Ireland (1996–98). First, violent conflict and peace talks produce the conditions of 'grievance' and 'optimism' necessary for social movement mobilization. Second, women use 'procedural grafting' to demand inclusion in peace processes. Third, they use 'strategic essentialism' to overcome the ethno-political divisions of the conflict. Fourth, women call upon relevant practices used in peace processes of the Global South. Fifth, high-level actors may influence peace processes to further international objectives. Sixth, women's involvement with transnational feminist networks facilitates the reproduction of international human rights language.

Keywords Burundi; negotiations; norm diffusion; Northern Ireland; peace processes; transnational feminist networks

We usually think of peace talks as addressing the issues of the battlefield at the negotiating table. However, since the 1990s, peace processes have also become fora to advance feminist objectives. Of the 148 peace agreements signed between 1989 and 2005, at least 38 contain explicit references to women.[1] International bodies such as UNIFEM, the EU and the UN Security Council now explicitly call for the inclusion of women's rights in peace settlements, making it likely that the practice of including them will continue.[2]

Women's references in peace agreements encompass gender-inclusive language; redress for war-related issues such as sexual violence, repatriation and restitution of property; women's participation in the transition period and long-term changes such as the establishment of new institutions, electoral quotas and accession to international treaties. For example, the 1995 General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina 'Dayton Peace Agreement' (GFAP 1995) affirms acquiescence to the 1979 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (Annex 6). Guatemala's 1996 *Agreement on the Implementation, Compliance and Verification Timetable*

for the Peace Agreements (AICV 1996) envisages the establishment of an Office for the Defence of Indigenous Women's Rights which would *inter alia* provide women with 'legal advisory services and social services' (II85). And, the 2003 Democratic Republic of the Congo *Inter-Congolese Political Negotiations-The Final Act* (ICPN 2003) stipulates that women comprise at least 30 per cent of all national decision-making bodies (3biv).

To date, the pathways through which women's rights provisions come to be included in contemporary peace agreements have been left unexplored in relevant literature. Literature that explicitly focuses on peace processes, or, 'war termination' literature, limits the study of peace agreements to elements believed to make peace durable (e.g. Doyle and Sambanis 2000; Hampson 1996; Harzell 1999; Licklider 1995; Stedman *et al*. 2002; Walter 1997). Mediation and negotiation theory defines negotiations as '[processes] by which the parties combine their divergent positions into a single agreed outcome' (Zartman and Faure 2005, p. 4). Accordingly, this body of literature also limits the study of negotiations to the 'divergent positions' of the conflicting parties and does not consider interests unrelated to the conflict. It has only explored the influence of norms peripherally and these studies have been limited to, primarily, the influence of *conflict-related* norms on the mediator (Anderson Forthcoming; Bluman-Schroeder 2004; Fabry 2002; Ratner 2000). On the whole, the dominant literature on mediation and negotiation of international and civil conflicts focuses on the *conflict-related* interests of the main protagonists of the conflict and in some cases on the interests of the mediator (Bercovitch 1996; Bercovitch and Houston 1995; Carnevale and Arad 1995; Crocker *et al*. 1999; Savun 2008).

These focuses have sidelined consideration and examination of the interests of other actors such as domestic and transnational advocacy groups. In cases where civil society's involvement has been explored, it has been done so in the context of its usefulness in reaching an agreement (e.g. Arthur 1999; Hopmann 2001; Rupesinghe 1996; Saunders 2001). As such, this body of literature has ignored the objectives of civil society not directly related to the resolution of the conflict. However, as evidenced by the peace agreements of Burundi and Northern Ireland, as well as by other settlements containing provisions pertaining to women, there are issues at play other than those relating to the ending of intercommunal violence.

Similarly, literature that details women's involvement in peace processes has not provided an explanation as to why and how women's rights come to be included in contemporary peace agreements. I divide this literature into three types. The first provides atheoretical histories of women's attempts to be included in peace processes (e.g. Anderlini 2000; Burke *et al*. 2001; Fearon 1999). The second focuses on the international campaign to make women's rights in peace processes a global issue (e.g. Cockburn 2007; Cohn 2004; Cohn *et al*. 2004). The final provides normative arguments for the inclusion of women's participation in peace processes and the incorporation of their rights explicitly in peace settlements. These include arguments that women generally work more collaboratively than men and, since they have done less of the killing, are

perceived as less threatening by the opposing side and accordingly better able to work across party lines (Hunt and Posa 2001); that since men and women experience conflict and post-conflict conditions differently, women bring specific issues to the table that would not be addressed without their presence (Chinkin 2003); and finally, that women have an inherent right to be present at peace negotiations since they comprise at least 50 per cent of the population (Anderlini 2007). Although this literature provides much empirical information on women's participation in peace processes, it does not attempt to provide a theoretical framework within which to understand the significance and the causal pathways of this contemporary phenomenon.

Since references to women in peace agreements suggest that international norms may be at play in peace negotiations, I employ a norm diffusion framework to understand the influence and dynamics of norm entrepreneurs in the peace process. To date, literature on norm creation and promulgation has left the arena of peace processes largely unexplored. Rather it has focused on sites such as *multi-lateral* treaties (Price 1998; Risse and Sikkink 1999b; Thomas 2002), international organizations (Acharya 2004; Donnelly 2002; Khagram 2002; Nelson 2002), and domestic legislation (Cortell and Davis 1996). The conceptual tools applied at those sites may be extrapolated and applied to peace processes. To do so, I ascertain who the 'norm entrepreneurs' are who lobby for women's rights provisions in peace settlements and what strategies they use to incorporate women's rights into the agreements.

To excavate possible causal mechanisms by which references to women are included in the final agreement, I have selected two peace processes which produced references to women in their peace agreements. Although social science methodologists have traditionally criticized case selection based on the dependent variable (e.g. King *et al*. 1994), Alexander George and Andrew Bennett (2004) propose that this method can be fruitful in the initial stages of a study in order to determine causal pathways. Since, to date, there are no plausible theories advanced as to why women's rights are included in peace agreements, my study offers the opportunity to uncover the various pathways. For this reason, I examine the peace processes and settlements of Burundi (1998–2000) and Northern Ireland (1996–98), both of which include references to women in the final peace agreements.

The history of how references to women were included in these agreements reveals the efforts and activities of domestic, transnational and international feminist networks. The peace process in Burundi consisted of several stages (Bentley and Southall 2005). Julius Nyerere, former president of Tanzania, convened peace talks between the two major political parties in Burundi – UPRONA and FRODEBU in Mwanza, Tanzania in April and May of 1996. The first, in a series of four negotiation sessions, took place in Arusha, Tanzania in June 1996 ('Arusha I'). The government then withdrew from the talks for two years in protest over regional sanctions. The 'Arusha II' negotiations began in June 1998 and were attended by nineteen parties from Burundi (seventeen political parties, the government, and the national assembly). Nelson Mandela succeeded Nyerere

as mediator in December 1999 and held three further rounds of negotiations, which resulted in the signing of the Arusha Accord on 28 August 2000.

Women were not represented by any of the political parties or as members of civil society at the Mwanza negotiations or the first two Arusha sessions (Burke *et al*. 2001). In response, a group of women arrived at Arusha II (20–29 July 1998) to emphasize the issue of their exclusion. In October 1998, the African Union (OAU) organized a conference in Uganda attended by 65 Burundian women and two men, an objective of which was to achieve women's participation at Arusha. During that same month, the facilitator held an informal consultation on the presence of women. The delegations at Arusha III were adamantly opposed to the inclusion of women. Therefore, women were allowed to stay only as temporary observers for that session, but not allowed to return for Arusha IV.

Then, in February 2000, seven women gained permanent observer status at the Arusha talks (Burke *et al*. 2001, p. 13). In June 2000, the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation, hosting the talks, invited the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to convene a high-level meeting in order to brief the 19 heads of the delegations and the 18-member facilitation team, representatives of international and regional bodies, states with ties to Burundi and donor agencies (Burke *et al*. 2001, p. 14). The purpose of the meeting was to convince the delegations to incorporate women in the peace process. As observers they were only able to attend the plenary sessions. As a result of the briefing session, the delegations agreed that an all-women's negotiation session would be part of the official negotiations. Accordingly, each of the 17 political parties nominated two women to attend. The All-Women's Peace Conference was held in July 2000 and in addition to women representatives of each party, it included members of civil society and international organizations. At this conference, women 'engendered' the peace agreement, ensuring that the rights and role of women were included explicitly in the agreement.

The resulting Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi (APRA 2000) includes a host of references to women, indicating a deliberate attempt to mainstream references to women and girls throughout it. For example, the agreement alternates between the use of 'women and men' and 'men and women' and between using 'girls and boys' with 'boys and girls' and also alternates between the usage of 'her/his' and 'his/her'. It contains a number of anti-discrimination clauses such as banning associations that advocate gender discrimination along with those that advocate ethnic, regional or religious discrimination (Protocol I, Chapter 2, Article 7.1). It also declares that international conventions will form an integral part of the constitution, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (Protocol II, Chapter 1, Article 3.1). It puts forth a number of positive measures such as specifying that the electoral process to be used to determine the transitional parliament will ensure that 20 per cent of each party's candidates will be women (Protocol II, Chapter 2, Article 20.8). It calls for the 'initiation of tangible actions for the advancement of women' (Protocol IV, Chapter 2, Article 13d) and the 'promotion of the role of women [. . .] in

development' (Protocol IV, Chapter 2, Article 16.i). It also seeks to include gender in the definition of ceasefire, by defining it as encompassing the cessation of sexual violence (Protocol III, Chapter 3, Article 2.5), and calls for consideration of the 'particular vulnerability' of women regarding their return after exile (Protocol IV, Chapter 1, Article 2.c).

In the case of Northern Ireland, to facilitate the entry of most political factions into the negotiations, the British government designed a process to allow as many parties as possible to the negotiating table. This allowed for broad-based consensus and in particular ensured smaller parties' participation (O'Shea 2005, p. 6). On 29 April 1996 the British government enacted the *Northern Ireland Entry to Negotiations Act* (NIENA 1996) which stipulated that *inter alia* elections would be held in Northern Ireland to select participants for a forum (art. 3.1). The designed electoral system would return 110 participants in total to the forum through selection of five delegates from each of 18 constituencies (called 'constituency delegates') and an additional 20 representatives (called 'regional delegates') to be drawn from Northern Ireland as a whole (Entry to Negotiations Act, Part I:2(1)). A top-up of two regional delegates each would be awarded to the ten parties grossing the highest number of votes throughout Northern Ireland as a whole (Entry to Negotiations Act, Part I:14(2)). The participants to be included in the talks were to be drawn from those elected, with a maximum of three from each party represented at the negotiating table (Ground Rules for Substantive All-Party Negotiations, Arts. 8–11). Such an electoral system meant that at least ten parties would be present at the negotiating table, some of which would require only minimal levels of popular support. Those participating in the actual peace talks would be selected by the parties from the pool of delegates elected to the forum.

Prior to the enactment of the Negotiations Act, the Northern Ireland Women's European Platform (NIWEP) pressed both the British government and various political parties to ensure that women would be present at the negotiating table (p. 122; McWilliams and Kilmurray 1997, p. 6) and that a women's party be allowed to run in the elections. In order for a political party to be eligible to participate, it had to be designated in the electoral legislation. In April of 1996, the NIWEP released a statement (personal communication with NIWEP (1996), on file with author) calling on the government to include a women's party in the legislation, to ensure that both negotiating teams and the forum be composed of equal numbers of women and men, that working hours be restricted so that those with domestic responsibilities could participate and that provision of childcare and dependent allowances be made available. Although demands for guaranteed parity were denied, the UK government responded positively to the NIWEP's proposal that a women's party be included on the ballot. In response, members of the NIWEP created the Northern Ireland's Women's Coalition (NIWC) and ran candidates for the forum elections. The NIWC won just over 1 per cent of the vote, gaining two top-up candidates from their regional list.

In the 1998 Belfast Agreement (GFA 1998), there are three specific clauses pertaining to the rights of women. First, under 'Human Rights': 'the right to

equal opportunity in all social and economic activity, regardless of class, creed, disability, gender or ethnicity'. Second, also under 'Human Rights': 'the right of women to full and equal political participation'. Third, under 'Rights, Safeguards and Equality of Opportunity': 'Pending the devolution of powers to a new Northern Ireland Assembly, the British Government will pursue broad policies for sustained economic growth and stability in Northern Ireland and for promoting social inclusion, including in particular community development and the advancement of women in public life'.

This article explains how and why these references to women were included in these peace agreements. I argue that six causal mechanisms were relevant. First, I assert that feminist activists mobilized in response to conflict and peace talks because these produced changes in opportunity structures necessary for social movement mobilization. Second, women's advocacy networks constructed peace processes as arenas for their own objectives through 'procedural grafting' – calling upon an accepted rule of procedure and attempting to broaden its scope. In the case of Northern Ireland, women activists called on the agreed-upon principles underpinning the peace talks – inclusivity and equitable representation – to advance their case for gender parity both at the talks and in the peace agreement. Third, in both cases women activists employed 'strategic essentialism' – 'the temporary suspension of difference for purposes of amassing power against oppression' (Sharer 2004, p. 40) – to overcome their identities as Protestant or Catholic in Northern Ireland and as Hutu or Tutsi in Burundi. In the case of Burundi, women also employed the 'politics of motherhood' – using their shared and non-threatening or accepted position within society to both subvert and expand upon the conception of their shared and traditional role as mothers. Fourth, in both cases activists referenced examples of women's participation in other peace processes of the Global South, and lobbied that such models be followed in their respective peace processes. Fifth, the case of Burundi reveals a 'reverse-boomerang' effect at play – international actors, rather than solely responding to domestic actors, initiated action in domestic arenas to create precedents to use at the international level. In the case of Burundi, UNIFEM New York intervened in Burundi's peace process, in part, to bolster their case for a Security Council resolution which advocated women's increased participation in peacebuilding. Sixth, a spillover of language occurred in both cases, as the women leaders in their respective peace processes had been involved in transnational and international feminist networks.

1. Peace Processes as Changes in Opportunity Structure

Peace processes in the wake of conflict represent opportunities for the formation of social movements. The traditionally exclusionary nature of peace processes and the changes in informal power structures as a result of conflict creates or furthers conditions of an 'aggrieved' and 'optimistic' population – conditions sociologists posit are necessary for the formation or emergence of social

movements (for example, McAdam *et al*. 1996, p. 5). The international relations (IR) norm diffusion literature has focused predominantly on how networks operate as opposed to why they form, ascribing a large amount of agency to individual actors while paying less attention to the circumstances conducive to their mobilization (see, for example, Keck and Sikkink 1998; Price 1998). Here, the sociological literature on movement formation provides a helpful frame in which to view the peace process. This literature asserts that movements form, in part, as a result of 'changes in the institutional structure or informal power relations of a given national political system' (McAdam *et al*. 1996, p. 3). A conflict challenges institutional structures and changes informal power relations, creating a space for advocacy groups to act.

Both cases illustrate the mobilization of activist groups as a response to the conflict and the announcement of peace talks. In the case of Burundi, as a response to the crisis that began in 1993, women created a host of associations that lobbied for peace (Pascasie n.d.). For example, Catherine Mabobori founded Le Collectif des Associations et ONGs Feminines du Burundi (CAFOB), a conglomeration of existing associations which aimed to give women working in a variety of areas a strong and united voice with which to seek a peaceful solution to the conflict.[3] Although few women's organizations had focused on political participation specifically in the past, when the Arusha negotiations began, a group of women demanded to participate in the peace talks (Pascasie n.d.). The women's demands went beyond participation, however. They repeated a core demand throughout the talks for a female electoral quota, calls for which began at 50 per cent and were later reduced to 30 per cent to be included in the agreement.[4] Such a demand illustrates that women in Burundi viewed the peace talks as an opportunity to advance issues of women's equality.

The NIWC stated explicitly that the peace process offered an opportunity to advance various interests not directly linked to reaching an agreement. For example, the NIWC's document entitled *Measurement of Success* (1996) states that the party's objectives were to '[demonstrate] that women are available to contest elections' (Pt. 2), to '[demonstrate] the contribution women have made and can make to peace, politics and progress' (Pt. 4), to '[raise] the level of public debate and awareness about women' (Pt. 6), to 'pressure . . . political parties to select women candidates' (Pt. 7), to 'pressure . . . political parties to actively seek and address women's views' (Pt. 8), to 'incorporate . . . Women's Coalition Election Platform into political party thinking' (Pt. 9), and to train '[a] considerable number of women . . . in election politics' (Pt. 10). Monica McWilliams, one of the two founders of the NIWC, stated that if the NIWC were successful in electing representatives to participate in the peace talks, it would 'achieve more than all the years of lobbying in terms of ensuring that women were represented in the political process' (McWilliams and Kilmurray 1997, p. 6). Therefore, the NIWC viewed the peace process as an opportunity that would not only allow women to address issues pertaining to conflict, but also to advance Northern Irish women's groups' long-term objective of increased political participation.

2. Constructing the Peace Process as a Forum for Women through Procedural Grafting

The first challenge for women seeking access to peace processes is to construct the process as a forum where they have a legitimate right to participate. In the case of Northern Ireland, women called on the agreed-upon principles under-pinning the peace talks – inclusivity and equitable representation – to argue for women's participation. This technique of 'procedural grafting' – calling upon an accepted rule of procedure and attempting to broaden its application – was also used to argue for provisions favourable to women in the final agreement. This strategy is a variation of what Richard Price (1998, p. 617) called 'grafting' whereby norm entrepreneurs attach a new norm to an already-accepted norm.

In September 1994, the Northern Ireland Women's European Platform (NIWEP) and the Council for the Status of Women issued a joint press release stating:

> There has been much talk of 'parity of esteem' between the people of the island, but it is not clear whether this extends to equality between men and women. If this concept is a central tenet of the future then logically there has to be a balance of men and women engaged in the process of building on peace. (McWilliams 1997, p. 4)

In March 1996, in response to the Framework Document issued by the UK and Irish governments which set out the principles which would underpin the future peace talks, the NIWEP submitted a document to the UK and Irish government and political parties in Northern Ireland. This document called for equal representation of men and women at the peace talks:

> We draw attention to a number of statements which are made in the Framework Documents issued by the two governments. The statements in these documents refer to 'protection for parity of esteem', 'equitable and effective political participation', 'proportional composition of political fora', checks and balances in the political structure. While we approve of attempts to achieve parity of esteem and parity of representation we wish this to be applied to parity of esteem and parity of representation for women. (NIWEP 1996, Pt. 1.3)

This strategy appeared to be effective in allowing the NIWC to vie for the right to compete for seats at the negotiating table. In response to the British and Irish governments' Joint Communiqué announcing All Party Talks, the NIWEP responded on 19 March 1996 with a paper entitled *Genderproofing the Election System and Talks* (NIWC n.d., p. 5). The paper called for 'the list of parties selected to participate in the election [to] be extended [to include] a Women's Network or Women's Caucus to run candidates in the election' (NIWEP 1996, p. 3). On 17 April 1996, the government confirmed that the NIWC would be listed on the ballot (NIWC n.d., p. 5). This gave the NIWC the right to contest the elections that would determine the composition of the peace talks. The NIWC won just over 1 per cent of the vote gaining two top-up candidates from their regional list which granted them two seats at the peace talks.

The NIWC continued their strategy of procedural grafting throughout the negotiations, arguing that any agreement reached must guarantee equality between women and men. For example, in a submission made during the negotiations, the NIWC specified that '[any agreement] must go beyond the narrow confines of two traditions. It must specifically include measures to ensure an equal outcome for women and men' (Office of the Independent Chairmen 1997a, p. 2, Pt.9). In keeping with a major focus of the negotiations – securing the rights of both political communities – the coalition stated that '[i]n terms of human rights we also place a strong emphasis on the issue of the rights of women, and of minority ethnic communities, as well as those pertaining to the two main traditions on the island of Ireland' (Office of the Independent Chairmen 1997d, p. 4, Pt.10) and '[a]longside being aware of the need for rights pertaining to the two main traditions on the island, the Coalition places a strong emphasis on the rights of women and of minority ethnic groups' (Office of the Independent Chairmen 1997c, Pt.1.3).

3. Strategic Essentialism

Mobilizing women as a group in an ethnically divided society presents particular difficulties since, in such a society, ethnic identities tend to politically dominate all others (Ward 1995, p. 41). These societal divisions present women's mobilization with two challenges. First, women from each community/ethnicity must find a common identity which minimizes the issues which are the causes of the conflict. Second, women must frame this identity in such a way that it legitimizes their participation in the peace process. To address both of these difficulties, women in both Burundi and Northern Ireland used various forms of 'strategic essentialism' – 'the temporary suspension of difference for purposes of amassing power against oppression' (Sharer 2004, p. 40).

To bridge divides between women in Northern Ireland, the NIWC identified themselves as a women's party, and repeatedly emphasized 'going beyond' or transcending 'Orange and Green' (for example, NIWC 1998). In Burundi, women called upon imagery of their traditional and socially-accepted roles to demand access to political and public space from which, traditionally, they had been excluded. Women argued that they should be included in the peace talks because as mothers they had an interest in peace.[5] They also argued that they deserved a place at the negotiations because as women they had struggled to hold society together (Burke et al. 2001, p. 13). Arguing on the basis of their shared identity as women and mothers allowed them to sideline contentious issues of the conflict such as amnesty, demobilization and genocide.[6]

International actors used strategic essentialism as a tactic as well. For example, at the All-Women's Peace Conference, the conference facilitators specifically asked that participants discussed 'women's issues only',[7] which served to minimize 'radical differences in political opinions' (Burke et al. 2001, p. 19). This strategy, then, served two purposes – on the one hand, to forge an

overarching identity between women on opposing sides of the conflict and, on the other, to sideline key issues of contention which divided the mainstream factions.

Burundian women's emphasis on their role as mothers resonates with what might be called the 'politics of motherhood'. In emphasizing their identities as women and mothers, 'women fulfill traditional expectations of femininity and at the same time violate them' (Ruddick 1989, p. 229). This practice has a long history in women's rights activism and particularly in women's peace activism. Historically, women activists have linked women to pacifism[8] (Carroll 1987; Carter 1998; Elshtain 1987; Nikolić-Ristanović 1997; Ruddick 1989). For example, at the 1915 women's peace conference at the Hague, members of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom argued that: 'because [women] ha[d] devoted their lives to nurturing human life, [they were] more attuned to the human costs of war' (Sharer 2004, p. 34). Such claims have been echoed by other women's pacific organizations such as the First World War Woman's Peace Party, which argued that women were the 'custodian of the life of the ages' (Carroll 1987, p. 8). Other examples of contemporary feminist peace organizations which link motherhood and peace are the Madres de Plaza Mayo (Ruddick 1989, p. 225; Scheper-Hughes 1998) and the Mothers' Front in Sri Lanka (Vickers 1993, p. 124).

4. Norm Flows from South to North/Horizontal Norm Flows

In both peace processes women imitated strategies of other feminist activists from peace processes of the Global South. They also drew clauses from Southern peace agreements. This finding offers refinement to norm diffusion theory regarding the direction of diffusion. Generally, norm diffusion literature focuses on actors of the Global South emulating those of the Global North. For example, Ropp and Sikkink (1999) discuss the transitions of Chile and Guatemala, from 'repression and initial socialisation' to 'rule-consistent' behaviour. Similarly, other works focus on illiberal Southern states and their efforts to become a member of the liberal democratic 'club' of states (Khagram 2002; Kothari 2002; Risse-Kappen et al. 1999; Risse and Sikkink 1999b, p. 9). The existing literature also theorizes vertical as opposed to horizontal norm flow. That is, it envisages more influential actors pressuring less powerful actors to change their behaviour. Also, the models employed in norm diffusion literature focus on vertical interactions. That is, domestic actors, often through transnational networks, seek the assistance of international organizations or foreign states to pressure their own governments. This is evident in the 'five-phase spiral model' (Risse and Sikkink 1999a), the 'boomerang effect', and Tarrow's 'expanded boomerang effect' (Tarrow 2005).

The two cases discussed here reveal that women activists in peace processes draw language and strategies from previous peace processes and agreements. In several instances throughout the negotiations, the NIWC appealed to the South

African example of expanding concerns beyond racial equality to other issues of inequality in their society. In their opening statement in Strand 2 of the negotiations, the NIWC stated:

> When South Africans sat down to design their new constitutions, their first commitment was not just to achieving equality between people of all races but also men and women. How can we ensure that when this conflict is over, the role which women have played across and within their communities will not be forgotten? They need to be written into and not out of the scripts which we now have the opportunity to design. Let us ensure that this happens by committing ourselves to equal access for women as well as men to any new structures on this island. (Office of the Independent Chairmen 1997b, p. 4)

The mediation team also used their ties to individuals involved in the peace process in South Africa and, consequently, the negotiating teams travelled to South Africa, in December 1997, to meet with various actors who had been involved in the South African peace process (Fearon 1999, p. 96). The NIWC also consulted Guatemala's peace agreement to frame the clauses they wished to insert into the agreement (Fearon 1999, p. 106). The women sought out the agreement since they were already aware that it contained women's rights through their personal contacts with women who had been involved in the peace process[9] indicating dense interaction between these different sets of women.

In the case of Burundi, there was extensive regional involvement in getting women to the peace table. Women's groups in Africa, and in particular, South Africa, played an important role liaising with women in Burundi working to be part of the peace process. In December 1997, Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) organized an African women's solidarity mission to Burundi to establish contacts with women's NGOs, to initiate an awareness campaign on the leading role women could play in bringing peace to Burundi and held a training workshop targeted at women's involvement in peacebuilding (Femmes Africa Solidarité 2001, p. 18). The FAS held a conference in Cape Town entitled 'Leadership of Women in Burundi Peace Process' in September/October 1998 (Femmes Africa Solidarité 2001, p. 37).

Here, the norm diffusion literature could be better articulated by drawing on conceptions of transnational feminist networks as conceptualized by Valerie Moghadam (2005). Moghadam offers the example of the NGO Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) founded in India in 1984 as a network for women of the Global South to affect international development policy. DAWN has influenced international policy through organizing Third World women's participation at UN conferences on women, producing publications on development from the perspectives of Third-World women, and serving as consultants for international bodies such as UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNDP, ILO and UNESCO (Moghadam 2005, pp. 106–110).

5. The Boomerang and Reverse-Boomerang Effect

In both cases, women activists first sought to influence domestic actors to allow them to participate in the peace talks. As detailed above, women activists were successful in the case of Northern Ireland. Therefore, it remains unknown whether they would have turned to external actors, had the government not allowed them to compete for a place in the peace talks. In the case of Burundi, women sought the support of external actors to bypass recalcitrant domestic actors. Such behaviour is predicted by the 'boomerang model' – local activists call upon their international counterparts when they are unable to influence their own state (Keck and Sikkink 1998, p. 13). Their external NGO counterparts then pressure other states or international organizations which in turn pressure the recalcitrant state. This case offers a variation of this model.

As predicted by norm diffusion literature, Burundians looked to external actors to target the political parties unwilling to allow them to participate in the peace process. In October 1998, Burundian women used a conference in Kampala, Uganda to appeal to the president of Uganda and other African leaders to promote the participation of women in the Arusha Peace Talks (Burke *et al*. 2001, p. 8). They also lobbied the president of Uganda to help them access the peace process[10] and the regional UNIFEM office in Nairobi.[11] However, UNIFEM Nairobi officials were unsuccessful at persuading others in the UN system in East Africa to agree to women's participation. Evidently, 'even UN officials in DPKO and DPA seemed to think that women at the negotiating table was somewhat superfluous' and members of the facilitation teams asked questions such as: 'Can you actually find women who can represent their parties?', while some UN officials made sceptical statements such as: 'If women want to be involved, let them talk to their husbands'.[12]

In this case, external *regional* actors were unable to precipitate the desired outcome – women's participation in the peace process. Concurrently, UNIFEM New York had selected Burundi to create a positive example of women in peace processes. In 2000, it recruited an individual who had worked on 'bringing children's issues into the UN's peace and security agenda' in UNICEF, which included lobbying for and obtaining the first ever Security Council resolution on children affected by armed conflict, to see if this model could be adapted to place gender issues onto the UN's peace and security agenda.[13] This individual notes that she was not instructed to select a peace process in which to advance the participation of women, but that '[i]t became clear … that some kind of "tangible" example/experience of women's participation in peace processes would provide an important basis for showing the impact of introducing both women and gender issues into negotiating processes'.[14]

To achieve this, UNIFEM New York set out to convince the facilitation team to allow women to participate in the peace process. They accomplished this by first persuading the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation, hosting the peace talks, to allow UNIFEM to address the heads of delegations (UNIFEM 2000, p. v).[15] The Mwalimu

Nyerere Foundation then invited UNIFEM to convene a high-level briefing to the 19 delegations, the 18-member facilitation team, envoys representing international and regional bodies, states with ties to Burundi and donor agencies (Burke *et al*. 2001, p. 14). Six UN experts, who had been involved in peace processes in South Africa, Uganda, Guatemala and Eritrea, gave a briefing and afterwards the parties agreed to an All-party Women's Peace Conference for which each party would send two women.

It would seem, then, that UNIFEM New York's intervention was key to women's participation in Burundi's peace process. It is unclear, however, whether UNIFEM Headquarters would have selected Burundi as a case for its intervention had it not been for prior lobbying by Burundian and regional women activists. Either way, however, the findings of this case suggest that a 'reverse boomerang model' accurately conceptualizes how transnational advocacy networks might alter domestic actors' behaviour.

This finding challenges the assumption of norm diffusion literature that external actors act at the behest of local actors to pressure other intransigent local actors. While local and regional actors were interested in getting women involved, they were unable to influence the mediation and negotiation teams or the political parties to do so. Women became involved in the Arusha peace talks because UNIFEM New York had an interest in creating a positive case which it could use at the international level.

6. Spillover

Finally, both processes indicate a 'spillover' of international norms into each peace processes. That is, a non-deliberate transfer of international language into state-level politics. This occurs through domestic movement actors' prior or concurrent involvement in transnational feminist networks. This process of 'spillover', to date, has been overlooked by the norm diffusion literature. Rather, such literature has examined norm diffusion as a *deliberate* process by 'norm entrepreneurs' who frame new norms in ways likely to resonate with widespread values or beliefs, and therefore consciously adopt international language (for example, Finnemore and Sikkink 1998).

In Burundi, of the seven women who lobbied for permanent observer status at the peace talks, two had clear links to international organizations devoted to women's rights, a third lived in exile in Kenya, while the others held positions in government ministries and political parties. For example, Catherine Mabobori founded the NGO Women for Peace and then CAFOB – an umbrella organization of women's NGOs in 1994 (Burke *et al*. 2001, p. 13). These Burundian NGOs had established links with international NGOs such as International Alert, Search for Common Ground and UNIFEM. Another member of this group was Imelda Nzirorera who was acting director of the Burundi Centre for Promoting Human Rights and Genocide Prevention. A third woman, Adelaide Ndayishimiye, worked for the Ministry of Gender Affairs (Burke *et al*. 2001, p. 9).

Women with ties to transnational organizations had a key role in constructing the clauses of the agreement. For example, the Burundian women's organization, Dushirahamwe – which also collaborated with international organizations and NGOs – obtained a draft of the Arusha agreement in May 2000 and went through it to determine how references to women might be incorporated.[16]

Furthermore, the key organizer of the All-Women's Peace Conference was UNIFEM. It ensured that the conference 'was guided by documents covering the international principles on which women's human rights are based [including] the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action' (Burke *et al*. 2001, p. 16). These linkages and influences produced an agreement expressed in universal human rights language as opposed to particular local understandings of women's role in society.

In Northern Ireland, the major protagonists in the formation of the NIWC were already well-connected to international women's movements and/or familiar with issues of women's human rights. Founding co-president of the NIWC was Monica McWilliams (McWilliams and Kilmurray 1997, p. 8), who was Professor of Women's Studies and Social Policy at the University of Ulster (Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission 2008). Bronagh Hinds, also a founding member, served as a campaign coordinator (McWilliams and Kilmurray 1997, p. 10). She had been a member of the NIWEP, had attended the UN World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985 as the only woman from Northern Ireland, and led the Northern Ireland delegation to the Fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995.[17] Jane Morrice, who was in charge of coordinating media strategy for the NIWC, worked for the European Commission in Belfast (McWilliams and Kilmurray 1997, p. 10). Kate Fearon, another member of the NIWC, was the women's rights officer of the Union of Students in Ireland (NIWC n.d., p. 11). Finally, Avila Kilmurray, who oversaw fundraising for the NIWC, had served as Women's Officer for the Transport and General Workers Union (NIWC n.d., p. 10).

Several direct linkages can be drawn between international women's rights and demands made and particular language used by the NIWC. First, in many of their submissions, the NIWC drew on the UNESCO Culture of Peace concept, which emphasizes the importance of women to the successful creation and implementation of political processes (Fearon 1999, p. 122). Second, the NIWC decided upon the wording of 'the right of women to full and equal participation' after consulting the Beijing Conference documents and examining the Guatemalan peace agreement (Fearon 1999, p. 122). Third, one of the women involved in selecting the language for the peace agreement stated that there was no consideration whether the clause referring to equality between men and women should be framed differently. Rather, she stated that the NIWC just took it 'for given' that human rights language was the appropriate language to use.[18] Finally, the NIWC was set up only six weeks before the election that would determine the composition of the peace talks. Therefore, there was little time to create new policy so it was drawn from both platforms of existing women's groups (McWilliams 1997, p. 3) as well as those produced by a variety of women's organizations which participated in the Beijing conference (McWilliams 1997, p. 3). Also, founding members of the NIWC

saw this way of determining policy legitimate since the Northern Irish women's groups involved in the process had consulted their membership in establishing a joint platform for Beijing.[19]

This resonates with 'World Polity' literature (Boli and Thomas 1997, 1999a, 1999b; Meyer *et al*. 1997; Strang and Meyer 1993), which asserts that there is an identifiable world culture, the underlying principles of which are universalism, individualism, voluntaristic authority, rational progress and world citizenship (Boli and Thomas 1997). This literature proposes that the similarity of institutions worldwide or 'structural isomorphism' is not 'the result of rational choices by existentially given actors having inexplicably similar agendas' (Boli and Thomas 1999a, p. 5), but rather is due to actors embedded within a world culture and constituted by it; actors *enact* rather than *act* (Boli and Thomas 1999b, p. 18).

Conclusions

Peace processes are not only fora to negotiate the end to violence. They also offer opportunities for domestic, transnational and international advocacy groups to mobilize and contest various aspects of state-civil society relations. First, I have argued that mobilization occurs, in part, because violent conflict and peace talks produce changes in 'opportunity structure' which create the conditions of 'grievance' and 'optimism' necessary for social movement mobilization. Second, I have found that women sought to reconstruct the peace process through 'procedural grafting' – calling upon an accepted rule or principle of procedure and broadening its scope. Women in Northern Ireland used this tactic to gain access to the negotiations. They called upon the peace process' explicit objectives of inclusivity and equitable representation, and successfully demanded that such principles extend to them. Third, to overcome the ethnic/political divisions of the conflict, which defined them as part of opposing groups, in both cases, they employed strategic essentialism – defining themselves in terms of their gender in order to unify them and minimize political dissent amongst them. Fourth, in both cases women called upon the participation of other women and the inclusion of women's rights in previous peace processes of the Global South. This demonstrates that the diffusion of norms and practices also occurs from South to North and South to South. Fifth, the Burundian case illustrates what we may call the 'reverse-boomerang' effect – international actors handpicking domestic cases to further international objectives. Finally, an informal spillover process of language occurred through the membership of domestic women in transnational networks. Through their participation in these, women had access to generic human rights language and framed their demands in these terms.

These findings challenge us to understand peace processes in broader terms than solely as arenas to negotiate the end to interstate or intercommunal violence. Rather, peace processes are key historical moments offering opportunities to contest and profoundly alter women's role in the state and society. This

finding leads to a set of questions for further research. First, does women's participation in peace processes help or hinder reaching an agreement? Second, to what degree do the women's rights clauses set out in peace agreements matter for women after the conflict. In other words, to what extent are they implemented? And, third, what are the costs and benefits of increasingly standardized women's rights language?

Acknowledgements

Notes

1   Author's calculation based on UCDP Peace Agreement Dataset v. 1.0, 1989–2005 in Harbom *et al*. 2006. These 148 agreements correspond to 46 conflicts, while 38 agreements with references to women relate to 20 conflicts. Thus, about 40 per cent (19/46) of conflicts between 1989 and 2005, which produced peace agreements, produced at least one with (an) explicit reference(s) to women.

2   For a comprehensive list of resolutions and documents promoting gender mainstreaming in peace negotiations see http://www.huntalternatives.org/pages/35_resources.cfm.

3   'Observer 1' (one of seven women observers at the Arusha peace talks). Interview, Bujumbura, Burundi, 11 June 2007.

4   'Observer 2' (one of seven women observers at the Arusha peace talks). Interview, Bujumbura, Burundi, 21 May 2007.

5   'Official 1' (former government minister involved in peace process). Interview, Bujumbura, Burundi, 21 May 2007.

6   'Official 1'. Interview, Bujumbura, Burundi, 21 May 2007.

7   'Observer 1'. Interview, Bujumbura, Burundi, 11 June 2007.

8   The connections offered between feminism and pacifism are five-fold. First is that there is an inextricable connection between patriarchy, domination, and war. Second, both traditions are concerned with violence. Third, the two theories promote gender equality. Fourth they share the rationale of inalienable rights. Fifth the shared concept of is sisterhood (Carroll 1987, pp. 19–23).

9   'Former NIWC Member 1'. Interview, Belfast, UK, 15 February 2006.

10   'Observer 2'. Interview, Bujumbura, Burundi, 21 May 2007.

11   'Official 2' (former UNIFEM Nairobi official). Interview, Nairobi, Kenya, 2 May 2007.

12   'Official 2'. Interview, Nairobi, Kenya, 2 May 2007.
13   'Official 3' (former UNIFEM New York official). UNIFEM and Arusha Peace Process. Email. 2 September 2008.
14   'Official 3'. UNIFEM and Arusha Peace Process. Email. 2 September 2008.
15   'Official 2'. Interview, Nairobi, Kenya, 2 May 2007.
16   'Observer 2'. Interview, Bujumbura, Burundi, 21 May 2007.
17   'Former NIWC Member 2'. Interview, Belfast, UK, 15 February 2006.
18   'Former NIWC Member 2'. Interview, Belfast, UK, 15 February 2006.
19   'Former NIWC Member 2'. Interview, Belfast, UK, 15 February 2006.

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