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Humanitarian Intervention as Liberal Imperialism: A Force for Good?

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Abstract

Since the end of the Cold War there has been a significant increase in the number of so called 'humanitarian interventions' in the internal affairs of states, concomitant to the seeming decrease in the importance of state sovereignty. The aim of this paper is to trace these developments alongside the rise to prominence of international liberal theory, which has had significant influence on the practise of humanitarian interventions throughout the 1990s as well as in the new era of the War on Terror. An analysis of the ideology underpinning liberalism aims to highlight the use of 'humanitarian' force as a technique of liberal governance, rather than a reflection of the newfound humanitarian sentiments of the Western world. It will, however, be argued that questionable motives aside, one cannot ignore the beneficial humanitarian outcomes that can result from intervention, meaning absolute non-intervention may be even more morally intolerable than the crusading force of liberal imperialism.

Key Words: Humanitarian Intervention; Liberalism; Imperialism; Securitization; Liberal Governance.

1. Introduction

1.1. *New Wars, New Security Concerns*

With the end of the Cold War, the beginning of the 1990s saw a flurry of optimism regarding the new found scope of the international community to deal with humanitarian issues. Indeed, as Orford puts it, "a new kind of international law and internationalist spirit seemed to have been made possible in the changed conditions of a world no longer structured around the old certainties of a struggle between communism and capitalism" (2003: 2). It has been argued that a 'new moral order' (Douzinas 2003) has been ushered in, one which sees individual human rights being promoted at the expense of state sovereignty. This 'revolution of moral concern', as Ignatieff has termed it, has been promoted heavily within liberal circles who have repeatedly emphasized the moral necessity (Teson 2001) to intervene militarily in situations that "shock the conscience of mankind" (International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect 2011). Such liberal ideals began to circulate at around the same time a new global political reality seemed to be emerging; that is to say the erosion of state sovereignty. Indeed, scholars such as Kaldor (1999) and Fukuyama (2004) have noted that with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the deepening effects of globalization, new conflicts and security problems were emerging which could no longer be viewed from a state centric perspective. Controversial as this notion has been, the theoretical decline in the importance of the state opened up space in which liberal ideas could flourish. Indeed the 1990s saw many liberals, then UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali included, speaking of a 'developing international norm' of humanitarian intervention (Bellamy and Wheeler 2008; Teson 1997; Teson 2001; Weiss 2004), reflecting the influence of the predominant liberal school of thought regarding intervention. Though enshrined in international law, a states right to non-intervention has repeatedly been violated since the beginning of the decade, with UN military force in the domestic affairs of states being used 56 times between 1990 and 2000, compared to only 22 times throughout the entire duration of the Cold War (Pattinson 2008). Such developments have, unsurprisingly, caused much controversy regarding the legitimacy of the powerful Western states to intervene in the affairs of weaker states.

Concomitant to developments in thought regarding the inviolability of state sovereignty and the subsequent rise in 'humanitarian' interventions has been the emergence of what Kaldor has termed 'new wars' (2006), that is to say new 'complex emergencies' which are characterized by a combination of causes, namely civil and ethnic conflict, mass displacement

of persons, disputed sovereignty and the breakdown of national government (Harriss 1995: 1). These new wars, Kaldor argues, require new solutions, particularly as it is now estimated that 80 per cent of casualties in current wars are civilians (Shaw 2000: 172). Indeed, although the number of inter-state conflicts declined sharply with the end of the Cold War, it would be difficult to argue that the world we live in is now more secure, as processes of globalization have further intensified and reconfigured existing social, political and economic inequalities. As Thomas has noted, "the Third World, far from disappearing, is becoming global" (2001: 161). Given the high level of civilian casualties, and the decreasing ability or willingness on the part of states to protect their citizen's human rights, liberal cries of a moral duty to intervene in the name of human rights where conflict prevention and diplomacy fail (Axworthy 2001; ICRtoP 2005; Kaldor 2006; Teson 1997) initially seem fairly unproblematic. Such humanitarian sentiments have been portrayed by liberals as the result of a growing global consciousness and sense of global responsibility (Kaldor 2006) in the face of human rights atrocities, indeed, as a turning point in history in which the "'enlightened states' will at last be able to use force where they 'believe it to be just'" (Chomsky 1999, 4).

This perspective, however, is by no means universal. As we shall see, numerous scholars (Chandler 2009; Duffield 2006; Duffield 2010; Evans 2010; Reid 2006; Thomas 2001), as well as the majority of third world countries and Russia and China, have questioned the motives of liberal states which have repeatedly used humanitarian reasons to justify disregarding principles of sovereignty and intervening in the sovereign affairs of states. These scholars argue that the growing trend of humanitarian intervention across the 90s should not be taken as a single, unproblematic fact (Duffield 2006); rather it is part of a wider process employed by Western liberal governments as a strategy to expand their influence and control over the illiberal regimes of the 'global borderlands', that humanitarian intervention is part of a liberal technology of global governance (De Larrinaga and Doucet 2008; Dillon and Reid 2009; Duffield 2010; Gordon 1991; Reid 2006). In order to better understand these claims it is necessary first to begin with an enquiry into liberal international theory and how this thinking has informed modern liberal thought on a right to humanitarian intervention. Only once the links between the emergence of liberalism and the upsurge in humanitarian interventions at the beginning of the 1990s have been understand can a satisfactory analysis of the true nature of humanitarian intervention take place. Whilst the events of 9/11 have generally been argued to have heralded a new shift in security concerns and an end to the so called 'era of

humanitarian intervention', through a critical analysis of the liberal way of rule and the 'biopolitics', to use the term coined by Foucault, that lays at the heart of it, it will be argued here that the 'War on Terror' is merely an expansion and continuation of a process of liberal global governance through 'humanitarian war', that has its roots in the first interventions of the 1990s.

2. A Re-conceptualization of Security

Coinciding with the end of the Cold War was a shift in thought regarding the organization of the international system. Indeed, as Fukuyama has famously postulated, during the course of the 20th century those alternatives to liberalism as an ideology with potentially universal validity, namely socialism and authoritarianism, all but disappeared, leaving liberal democracy without any competitors as the predominant doctrine for the organization of society (1992, 43), a sentiment which has since been echoed (Duffield 2006; Thomas 2001). The rise in the importance of liberalism as a doctrine for understanding how international relations should be conducted has had important repercussions for the practise of humanitarian intervention; as the liberal way of rule takes species life, that is to say individual human life as opposed to sovereign states, as its referent object of rule (Dillon and Reid 2009; Duffield 2007; Mehta 2009), essentially rejecting the old Westphalian model of a society of states. The turn of the millennium, therefore, was characterized by a new wave of thinking regarding the legitimacy of state sovereignty, as concerns regarding the security of populations within states overtook traditional concerns regarding nation states. Indeed, as a number of commentators have argued (Bellamy and Wheeler 2004; Falk 1993; Fukuyama 2004; Kaldor 2006), the changing nature of conflict and the demise of inter-state wars have essentially meant that the Westphalian system is no longer an adequate framework for international relations.

This 'changing nature of conflict' theme, as Kaldor (2006) has noted, became an established part of 1990s conventional wisdom, and was directly implicated in the linking of security with development, which has seen the emergence of what has been termed 'human security' (De Larrinaga and Doucet 2008; Duffield 2007; Duffield 2009; Kienscherf 2011). Whilst as Duffield (2001; 2010) has noted, such a relationship between security and development is nothing new, the implications of viewing security through a development nexus has had

important repercussions on the governing strategies of the Western powers in the post-Cold War era. Indeed, with the dawning of the post-Cold War era, issues of poverty and underdevelopment were increasingly linked to outbreaks of conflict, therefore leading liberal thinkers and regimes to re-problematize underdevelopment as a threat to security, hence creating the link between security and human development and concerns with international humanitarianism (De Larrinaga and Doucet 2008; Dillon and Read 2009; Goodhand 2003; King and Murray 2001-2002). Considering then, that processes of globalization are intensifying existing political, economic and social inequalities, it is no surprise that liberals are increasingly seeing issues of development as issues concerning the security of the global order (Thomas 2001). The notion of human security, with its focus on humanity, has generally been viewed as "a step towards modernity by the 'enlightened states'" (Gordon 1991: 14), particularly when we note the Canadian and Norwegian governments definition of the concept of human security as enshrining the "pre-eminent progressive values of the 1990s: human rights, international human law, and socio-economic development based on equity." (Suhrke 1999: 266) As has been noted, however, little attention has been paid to the ways in which human security has been used as a liberal technology of governance. In order to understand how this concept has been used by liberals, and how this links to the upsurge in humanitarian interventions the international community has experienced in the past twenty years, it is necessary first to gain a better understanding of the driving aims behind international liberal theory. Reid puts it quite succinctly when he states that "[d]efinitive of liberalism has been its belief in the ability to establish societies through the removal of life from the condition of war and the provision of political means to allow human beings to flourish peacefully." (2006: 1) In other words, liberalism is inspired by the Kantian notion of 'perpetual peace' through the establishment of an international society of liberal democratic states. Insofar as liberalism purports to strive for a lasting peace through the transformation of illiberal societies into models of the Western liberal states, it becomes clearer how 'humanitarian intervention' could be conceived of as a technique for furthering the influence of liberal rule.

The very concept of human security upon which liberalism is based then, becomes problematic. Whilst further criticisms of the predominance of human security and the liberal way of rule will be addressed later in this essay, for now it is suffice to note that the resurgence of interest in seemingly humanitarian ideals is inextricably linked to the security concerns of Western liberal regimes. Such concerns are reflected in the 1994 Human

Development Report published by the UNDP, which acknowledges the relationship between development, peace and security, stating that the "grim consequences" of poverty and environmental problems "respect no national border" (UNDP 1994), meaning human development has become one of the main priorities for the UN. Development, it has been argued, provides a solution to the disorder the continuing processes of globalization bring, such as poverty and inequality, and the conflict and mass displacement they cause, essentially meaning that an ever widening range of social trends, conditions, and practises are being viewed through a security lens, or what can be referred to as a 'process of securitization' (Duffield 2007: 3). The process of securitization is essential to our understanding of humanitarian intervention, as by viewing such global reaching and abstract problems such as underdevelopment as a security concern, human security is defining an ever wider range of circumstances as 'exceptional', that is to say circumstances that require the international community's intervention, whether on behalf of humanitarian imperatives or, since the events of 9/11, in the service of maintaining global order (De Larrinaga and Doucet 2008: 532).

Through addressing the rise in predominance of the liberal world order, and the concomitant developments regarding human security and the securitization process, an analysis of the motives behind humanitarian intervention starts to become more critical. Indeed, through the securitization of an issue, the issue is being framed as an 'existential threat', as something to be placed 'above politics', thus justifying action that would otherwise be difficult to justify in the eyes of the law and to the international community (Buzan et al 1998, 24). This has particularly important repercussions for the justifiability of humanitarian intervention when we note that ideas of security are monopolized by Western liberal powers (Watson 2011, 12), therefore raising concerns as to for whose security, and in whose interests so called 'humanitarian interventions' are waged. The notion of human security then, whilst appearing to be a laudable development in theory, has in reality meant that through the securitization of development and any forms of 'underdeveloped' life that lives outside the sphere of liberal modernity, the West has been able to justify a series of military interventions in the developing world in the name of human rights and the maintenance of global order. The reality of the impact of the securitization discourse on humanitarian intervention will be examined in the next chapter, which tracks the evolution of humanitarian intervention from the end of the Cold War to the present day.

3. The Evolution of Humanitarian Intervention in the 1990s

3.1. Theoretical and Legal Developments

The series of theoretical developments that took place at the beginning of the 'decade of humanitarian intervention' regarding the rights of individuals and the states responsibility to protect its citizens from harm (Pattinson 2010; Tanguay 2003; Teson 1997; Teson 2001) were soon matched by an enthusiasm on behalf of the Western liberal world to put such theory into practise. Indeed, it didn't take long for Teson's argument that any state which fails to protect the "natural rights of its citizens" loses its legitimacy as a sovereign entity, and is therefore susceptible to outside intervention (1997: 15) to influence the way in which certain states began to re-interpret certain articles of the UN Charter. Such a re-interpretation has had important repercussions for the conduct of international affairs, considering the UN Charter was originally created on the underlying premise of a Westphalian system of sovereign states. The key element of the UN Charter which prohibits intervention is article 2(7), which states that "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state". The exception to this, however, is anything which can be defined, under Chapter VII of the Charter, as a matter of "international peace and security" (United Nations n.d.). Up until the beginning of the 1990s, intervention had been justified predominantly as an act of self-defence, however the development of the concept of human security and the perceived threat posed by underdevelopment has meant that humanitarian issues have increasingly come to be defined as concerns to international peace and security, thereby legitimizing military intervention in the domestic affairs of states. The rise to pre-eminence of liberal ideas regarding individual rights and state responsibilities seemed to be manifesting itself in the interpretation of international law, meaning the once "deeply enshrined" principle of non-intervention, with its "foundations in the principles of the sovereignty and equality of states" (Delbruck 1992, 889), no longer held the authority it once did over the international community.

Legal considerations aside, there is no doubt that the decade following the end of the Cold War saw a considerable shift in attitudes with regards to the permissibility of armed intervention, a shift which culminated in the coining of the term 'Responsibility to Protect' in the 2001 report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). The report was a response to growing international debate over the inviolability of state sovereignty, and enshrined the increasingly popular principle of natural law theory that

"our common human nature generates common moral duties – including, in some versions, a right of humanitarian intervention." (Holzgrefe and Keohane 2003) Whilst lauded by the Western powers as an important step towards successful implementation of the humanitarian ideals which had existed solely in theory up until this point, the report was viewed by many, particularly those in the developing world, as supposedly reflected mainly the "diabolical wishes of the great powers." (Weiss 2004: 43) Indeed, it has been noted that the evolution of the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine and the discourse on human security are inextricably linked (Kienscherf 2011), which raises problems concerning the seemingly moral values of the Commission being exploited and used as a liberal technology of governance. Such criticisms will be explored further in this body of work, however it would seem that whatever the opinion on the developments regarding the erosion of state sovereignty throughout the 90s, it is undoubtedly slowly becoming a political reality. Should anyone be left in doubt over the intentions of Western governments and the UN regarding the future of humanitarian intervention, I refer once again to the Secretary General's 1999 opening speech to the United Nations General Assembly, in which he states that "States bent on criminal behavior [should] know that frontiers are not the absolute defence...that massive and systematic violations of human rights – wherever they may take place – should not be allowed to stand" (Annan 1999), reflecting the predominant attitude of Western liberal thought towards state sovereignty. There can be no denying that during the 1990s, the international community experienced a surge in interest regarding humanitarian intervention and a 'responsibility to protect' alongside the perceived erosion of state sovereignty, but whether or not such optimism in theory translated to success on the ground is a different story. Indeed, as we will see, the changing nature of humanitarian intervention across that decade has been the cause of much controversy.

3.2. The Changing Nature of Intervention

In the process of attempting to meet the growing calls for humanitarianism in the post-Cold War world, the very nature of humanitarianism came under scrutiny. If one phenomenon of the 1990s was a shift in perception with regards to the violability of state sovereignty, the subsequent effect of this was a shift in the way humanitarianism was conducted throughout the decade. The optimism with which the decade began failed to translate into humanitarian success on the ground. As Kaldor has criticized, there was a failure on the part of the

international community to recognize the new nature of conflicts in the post-Cold War world, a failure which resulted in confused and inadequate attempts at peace-keeping in war torn areas (2006). The new type of conflicts which characterized the post-Cold War World were mainly inter-state conflicts, the main actors of which were rebel groups, militias and warlords, as opposed to sovereign states. The highly politicized and volatile nature of such conflicts challenged the traditional humanitarian principles of "impartiality, neutrality and independence" (Barnett 2005: 724). Perhaps the most striking example of the problematic nature of impartial aid was the refugee crisis in Eastern Zaire in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide. Indeed, evidence would suggest that the provision of aid to these refugee camps aided the militia's, many of whom had been perpetrators of the genocide in Rwanda. Not only was impartial humanitarianism proving to be ineffective in this new era of violence, but in some cases even damaging to the very cause they were trying to further. As can be seen with the case of the Rwandan refugee camps, the unintended outcome of humanitarian aid could sometimes be worse than if efforts had been politicized and orchestrated by donor governments in order to further foreign policy goals (Terry 2002: 220). This challenge to traditional humanitarianism has meant that many notable aid agencies have changed tactics and, over the course of the 90s, began lobbying governments and the UN for political commitment and in some cases, military force (Rieff 2002: 26). As well as increased political involvement in affairs which were traditionally the domain of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the range and scope of humanitarian missions has also expanded significantly. An increasing awareness that in order to protect human rights in any meaningful way the situation on the ground must be changed has led many humanitarians to aspire beyond providing temporary relief for those in need. It is a growing reality that many aid agencies, alongside the political will of governments, aim to spread "development, democracy, and human rights and create stable, effective, and legitimate states." (Weiss 2007: 76.) Aid agencies have been criticized for this development by those who argue that they are simply serving the liberal imperialist goals of governments. Indeed, it would be very difficult to deny that terms such as 'nation-building' and the 'creation of stable, effective and legitimate states', whilst desirable in rhetoric, signify an unprecedented level of intervention in the domestic affairs of states, often against the wishes of the target state. In the quest to find a successful way to solve the humanitarian crises of the new era, humanitarianism has departed from its traditional meaning of neutral peacekeeping, gaining significant policy attention from

Western governments. Rieff sums up the nature of the development of humanitarianism when he states that “[h]umanitarianism as an ideal has achieved an authority and reach that would have been inconceivable even twenty years ago…And yet humanitarianism is also generally agreed to be in crisis.” (2002: 24) To understand exactly why humanitarianism should be perceived to be in crisis, despite the increasing attention being paid to the issue, requires an investigation into the successes and failures of humanitarian interventions across the 1990s.

3.3. Reality on the Ground: From Somalia to Kosovo

If it is true that the 90s signalled a new era of awareness with regards to humanitarian activism, the reality on the ground painted a far different story. David Rieff describes the optimism at the close of the Cold War as the “historical false dawn of 1989” (2002: 124); illusions of a more peaceful, secure world which soon came to be shattered with the outbreak of war in ex-Yugoslavia in 1991. Soon after, when war broke out in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992, containment, not military intervention, was the strategy chosen by the Western powers. For all the rhetoric of a ‘new world order’ in which the UN could finally achieve its full potential in the promotion of human rights and democracy and the maintenance of peace and security, the reality was that the Western powers didn’t want to be involved in another war which was not in their strategic interests. If the political will to act upon the humanitarian rhetoric being espoused was weak at the beginning of the decade, events in Somalia in 1993 all but extinguished any hope for forceful and meaningful intervention to put an end to gross violations of human rights.

The UN mandated task force in Somalia in 1992 faced a classic example of the new challenges facing peace keeping forces in Kaldor’s ‘new wars’ (1999). The complete absence of any governmental structure meant that aid workers increasingly had to deal with warlords and militias in order to distribute aid to the civilian population (Barnett 2005). The problem in Somalia was not a lack of aid, rather, an inability to distribute the aid effectively in an environment where UN peacekeepers were at the mercy of hostile combatants. This, along with a flood of media coverage of the plight of the starving Somalis, led to calls for a stronger response to the crisis. The eventual deployment of UN mandated US troops in Somalia is difficult to explain through a realist paradigm of international relations, as this small faraway country in Africa was of no obvious strategic interest to the US. It can be understood,

however, when we note that Somalia was perceived as a ‘relatively risk free’ and ‘short term operation’ (Wheeler 2000: 180) to the Bush administration, which was looking to strengthen its humanitarian credentials after criticism over lack of American commitment in Bosnia. Whatever the reasons for the US decision to intervene militarily in Somalia, there can be no denying that subsequent events were nothing short of a disaster. Events came to a head when, on the 5th June 24 Pakistani peace keeping troops were killed in Mogadishu by one of the warring factions. “From this moment on the UN’s mission was dominated by the imperative to capture Aideed” (Shawcross 2001: 100), who was supposedly behind the attack. This represented a clear change in the humanitarian mission, as it involved, for the first time since the Cold War, the deployment of UN military troops to go after a specified enemy. The US decision to take sides during their supposedly humanitarian mission led to the retaliation of Aideed and his followers, and ultimately the death of 18 US soldiers. Footage of their corpses being dragged through Mogadishu was subsequently shown on television screens across the Western world, sending shockwaves throughout the international community. The decision of the US to get involved politically and militarily in a conflict which did not serve in their direct interests, which resulted in the highly publicized deaths of American soldiers, became known as ‘crossing the Mogadishu line’. From that point on, the overriding policy of the Clinton administration, and indeed the rest of the Western world, became one of non-intervention in areas which didn’t affect national interests. “US peacekeepers must never again become party to a conflict; their protection must be the overriding priority of US policy.” (Shawcross 2001: 102) Operation Restore Hope in Somalia marked a historical point for humanitarian intervention, as it was the first time the Security Council had authorized the use of force under Chapter VII without the consent of the state in order to assist the deliverance of humanitarian aid where it was being impeded by warlords and militias. The subsequent events in Somalia however, left a shadow over the practise of humanitarian intervention for years to come.

One needs only to look at the failures of the UN in Bosnia and Rwanda to see the devastating effects Somalia had on policy regarding humanitarian intervention. The US, and indeed the rest of the Western world’s reaction to the incidents in Somalia has been termed the ‘body bag syndrome’; that is to say, Western foreign policy in the aftermath of Somalia reflected the unwillingness of any Western government to sustain even minimal casualties in the pursuit of humanitarian aims that were not in their strategic interests (Ayoob 2002: 89). This manifested itself most tragically when, in 1994, “as a consequence of disaster and failure in one African

country, the Security Council would become a bystander to genocide in another." (Wheeler 2000: 208) Despite the fact that under the 1948 Genocide Convention states' have an obligation to prevent and punish genocide, the international reaction to the genocide in Rwanda was far too little far too late. The resulting death of up to 800,000 Rwandans demonstrated only too clearly the limitations of the so called 'emerging humanitarian norm'. Despite all the rhetoric calling for a re-evaluation of the principles of state sovereignty, lack of political will to follow through on such grand statements meant that Rwanda, which was not a strategic interest to any of the Western states, was left to its own genocidal devices. Indeed, such seeming lack of concern on the part of the international community led the Nigerian ambassador to pose the question, "Has Africa dropped from the map of moral concern?" (Shawcross 2001: 117)

If Rwanda is not example enough of the failures of humanitarian intervention where there is little or no political will, attention will now be drawn to the disaster of UN peacekeeping in Bosnia. The civil war which broke out in Bosnia-Herzegovina posed a serious challenge to western foreign policy decision makers, not least because of its location in Europe; such a conflict on the back door of the 'civilized western world' would have been impossible to ignore. Despite this though, the stomach for another war, particularly one which appeared to have no strategic interests for the Western powers, was weak. As Roberts has noted, the initial Security Council resolution on Bosnia in February 1992 stated that the force UNPROFOR was 'to create the conditions of peace and security required for the negotiation of an overall settlement of the Yugoslav crisis.' The reality of this, however, was that the UN mission in Bosnia had the very narrow humanitarian aims of ensuring 'the security and functioning of Sarajevo airport and the delivery of humanitarian assistance.' (Roberts 1993: 442) This meant, then, that the Western powers could be seen to be responding to the crisis, without having to commit serious resources or risk casualties for the cause. By sticking to the traditional humanitarian principles of neutrality in the face of ethnic cleansing and human rights atrocities in Bosnia, the UN came under much criticism (Ayoob 2002; Roberts 1993; Teson 1996). Indeed, Ayoob goes as far as to suggest that had the UN abandoned the humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality during the Bosnian crisis, the Srebenica massacre could have been avoided. Instead, by failing to engage politically with the causes of the humanitarian crisis, the UN mission essentially amounted to what has been termed the 'well

fed dead', by keeping alive those Bosnian Muslims under siege in the enclaves, without attempting to tackle the root causes of the problem.

Such assertions have been backed up by reports from Human Rights Watch on Bosnia on the period from 1992 to 1995, which states that peacekeepers in Bosnia were failing to undertake their mission even before the fall of Srebenica. The UNPROFOR force in Bosnia was seriously underequipped to deal with the Serbian insurgents, and was mandated to use force only in self-defence, the authorization of which failed to transpire into more determined action by the peacekeepers on the ground. This meant that aid was struggling to reach those Bosnian Muslims inside the enclaves which were supposed to be UN protected 'safe areas'. (Human Rights Watch 1995: 9) The fall of the 'safe area' of Srebenica and the subsequent slaughter of up to 7000 Bosnian Muslims represents one of the greatest disasters of UN peacekeeping in the 1990s. When the UN finally decided to use force against the Serbs in an attempt to halt the atrocities, many saw the efforts, as in Rwanda, as too little too late. An eye witness account from the fall of Srebenica describes the meagre UN effort –

> *"two NATO airplanes showed up from the hill where we were, we could see everything. These NATO planes circled two or three times around Srebenica and then they dropped a couple of bombs. But I saw each one come down, and I am sure that none of them hit their targets."* (Human Rights Watch 1995: 13)

In the post Somalia context, the decision of the international community to use air strikes in Bosnia reflects the unwillingness of western foreign policy makers to commit military troops on the ground, for fear of sustaining casualties (Ayoob 2002; Wheeler 2000), a decision which was repeated four years later, in the controversial NATO bombing of Kosovo in 1999.

Whilst the interventions in Bosnia and later Kosovo were justified on humanitarian grounds, there has been much debate about the means by which these humanitarian interventions were undertaken. As well as being relatively ineffective in Bosnia, the use of air strikes to further humanitarian goals seems a paradox in terms, as there was a high risk of casualties amongst the target civilian population. This was demonstrated most clearly by the actions of NATO in Kosovo in 1999, acting without Security Council authorization. In the wake of humanitarian failures in Somalia, Bosnia and Rwanda, Kosovo seemed a perfect opportunity for the international community to redeem its humanitarian credentials. This perhaps goes part the way to explaining why NATO reacted to atrocities being committed against Kosovar

Albanians without proper authorization. This didn't change the fact, however, that there still existed little political stomach for casualties on the part of the intervening states, leading to the decision to bomb Serb targets from the air. The case of Kosovo demonstrates quite clearly that "liberal democracies...are unwilling to accept the costs of conducting a humanitarian war in a humanitarian manner." (Falk 2000: 331) Indeed, Valentino highlights the nature of the problem well when he writes that,

> *"[I]n the effort to keep NATO casualties to an absolute minimum, NATO aircrafts were not permitted to fly below ten thousand feet. This policy kept the pilots out of range of Serbian antiaircraft weapons but also made it difficult to distinguish between friends and foes on the ground, which in turn contributed to several incidents of mistaken attacks by NATO on Kosovar civilians." (2006: 738)*

We can see then, the inherent problem with humanitarian intervention where no other motives for intervention exist. More than ever, states feel a duty to intervene in situations that most 'civilized' peoples would find morally abhorrent, more often than not due to media and domestic pressure; yet states are unwilling to commit 'blood and gold' to the cause if the intervention does not benefit their national interests. The optimism which flourished at the beginning of the 1990s withered away with the realities of international attempts at humanitarian intervention, which, if they took place at all, were often un-coordinated, un-prepared for the task at hand and often far too late to make any substantial difference to the situation. Humanitarianism and politics are now, arguably, inextricably linked, particularly as the success of an intervention, or the amount of resources and attention paid to a humanitarian disaster is reliant not on the level of suffering going on in any particular place, but rather on whether there exists strategic and economic motives for the intervening states (Ayoob 2002: 86). Humanitarian intervention has become reliant, it would seem, on the imperialistic interests of the most powerful states.

4. Humanitarian Intervention or Liberal Technology of Governance?

4.1. Perpetual Peace or Perpetual War?

As the last chapter has illustrated, notions of human security and humanitarianism have been used repeatedly throughout the 90s to justify Western intervention in the sovereign affairs of states. Since the events of September 11 however, it has been argued that there has been a

shift in concern away from what Wheeler has termed 'saving strangers' (2000) as new security concerns have been brought to the fore (Chandler 2004: 61; MacFarlane and Weiss 2004: 977). The argument goes that the attacks of 9/11 and the subsequent interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan have undermined any legitimacy humanitarian intervention may have gained during the previous decade, as humanitarian notions became tools of Western governments to rationalize ad-hoc interventions that would otherwise be difficult to reconcile with international law (Falk 2003; MacFarlane and Weiss 2004). This argument, however, is based on the somewhat naive premise that the motives behind the humanitarian interventions of the 1990s were unproblematic, that is to say unquestionably humanitarian. Whilst it is undeniable that the War on Terror has changed the way in which so called 'humanitarian' interventions are viewed and conducted, one needs only to scrape the surface of liberal concepts of human security to realize that the US led interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan are not a departure from, but an acceleration and continuation of processes that have been on the Western liberal agenda since the end of the Cold War.

In order to illustrate why and how the humanitarian agenda has been manipulated by Western liberalism, it is necessary to critically analyse the previously unproblematic notion of human security, and how it has influenced liberal security discourse. This chapter will begin then, with an exploration into what Foucault has termed bio-politics, as such a notion is essential to our understanding of securitization and its link to modern day humanitarian interventions. Bio-politics, as has been noted, takes populations, and more generally life as its referent point; the security of the species is its driving goal. Such a conception of life as the primary object of security inevitably means that life is also framed as the greatest threat to security, and therefore what becomes dangerous are those ways of life that threaten liberalism and the greater good of the species as a whole (Dillon and Read 2009; Evans 2010). Indeed, as Foucault has stated, wars are "no longer waged in the name of a sovereign who must be defended, they are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone" (Foucault 1990: 137); a statement which introduces the paradoxes inherent in humanitarian intervention: that liberal democracies are willing to wage war against human life in the name of 'making life live'. (Dillon and Read 2009) The process of 'making life live' necessarily requires that those elements of the global population deemed 'enemies of humanity' (Evans 2010) are kept under control, and the on-going process of securitization means that an ever wider swathe of

humanity can be deemed a threat to the security of the liberal world order. Indeed, human security has re-conceptualized issues such as poverty, environmental collapse, civil conflict and health crises as international threats that require management if they are not to "inundate and destabilize Western society" (Duffield 2007: 1); implicating Western security motives alongside liberalisms much espoused humanitarian agenda. Essentially then, the liberal doctrine has upheld the bio-political notion that those ways of life that do not conform to Western liberal standards are a threat to society as a whole, a notion which finds its martial expression in the drive to liberal interventionism and its preparedness to make war on enemies of life. (Dillon and Read 2009: 85)

It is clear then, that even if one is to ignore for a moment the questionable motives that lie behind humanitarian intervention, violence and loss of life seem to be an unavoidable part of the liberal quest to rid the world of these very things. As Evans has noted, before we can even begin to critically evaluate the forms of violence that occur under the justification of humanitarian motives, it is imperative that we "address how necessary violence continues to be an essential feature of the liberal encounter" (Evans 2010: 426). Indeed, Ronald Reagan, perhaps unaware of the paradox, stated in a speech before the British parliament in 1982 that liberal governments exercise "restraint" and "peaceful intentions" in their foreign policy. He then continued, however, by announcing a "crusade for freedom" and a "campaign for democratic development" (Doyle 2004), essentially highlighting the West's willingness to mobilize populations to war in the name of spreading Western liberal values in order to 'promote life' (Dillon and Read 2009: 40). Whilst liberal international theory and its advocates proclaim Kantian principles of perpetual peace, the increase in military humanitarian interventions in the 90s, and the advent of the global War on Terror illustrates only too clearly how western liberal democracies have instrumentalized perpetual war in pursuit of such a peace (Reid 2006: 17). It has been argued that, whilst an imperfect instrument for righting humanitarian disasters, war is nevertheless a necessary evil in the liberal "crusade" for the betterment of life through the eradication of violence and suffering (Blair 1999). It is unclear, however, as to whose lives these humanitarian interventions are intended to better. Indeed, as the previous chapter has demonstrated, whilst there have been concerns unbounded regarding the safety of US and UN troops during the so called "humanitarian" interventions of the 90s, from Mogadishu to Kosovo, relatively little attention has been paid to the effects of military intervention on those populations concerned. Such a

problematic has been highlighted by Ignatieff, who asks how it is possible to have a human rights doctrine which puts the right to life at its centre yet which is simultaneously used as justification for recourse to violence to right such human rights abuses (Mcinnes and Wheeler 2002: 6). This brings us to the question of how liberal governments, whilst claiming to uphold universal cosmopolitan principles of a global humanitarianism, can simultaneously place a higher worth on the lives of their own citizens over those they are purportedly supposed to protect. Jabri sums this up well when she notes that inherent in the Western worlds' desire to "democratise, modernize, and civilize" those parts of the world which are outside the liberal sphere of influence, is a "conception of the world rendered in hierarchical terms"; which is to say a distinction between those who can claim the right of judgement and those who cannot, those within the law and those located beyond the law, and those that are more worthy of protection than others (Jabri 2007: 96). In simpler terms then, we can conceive of humanitarian war as a kind of international policing operation, whereby the powerful liberal states justify their intervention in 'barbaric' states in the name of upholding peace and justice, whilst in reality the goal is one of pacifying and managing "at risk and risky populations" so as to ensure the security of the Western world (Kienscherf 2011: 518).

4.2. The Politics of Exclusion

It would seem then, that the only times liberal democracies exercise "restraint" and "peaceful intentions", as Reagan put it, is in their dealings with other liberal democracies as these, unlike the rest of the non-Western world, are already assimilated into the liberal way of rule and therefore do not pose a threat to the liberal ideology. The very nature of the liberal doctrine, with its focus on the bio-political, is to promote life, to create conditions in which humanity can live out its life free from fear or want. Yet the reality of such a broadly cosmopolitan and humanitarian aim lies in the liberal 'humanitarian' wars that have been waged against any "radically different ways of life" (Evans 2010: 427) which pose a threat to the species as a whole. Liberalism purports to create a world of perpetual peace through the spread of liberal democracy, which naturally means that in order to achieve such a peace, liberalism must attack difference in order to preserve its universal liberal identity (Bishai 2004: 52); therefore creating a divide between 'us' and 'them'. Those outside the liberal sphere of influence are thus constructed as a threat to life, and become an object of intervention (Chandler 2009: 249) so as to ensure the security of the Western liberal world (Bishai 2004;

Evans 2010). The construction of a certain portion of the population as a 'threat' to universal liberal values highlights the supremely paradoxical nature of international liberalism in that such purportedly universal ideals nevertheless spawned practises that were either predicated on or directed at the political marginalization of various people (Mehta 1990: 428).

The utilization of bio-political notions of human security which allow western liberalism to discriminate between 'good' life and 'bad' life also has repercussions for the conditionality of state sovereignty. Indeed, Duffield has noted that in placing the ultimate responsibility for securing human life in the state, human security is embodying a distinction between effective and ineffective states (2007: 122), essentially making a distinction between states which have a legitimate right to intervene, and states which are 'ineffective' and therefore lose their sovereign right to non-intervention (De Larrinaga and Doucet 2008; Duffield 2007). in linking concepts of human security with the notion that states retain the primary responsibility for protecting such a security, inequality between the powerful liberal states and those states it wishes to expand its influence over is deepened, as the 'ineffective' states and the 'dangerous' life they contain are excluded from the benefits of the supposedly universal liberal international order. It initially seems surprising that such exclusionary practises are an inherent feature of liberal intervention in the global borderlands, as the politics of exclusion is quite clearly at odds with liberalisms claims to cosmopolitanism and universalism. Yet one of the prominent features of international liberalism is its unfailing conviction in the moral righteousness of its mission; that is to say liberals are certain in their belief that the values they uphold are universal, that essentially those societies that are "beyond the liberal pale" should be subject to its grasp for "their own betterment" (Evans 2011: 749), that the Third World needs 'saving from itself (Furedi 1994: 110). It is evident then, that despite the exclusion of a large category of people from the benefits of liberalism, liberal intervention is still justified in humanitarian terms, as violence against the particular is morally justified for the sake of the universal, for the sake of humanity as a whole (Evans 2010: 424).

Liberal regimes have regularly justified armed intervention in the sovereign affairs of states by asserting the moral righteousness of their mission, in that war is being waged on behalf of 'values' rather than 'territorial ambitions' (Blair 1999), and therefore is above criticism. Indeed, in utilizing the language of human rights, Schmitt has argued that liberals seek to adapt traditional Just War arguments and transform them into an 'archetypically liberal notion' (Brown 2007: 6), thus assigning absolute morality to their 'humanitarian' mission. The idea

that liberal intervention is always just because it places human life at the centre of its reasoning allows for the universalization of war, as it is argued not to be fought in any particular interests, but for the interest of humanity as a whole (Hardt and Negri 2004: 15). The persuasive moral argument posed by liberalism goes a long way in explaining the level of influence such thought has had on the practise of international relations in the past decades; indeed it is hardly surprising that human rights has increasingly come to be accepted as "the first truly universal moral justification for the use of force" (Douzinas 2003: 161). What has been lauded by many as the dawning of a new era of humanitarian sentiment in which those states that commit gross violations of human rights lose their moral legitimacy (Nardin 2006) and therefore their right to non-intervention is in reality a naive, if not dangerous perspective as it ignores the question of who gets to decide what is morally legitimate. If we consider the power and influence the Western liberal world wields over the rest of the international system, it is unsurprising that it is these states that have the power to adjudicate in the sphere of morality, thus allowing liberalism to prevail in the justification of wars on moral grounds (Jabri 2007: 95) by presenting a set of essentially Western, local norms as universal (Thomas 2001: 167). It is necessary then to be wary of liberal proclamations of a universal morality, as it can be seen as a technique of liberal governance which allows liberalism to stand on a moral plain above the law (Hardt and Negri 2004: 27) and to cloak any particular political interests; essentially masking political decisions as the result of a moral judgement which "cannot be opposed without falling into moral turpitude" (Brown 2007: 60).

4.3. Liberal Imperialism and the War on Terror

Such unfailing conviction in the moral righteousness of the liberal mission has arguably never been seen so clearly as in the aftermath of the attacks of 9/11, ironically in the aftermath of the largest and most violent attack against a symbol of the very 'universal' values western liberalism purports to uphold. The way in which the absolute morality of liberal values has been utilized in the War on Terror is evident in the strong words used by George W. Bush in a speech made one year after Operation Iraqi Freedom, in which he states that,

> *"We who stand on the other side of the line must be equally clear and certain in our convictions. We do love life, the life given to us and to all. We believe in the values that uphold the dignity of life, tolerance, freedom, and the right of*

> *conscience. And we know that this way of life is worth defending. There is no neutral ground – no neutral ground – in the fight between civilization and terror, because there is no neutral ground between good and evil, freedom and slavery, life and death."* (Bush 2004).

It is evident from the language of the former President of the most powerful western liberal democracy in the world that the aims of the liberal mission are essentially to change or destroy those outside the liberal way of rule and therefore outside of 'civilization', as it is these swathes of the population that are 'evil', the antithesis of life. Indeed, it would seem that rather than leading to a more moderate formation of foreign policy and a struggle for acceptance between cultures, the American liberal response to terrorism has in fact been a reversion to a singular understanding of the truth, that its version of morality and truth is the right one, and thus has manifested itself in intolerant and narrow minded ways (Bishai 2004: 48). Such forceful rhetoric, combined with an even more forceful response in the form of the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan in the wake of the September 11 attacks has led a number of critics to describe the actions of the US and the West more generally as modern day colonialism and imperialist expansion. Such critics argue that the moral imperatives that drove the interventions of the 1990s (Weiss 2004) have been overtaken by the West's security concerns, and any legitimacy humanitarian intervention may have gained is being undermined by the use of humanitarian arguments to justify a 'War on Terror' which is being waged on behalf of American, and more generally Western security concerns (Macfarlane and Weiss 2004; Welsh 2006; Wheeler 2000).

Whilst there can be no doubt that the events of September 11 and the subsequent declaration of the War on Terror have had a considerable impact on the conduct of international politics, what this section will argue is that the events have not changed, but reinforced the existing Western-centred international order (Ikenberry 2006: 197). Indeed, Ignatieff highlights the fact that much of the discourse on humanitarian intervention continues to construe it as an act of conscience, whereas the reality is that since the beginning of the 1990s state interests have been ever present: as the rebuilding of failed states reduces their security threat to the international community (Ignatieff 2003). We can conceive of the War on Terror as an expansion of a process of liberal governance with its roots at the beginning of the 90s when we note that the drive to intervention is linked to the globalization of security which began with the end of the Cold War; that is to say the 'global imaginary of threat' that emerged has

meant liberal governments have become increasingly concerned with conflicts and suffering in distant lands as a threat to Western security (Evans 2011). If this process was on-going throughout the 1990s, the impact of the 9/11 attacks has been to reinforce Western security fears, illustrating sharply that it is "no longer possible to insulate some parts of the world from others (Kaldor 2006: 13). The global reach of the terrorist attacks has had the immediate consequence of allowing liberal regimes to reiterate and reinforce previously held notions that the destiny of populations in far-away lands is inextricably linked to the security of populations in the western world, and that therefore this new 'violence without limits' requires an equally far reaching response. Such a stance is articulated clearly by Tony Blair in his justifications for going to war against Iraq when he states that it is his "fervent view" that the global threat posed by terrorism around the world is "real and existential" and the "true danger" would be in ignoring such a threat (2005); essentially justifying the use of extreme measures to combat such a threat. What we can see to be emerging in the wake of the September 11 attacks is a permanent 'state of exception', that is to say the emergence of a state of emergency which usually results from periods of crisis such as civil wars, in which governments can assume exceptional measures which are not usually reconcilable with judicial law. Indeed as Agamben has noted, facing the limitless progression of the global War on Terror, the state of exception seems to increasingly becoming the norm when we note the behaviour of liberal governments in contemporary politics (Agamben 2005: 2).

The repercussions of such a development are significant for the practise of liberal intervention since the beginning of the War on Terror, since it has added a level of urgency to the liberal goal of the pacification of the global borderlands, allowing liberal regimes to justify the questionable interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq by using the language of 'exceptional measures' to combat the exceptional threat to humanity caused by terrorism. The War on Terror has then, in effect, provided international liberalism with an enemy worthy of justifying the global spread of liberal values, by force if necessary, allowing those liberal regimes to extend their discipline and control across the globe (Hardt and Negri 2004). Concomitant to the declaration of an indefinite state of emergency following the events of 9/11 has been an increase in discourse regarding 'nation-building' and 'democracy spreading' as techniques to strengthen liberalisms external frontier (Duffield 2009: 118), as has been evidenced in the extensive operational remit of the forces in Afghanistan and Iraq. Indeed, as

Chesterman has noted, nation-building, which had previously been deemed by George Bush as an inappropriate exercise for the US military, came back onto the agenda (2006: 166) with the invasion of Afghanistan, purportedly to strengthen the humanitarian credentials of the mission but also because, as Blair has pointed out, "the spread of our values makes us safer" (1999). If we consider the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq, it would really be stretching the traditional definition of humanitarian intervention if such a term is to be applied to the invasion and forceful imposition of democratic regimes in these countries, despite whatever humanitarian consequences result from doing so. It is evident that the interventions conducted in the Middle East were not motivated primarily by humanitarian interests, but by the security concerns of the Western liberal world, which can be alleviated by the imposition of liberal forms of governance on states which do not conform to the liberal vision of society, and the eradication of anything which threatens the liberal way of rule. What seems to be becoming clearer as the War on Terror develops then, is the spread of a liberal system of governance and control reminiscent of colonialism, masquerading behind humanitarian motives presented as being representative of some kind of 'universal morality'. What is more, such a phenomenon cannot be isolated solely to the post-9/11 world; rather what we can see is continuity, not a departure in the human security discourse which came to the fore in the post-Cold War world. Notions of human security which gained popularity in the 1990s can now be manipulated to their full extent by liberal regimes aspiring to increase their security through the global management of at risk and risky populations (De Larrinaga and Doucet 2008; Dillon and Read 2011; Kienscherf 2011).

5. Liberal Imperialism: A Force for Good?

5.1. Motives vs. Outcomes

Considering the evidence put forward in the previous chapter, it would be difficult to argue that liberal interventionism, despite its humanitarian cloak, is not in reality part of a liberal strategy of global governance which can be better understood as liberal imperialism. What such a critique of liberal intervention ignores, however, is the potentially beneficial humanitarian outcomes of liberal intervention, irrespective of motives. Indeed, Bellamy frames the question well when he asks whether we should define legitimate humanitarian intervention by the "ostensibly humanitarian outcome" of

the action, or by the "humanitarian motivations of the interveners" (Bellamy 2004: 217). The term 'humanitarian intervention' is traditionally used to refer to the threat or actual use of force by a state or states against another state with the *explicit aim of preventing or ending grave violations of human rights* (Holzgrefe and Keohane 2003), yet it has been argued that such a definition is too narrow and ultimately unrealistic in that it does not allow for any other motives alongside humanitarian ones, effectively disregarding the realist behaviour of states in an anarchic international system. At the heart of much of the criticism of liberal intervention lies a pre-occupation with the motives of the intervening states, however such a pre-occupation, which insists that unless "the intervening states are pure at heart" the intervention cannot be defined as humanitarian (Brown 2007: 56) is placing the bar so high that almost no military action can pass the test, even if such action is the only way to halt atrocities such as genocide (Bellamy 2004: 223). Wheeler and Teson share the perspective that the primacy of humanitarian motives should not be the sole consideration when analysing the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention, as such an approach wrongly takes the intervening state as the referent object of analysis, when any discourse on humanitarian intervention should logically take the impact the use of force has on the populations concerned as its referent point (Wheeler 2000: 38).

Such an argument is not incompatible with the arguments highlighted in the previous chapter which states that humanitarian intervention has been hi-jacked by liberal regimes to justify intervention with altogether more questionable motives; rather its point of contention with such arguments is that in focusing solely on a criticism of the liberal way of rule, the sometimes beneficial consequences of liberal intervention risk being ignored. Indeed, whilst it would seem evident that the primary motivation behind liberal intervention lies not in rescuing strangers from their plight, there have nonetheless been a number of interventions throughout the 90s, as chapter three has illustrated, where large scale human rights atrocities have been curtailed or prevented as a consequence of the use of force (Brown 2007: 57), however controversial the use of force has been. Not only this, but some scholars have gone so far as to argue that the strategic interests of states are an essential component of a successful humanitarian intervention, as the righting of humanitarian wrongs and the creation of stable and peaceful societies requires political will and the involvement of governments and leaders, something which would be

impossible if states national interests were not implicated (Shawcross 2001: 123). If we take the 2001 intervention in Afghanistan as an example, it is quite clear that in the absence of national security concerns motivated by the 9/11 attacks, little would have been done by outsiders to change the situation of the Afghan people in a failing state (Welsh 2006: 170), yet alongside the stated aims of combating terrorism, Washington highlighted favourable and indisputable humanitarian consequences regarding the liberation of the Afghani people and the reconstruction of society (Weiss 2004: 42). Such an argument can also be applied to the rather more controversial intervention in Iraq in 2003, as whilst motives have been hotly contested and condemned even amongst the liberal community, one cannot deny that the Saddam regime was highly morally objectionable, brutal and repressive towards its own people and aggressive towards neighbouring states, thus allowing for the humanitarian argument that overall lives have been saved, and that the invasion has contributed to the overall stability, liberalization and democratization of a highly brutal and repressive state (Kofman 2005: 137). Whilst motives for intervention are more likely to be the spread of the liberal world order and the security of liberal states, as is evidently the case with the Western interventions in the Middle East, such motives do not necessarily preclude a humanitarian outcome (Bellamy 2004: 225).

This being said, critics will point to the myriad of other, definitively un-humanitarian consequences of the invasions in Iraq and Afghanistan, most notably the abuse of prisoners at Abu Ghraib, which is difficult to reconcile with notions of humanitarianism. Indeed, the intervention in Afghanistan, which can be characterized as a liberal intervention insofar as the motives were self defence against the threat of insecurity wrought by terrorism, was never justified on humanitarian grounds, although humanitarian rhetoric came to be increasingly used. Such a gap between the real grounds for intervention and the alternative justifications for it, as Ayub and Kouvo have noted, has seriously hampered the stabilization and state-building process in Afghanistan, as the main agenda of fighting the War on Terror to reduce the insecurity threat Afghanistan poses to the US and its allies is largely incompatible with humanitarian ideals (2008: 647). Indeed, the primary concern in Iraq and Afghanistan was never the security of the populations concerned, but the security of the Western intervening states, and therefore one must be wary of construing the forced imposition of democratic regimes and the

modernization of society as humanitarian. The War on Terror has opened up new space in which counterterrorism and human rights can be combined, allowing for meaningful military intervention which was so lacking during the humanitarian crises of the 90s (Heinze 2006: 23). However these new liberal interventions have also created new problems in that whilst there are cries from the international community to 'fix' the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan, there is also growing disconcertment with the western liberal political agenda (Ayub and Kouvo 2006: 655), which has arguably eclipsed any humanitarian agenda there once was.

5.2. The Consequences of Non-Intervention

The War on Terror has raised concerns over the future of the practise of humanitarian intervention. Indeed it would seem the liberal agenda, despite its ideological foundations of universalism and cosmopolitanism, has exhausted what little political will and strategic capabilities existed for true humanitarian intervention in the pursuit of Western security in an increasingly insecure world. Yet to respond to the ever darkening cloud the War on Terror is casting over humanitarian intervention by dismissing the practise entirely is to render a valuable instrument in the protection of human rights as undeservedly useless (Heinze 2006: 31). Proponents of humanitarian intervention have argued that those who dismiss humanitarian intervention as simply a vehicle through which liberal regimes wish to extent their control are "condemning other people to death" (Rieff 1999) and "leaving the innocent to suffer the world over" (Ramos-Horta 2005: 284) through being overtly politically correct. It is difficult to counter such arguments when we consider the consequences of non-intervention in Rwanda, as well as the consequences of intervention where political commitment to the cause is lacking, as was the case with the Srebenica massacre. Such morally abhorrent events were allowed to happen as a direct consequence of a lack of strategic interest for the states with the power to intervene, and have led to commentators such as Richard Just to argue that despite the controversies the War on Terror has wrought upon the practise of humanitarian intervention, to respond by saying that it is wrong for the United States to intervene to spread its own moral universal values is to condemn the interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo which stopped ethnic cleansing and possibly genocide, and to agree with the decision not to intervene in Rwanda as right (Just 2005: 212), a position which most would find morally unacceptable. Here then we can clearly see the crux of the problem, in

that non-intervention is intolerable, but humanitarian intervention, as has clearly been demonstrated in previous chapters, remains impossible (Falk 1993: 757).

Such a problematic of humanitarian intervention requires confrontation if future human rights atrocities are to be halted, and if the unchecked spread of liberal technologies of governance and control is to be challenged. It is not enough simply to denounce humanitarian intervention as reflecting only the imperial interests of powerful western governments, as ex-UN Secretary General Kofi Annan highlighted when he posed the question, “If humanitarian intervention is, indeed, an unacceptable assault on sovereignty, how should we respond to a Rwanda, to a Srebrenica—to gross and systematic violations of human rights that offend every precept of our common humanity?” (Annan 2000) Even if one were to argue for an absolute rule of non-intervention so as to avoid abuse of the humanitarian sentiment by liberal regimes, one need only look at the interventions in Kosovo and Iraq to note that international legitimization is not a necessary precursor to liberal intervention. Given the power Western liberal states have to override international legal norms to intervene in situations which threaten their interests and security, and given the fact that there exists many parts of the world where the humanitarian situation remains intolerable, to respond to the liberal crusade towards intervention by calling for a steadfast rule of non-intervention is not only impossible, but also immoral.

Conclusion

The debate over the legitimacy and conduct of humanitarian intervention continues to rage fiercely within the international community, particularly in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks and the declaration of the War on Terror. From growing calls for more humanitarian action and political involvement to solve the humanitarian crises of the 90s, to international scepticism and condemnation of the liberal interventions in the Middle East following the events of 9/11, it comes as no surprise that humanitarian intervention is generally deemed to be “in crisis” (Rieff 2002). As this essay has demonstrated, the waning of state sovereignty and the subsequent rise in ‘humanitarian’ interventions has been an emergent reality throughout the 1990s; yet far from being the result of a growing humanism amongst the powerful liberal states, such a shift in concern from the state to the individual is in reality part of a much more sinister liberal enterprise which is quintessentially concerned with the art of global governance (Gordon 1991: 14). The repercussions of the implication of liberal self-

interests alongside the achievement of humanitarian goals has been highlighted only too clearly in an analysis of the development of humanitarian intervention throughout the 1990s, during which time it became painfully clear that intervention undertaken for purely humanitarian concerns, if it occurs at all, has generally been underfunded and insufficient (Falk 2000: 333), therefore leading to interventions which arguably did more harm than good. Rwanda provides us with a clear example of what happens when, despite grave humanitarian concerns, there exists no strategic interests for the states with the power to intervene, whilst events in Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo illustrated the fact that in the absence of state self-interest, there exists little political will to pay the costs of blood and gold in order to ensure that "humanitarian war is conducted in a humanitarian manner." (Falk 2000: 331) The 1990s then, far from being the 'golden era of humanitarian intervention' (Bellamy and Wheeler 2008), were in reality an experimentation in liberal expansionism, yet where there existed few security concerns for the liberal states, there existed little political will to commit to the mission. It is only when national interests are implicated that states are willing to accept the costs and stay the duration necessary to alter the humanitarian situation in any meaningful way (Weiss 2004: 37).

As has been noted throughout this essay, the vital interests of the intervening states are grounded in liberal notions of human security; that is to say entire swathes of the world's population are re-conceptualized as a threat to humanity which requires pacification through assimilation into the liberal world order or, failing that, destruction. In liberalisms quest to expand its control and influence across the world, the remit of intervention has been broadened to include within its scope democracy spreading, nation building, and regime change, as has been demonstrated in Iraq, Afghanistan, and more recently, Libya. It would seem undeniable that humanitarian intervention is essentially a veil behind which liberal imperialism can disguise itself, despite protestations of liberals heralding a "revolution of moral concern". Indeed, we can see clear similarities between the old rhetoric of empire and current discussions surrounding liberal imperialism. As Nardin has noted, in the old days of empire humanitarianism was used to justify the imposition of foreign power on populations at the margins of the 'civilized' world in order to uphold the standards of civilized morality; essentially in order to protect the population from themselves. We can see that little has changed between then and now when we note that current rhetoric on humanitarian intervention constructs the third world as a threat to itself and to the rest of the world, and

therefore the barbarity of tyranny and terrorism that these ‘uncivilized’ regions breed “must be countered, in the name of humanity, by the exercise of imperial power” (Nardin 2006: 25). In construing humanitarian intervention as liberal imperialism, the motives behind liberal intervention become clearer, in that essentially liberal regimes wish to subjugate and impose indirect control on those portions of the population securitization discourse has constructed as a threat to global security. Whilst it is true that the days of territorial expansion are over, what we are experiencing now is by no means a waning of imperial ambition, as through the spread of liberal values and the imposition of liberal structures, through force if necessary, liberalism is extending its ‘universal’ values across the world, justifying any means by the end which is indisputably morally right (Bishai 2004: 51).

Indeed, as was highlighted in chapter four, there exists a significant cognitive dissonance between liberal universalism, with its proclaimed notions of a cosmopolitan humanitarianism, and liberal imperialism, which finds its expression through intervention which is justified on a humanitarian basis, yet which in reality functions through the eradication or exclusion of all life forms which do not conform to liberalism (McCarthy 2009: 166). It would seem that the obvious conclusion to draw would be one which wholly condemns the practise of humanitarian intervention as a front for the furthering of a liberal ideology which functions through the subjugation of ‘morally inferior’ populations so as to extend its own remit of control and power. Humanitarian intervention is less about a moral concern for the suffering of people, than a method through which Western liberal states can secure their own populations from a global imaginary of threat. Yet such a damning analysis of liberal intervention is incomplete, as it fails to give a sufficient analysis of the *effects* these interventions have on the populations concerned, not to mention the effects non-intervention could have on those populations suffering human rights abuses. Of course a proclaimed interest in ‘saving strangers’ will only ever be put into action when the strategic interests of liberal states are at stake, meaning liberal cries of a ‘duty to intervene’ and a ‘responsibility to protect’ in those situations that shock the moral conscience of mankind must be regarded with scepticism. Such scepticism, however, should not be translated into an absolute rule of non-intervention, as to do so would be to turn our backs completely on the suffering of those that need our help, in whatever form such help may come in. Indeed, the spread of liberal imperialism does not necessarily signify the death of humanitarian sentiments; rather the two

can coincide, and when they do, a greater window of opportunity is created for those wishing to act on the humanitarian impulse in the Security Council (Weiss 2004: 37).

When we consider the globalizing effect the War on Terror has had on liberal intervention, however, as we move further into the new millennium it is becoming ever clearer that liberal intervention is being stretched to its limits. Ten years after the invasion of Afghanistan and eight years after the invasion of Iraq, 99,000 and 46,000 US troops remained in each country respectively (New York Times 2011), highlighting the extensive nature of the liberal imperial mission in the aftermath of 9/11. The 'unending war' against terrorism seems to have taken its toll on Western liberal states capacity to intervene, meaning that, rather than coinciding, the requirements of the war against terrorism will have to be balanced against the more distant demands of humanity (Macfarlane et al 2007: 985), and it is not difficult to work out which will prevail. Indeed, since the coming to power of the Bush administration in 2001, humanitarian intervention where no national interests were at stake has been dismissed as "blunting the purpose of the military" (Ignatieff 2003), yet quite paradoxically Bush pinned continuing support for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan on humanitarian rhetoric regarding nation-building and the promotion of democracy for the Afghan and Iraqi people. In doing so it would seem that the US has manipulated the idea of a responsibility to protect to include a much broader remit for intervention, embracing not just the "responsibility to react" but the "responsibility to prevent" and the "responsibility to rebuild" as well (Evans and Sahnoun 2002: 101), stretching the language of humanitarianism to suit liberalisms own political agenda. As has been evidenced by the growing disillusionment with the on-going operations in the Middle East in which thousands of western troops have been killed, the continued threat of terrorist attacks, and more recently the lack of political support for further meaningful interventions in Libya and Syria, it would seem that liberal interventionism has not only lost sight of the universal humanitarian notions that lie at its roots, but is struggling to retain its omnipotence in the face of widespread opposition to the invasions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Whilst the 9/11 attacks may have had a 'rally round the flag' effect within the US, the most ardent exporter of international liberalism, it has had the opposite effect across the rest of the international community, which has sought to distance itself from the aggressively Western liberal interventionist stance that provoked such terrorist attacks (Ignatieff 2003).

All things considered, it would seem that Fukuyama's prediction in 1992 that the rise to predominance of Western liberal democracy would signal the 'End of History' in that it

would become the universal and final form of human government (Fukuyama 1992) is increasingly being challenged. The rise in militant Islam and terrorist attacks against the West highlights inescapably that the proclaimed universal moral righteousness of the liberal mission is in reality far from universal, whilst the rising spectre of China as the new superpower on the international stage could diminish Western liberalisms power and influence in years to come. This being said, the reality remains that, for now at least, Western liberal regimes retain hegemony on the global stage, and therefore hegemony in decisions to intervene or not. As we have seen, liberal 'humanitarian' intervention is deeply flawed; oftentimes the primary motives for intervention are far from humanitarian, and there is much resentment in the international community regarding the omnipotence of the Western liberal states wishing to impose their world view on weaker states. What is more, the War on Terror has only exemplified such concerns, highlighting the way in which liberal states have manipulated humanitarian sentiments to justify intervention with other motives (Ayoob 2002) and allowed liberalism to broaden its scope of expansion globally (Evans 2010). Yet the reality is that liberal intervention, however imperfect and unpalatable it may be is currently the only choice the international community has if it is to avoid another Rwanda, or another Srebenica, to avoid once again becoming a bystander to genocide. As we have seen, where no other interests exist, attempts at humanitarianism will flounder. To argue for intervention motivated by purely humanitarian motives and conducted in a completely humanitarian manner is to ignore the realities of the world in which we live. The reality is that, as Weiss quite succinctly put it, the rise to predominance of liberal imperialism and the resultant convergence of humanitarian values and liberal security interests "has not brought utopia, but made the world a somewhat more liveable place than it would have been otherwise" (2001: 104). Whether this remains the case in the aftermath of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, in a seemingly endless War against Terror, and in a world where Western liberalism is increasingly feeling threatened yet where political support and capacity for liberal intervention is low, remains to be seen.

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