

Kimberly Zisk Marten. *Enforcing the Peace: Learning from the Imperial Past.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2004. x + 202 pp. \$25.00, paper, ISBN 978-0-231-12912-1.



Reviewed by Satish Joshi

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In the post-Cold War era, one issue that has dominated the collective psyche of International Relations scholars is the issue of multilateral peacekeeping. Many scholars, including UN diplomats, have written on this subject and have tried to analyze why peacekeeping fails. Kimberly Zisk Marten's book makes an important contribution to this discussion by juxtaposing peacekeeping with colonialism, particularly the efforts of colonial powers to establish and consolidate law and order in their colonies. Many previous works have focused on what goes wrong with peacekeeping missions and tend to blame both UN structures as well as problems related to the assumption that it is difficult for states to cooperate in an anarchical world. Marten's work, however, takes a broader historical approach and enumerates important similarities between colonialism and contemporary peacekeeping activities. While the focus of the book is on UN authorized peacekeeping missions in Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and East Timor in the 1990s, the author also explores, in detail, the situation in post-war Iraq and Afghanistan.

The author makes a number of important assumptions in order to argue that policy makers could learn from experiences of colonialism. Indeed the resemblance between colonialism and peacekeeping leads her to conclude that contemporary peacekeeping operations are too ambitious and thus fail. The first of her assumptions is that both peacekeeping and colonialism have been motivated, at least in part, by humanitarianism. Radical critiques of peacekeeping question the humanitarian bases of peacekeeping activities, not to mention colonialism. Marten's assumption of altruism with respect to peacekeeping appears again and again in the work, especially in the second chapter. On the basis of her assumptions and historical overview of the cases, the author suggests a more pragmatic model for future peacekeeping missions in the last chapter. While comparing colonialism and peacekeeping activities, the author states that the international community acts on a kind of "pre-existing sympathy" when establishing peacekeeping missions, unlike colonialism. However, this assumption can be questioned, as there have been past examples like Rwanda and contemporary examples like Darfur

where such sympathy, if it existed at all, did not avert the catastrophe. Besides, the current structure of the UN Security Council (UNSC) is hardly evidence of such sympathy. Thus, the author's claim "in today's operations, foreign military organizations usually have no desire to dominate foreign societies" can be questioned (p. 64). The author has not provided any information on the basis of which such an assumption was made. This is not to say that the relevance of the comparison between colonialism and peacekeeping suffers due to these assumptions. On the contrary, these assumptions enable the author to effectively juxtapose the two and the resulting analysis has great relevance for policy formulation. Another important contribution of this work is the recognition that mere humanitarian concerns are not sufficient for establishment of peacekeeping operations. Instead, it is only when humanitarian concerns and national self-interest are intertwined, such that national self-interest is the dominant factor, that peacekeeping operations are established. One very important aspect, however, is that the author seems to assume that the concept of national self-interest has remained the same for both colonial and contemporary eras. It should be recognized that colonial and imperial actions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and contemporary actions with respect to peacekeeping take place in different contexts with different understandings about what state interests are. Besides, the author takes a very state-centric approach, while enumerating the reasons why peacekeeping missions are established, and she does not take into account non-state interests that influence decisions to establish such missions.

As mentioned earlier, the author has taken historical approach and compares three cases of peacekeeping missions, while also exploring the situation in post-war Iraq and Afghanistan. While describing these cases, the author provides examples from specific incidences and backs those with interviews conducted at various places in Europe

and North America. All the interviews are off-the-record and the author does not identify those interviewed by name. This description takes the reader straight to the place where the incidence occurred; the author also keeps the reader informed about what was happening in the decision making circles at that time, in Europe, the United States, and the United Nations. Chapters 4 and 5 in particular are rich in description. The author writes with lucidity and never loses the thread of her basic argument as laid down in the first chapter. Indeed the organization of the book is one of its strengths.

There are a few claims, however, that can be contested. While the author criticizes the structure of the UNSC and its veto power, she also claims that contemporary international law is universal and not imposed by the great powers. There is a fundamental incompatibility between these two, since the basic legal framework of the United Nations was unilaterally designed by the great powers of the time. Despite such minor inconsistencies, this book provides important insight into peacekeeping. More importantly, it provides a model for future peacekeeping: without political will, peacekeeping missions will suffer; that political will is hard to come by; that abolition of domestic anarchy in post-conflict societies should be the primary goal of peacekeeping missions; and that a narrower definition of security should be adapted. Additionally, a broader role for the military, which might include the undertaking of police functions, is key to this model. This book is an important, useful, and timely contribution to our understanding of peacekeeping and has important policy recommendations for future missions. It is also innovative in that it does not shy away from comparing colonialism to peacekeeping or, as the author terms it later in the book, "security keeping."

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