

# Whose Peace? Which Peace?

On the Political Architecture  
of  
Liberal Peacebuilding



Kristoffer Lidén

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**Til**  
**Iben, Eskil og Liva**

## *Preface*

During the last few years, peacebuilding research has become quite a growth industry. While being a rather obscure topic for scholarly work when I first took an interest in this intractable phenomenon, it has now become hard to ignore, even for the most respected of academic journals in international studies. And while my idea of engaging with the *politics* of peacebuilding seemed original at first, it is now enveloped by an increasing amount of books and articles on the subject.

How, then, can possibly a philosopher contribute to this field? By posing the hardest questions, dwelling by them and leaving them unanswered. That is more or less what I will do in this thesis. The questions that I address do not concern whether peacebuilding has a right to existence: 'To be, or not to be?' is not the hardest question. The peacebuilders also confront skulls, but their destiny is different: 'Whose peace?' 'Which peace?' These are the questions.

The sources of inspiration for this title also indicate where these questions will take us. In 'Whose Democracy; Which Peace? Contextualizing the Democratic Peace' (2004), John MacMillan positions liberal peace theory in the wider liberal tradition of international thought. In *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (1988) Alasdair MacIntyre places this wider tradition in a larger philosophical and historical perspective. This thesis is an attempt at paralleling these successful examples by locating 'liberal peacebuilding' within the philosophy of world politics. In this effort, I combine insights from political philosophy, ethics, IR-theory and political theory, as well as from 'the peacebuilding literature' i.e. a multitude of policy-documents, reports, case studies and general theories on the subject. I thereby enter the ground normally covered by political science in Norwegian universities. However, as will be further elaborated in the introduction, my approach is more philosophical and less 'social scientific' than this discipline. If read as a vain attempt at replicating a 'political science of peacebuilding', the thesis will therefore appear as a disaster. In this respect, it is more at home in the British tradition of IR scholarship, where greater emphasis is put on historical and philosophical issues. Much of the literature and theory that I apply has evolved from this tradition, including the meta-theoretical framework of 'International Political Theory'.

I have had the privilege and honour of writing this thesis in the inspiring work environment of the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO), with a stipend from the Ethics, Norms and Identities Program. Here, I have benefited from many a discussion and seminar, not to mention the library services splendidly managed by Odvar Leine.

Many thanks to my supervisor Anne Julie Semb for valuable comments and careful reading. Your criticism has been both challenging and inspiring, and our disagreement on substantial theoretical issues has made our meetings extra profitable. I am also grateful to my supervisor at PRIO, J. Peter Burgess, whose help and support has been invaluable, and whose example as a philosopher is of great inspiration to my work. Furthermore, I am indebted to Hilde Lidén and Iben Brinch Jørgensen for commenting on parts of the final draft, and to Martin Austvoll and, lately, Kathrine Holden for great company in our student office at PRIO. Finally, I want to thank my beloved Iben for taking care of our children Liva and Eskil while I took care of this thesis.

*Kristoffer Lidén*  
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## THE VIEW

This year, on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN, a historical decision was made in the General Assembly of establishing a permanent Peacebuilding Commission. This marks the latest stage of incorporating ‘peacebuilding’ as a central element of international peace, security and development politics. The core mandate of the Commission is to provide sustained international attention and support to countries in the transition from post-conflict situations to recovery and long-term development (UN, 2005). This aim is a reaction to the experience of countries relapsing into war after a peace agreement has been reached. In the words of Kofi Annan:

Our record of success in mediating and implementing peace agreements is sadly blemished by some devastating failures. Indeed, several of the most violent and tragic episodes of the 1990s occurred after the negotiation of peace agreements – for instance in Angola in 1993 and in Rwanda in 1994. Roughly half of all countries that emerge from war lapse back into violence within five years (Annan, 2005: §114).

The idea of peacebuilding grew out of an acknowledgement of the limitations of traditional peacekeeping measures for this purpose. A broader political agenda comprising civilian as well as military issues was needed for peace to be sustained. The following definition of peacebuilding from a well founded report on the peacebuilding policies of Germany, The Netherlands, Norway and the UK grasps the full array of this agenda as it has developed in international politics over the last 15 years:

Peacebuilding attempts to encourage the development of the structural conditions, attitudes and modes of political behaviour that may permit peaceful, stable and ultimately prosperous social and economic development. Peacebuilding activities are designed to contribute to ending or avoiding armed conflict and may be carried out during armed conflict, in its wake, or as an attempt to prevent an anticipated armed conflict from starting. [P]eacebuilding activities fall under four main headings: to provide security, to establish the socio-economic foundations of long-term peace, likewise to establish the political framework of long-term peace, and to generate reconciliation, a healing of the wounds of war, and justice’ (Smith, 2004:20).

Due to the extensiveness of this agenda, Roland Paris in the benchmark study *At War’s End* (2004) limits his definition of peacebuilding to...

...action undertaken at the end of a civil conflict to consolidate peace and prevent a recurrence of fighting. A *peacebuilding mission* involves the deployment of military and civilian personnel

from several international agencies, with a mandate to conduct peacebuilding in a country that is just emerging from a civil war' (Paris, 2004:38).

This limited definition, which is in line with the official terminology of UN peace operations, reflects the primary usage of the concept of peacebuilding in this thesis. This does not mean, however, that the discussion is irrelevant to peacebuilding in a broader sense. To the limited definition, furthermore, the term 'liberal' is added (as a derivation of 'liberalism,' and not in the general sense of 'free-minded') in order to emphasize and amplify the political character of peacebuilding. 'Liberal peacebuilding' is the idea and practice of building peace through liberalization. As will be demonstrated in the following chapter, it springs from a 'liberal internationalist' understanding of the concept, and is the dominant meaning of peacebuilding in international politics today (Bellamy & Williams, 2004a; Paris, 2004).<sup>1</sup> This focus on the political dimension of peacebuilding does not exclude the other three dimensions listed in Smith's definition above (security, development and justice/reconciliation). Nevertheless, due to their interconnectedness, they can all be seen as parts of a political project – as they can all be seen as parts of a security project from a security perspective, and so on.

In recent scholarly literature, this political dimension is placed under increasingly critical scrutiny (Bellamy, 2004a; Bellamy & Williams, 2004a; Chandler, 2004, 2005; Chopra, 2000; Chopra & Hohe, 2004; David, 2002; Duffield, 2001; Keen, 2005; Marten, 2004; Mychajlyszyn & Shaw, 2005; Paris, 2002a, 2004; Pugh, 2002, 2004; Ramsbotham, 2000; Richmond, 2001, 2002; Richmond, 2004; Stamnes, 2004; Warner, 2003; Williams, 2004; Woodhouse & Ramsbotham, 2005). One of the themes of this criticism concerns the question of 'Whose peace?'. Peacebuilding is portrayed as building peace on the premises of international liberal actors rather than of the citizens of the host-countries. In the words of Richmond:

The question of what peace might be expected to look like from the inside is given less credence than the way the international community and its organizers and actors desire to see it from the outside, and moderates searching for peace from within the conflict environment tend to expropriate Western models in their search for a solution (Richmond, 2004: 91).

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<sup>1</sup> The conceptualization of 'liberal peacebuilding' is one of the main innovations of this thesis. It was therefore with mixed feelings that I recently found this notion in an article on the EU Police Mission in Bosnia (Merlingen & Ostrauskaite, 2005).

Other critics are more concerned with the related question of ‘Which peace?’ and argue that the political presuppositions of current peacebuilding missions are wrong. These two questions raise *ethical* concerns of *legitimacy* that have not been sufficiently addressed in the earliest phase of peacebuilding theory due to an exclusive focus on *efficiency* (Bellamy & Williams, 2004b; Paris, 2000; Pugh, 2003).

The critique of liberal peacebuilding thereby opens a theoretical field for ethical debate framed by, on one side; portrayals of peacebuilding as the quintessence of altruism and benevolence in international politics, and, on the other; accounts of peacebuilding as pure imperialism in disguise. If one supports the basic idea of peacebuilding defined by Annan, Smith and Paris above – and I do – the critique of peacebuilding raises a dilemma because the alternative to *liberal* peacebuilding would be no large-scale peacebuilding at all. For such an alternative, the peacebuilding agencies too heavily depend on economic and political support from liberal states and organizations – or more correctly, they are themselves part of this liberal political complex (Doyle, 1999; Duffield, 2001; Ikenberry, 1999; Paris, 2003). From this dilemma it follows that in addition to assessing whether liberal peacebuilding is legitimate or not, this discussion should contribute with insights on how to preserve its positive potential in the best way possible. This approach finds support in the following quote from Chris Brown:

[I]t is, a fortiori, much easier to show what the present international order is lacking in legitimacy than it is to get a handle on how actually to create the kind of world order that would be legitimate. It is a commonplace that most of the critics of globalization are better at demonstrating its evils than they are at showing how the good things associated with global change – and there are such good things – could be preserved without these evils (Brown, 2002: 230).

The critical literature on peacebuilding which is now evolving only takes the first step in this direction of a political ethics of peacebuilding. A second step that clarifies the theoretical premises of the critique and opens it for ethical debate is needed in order to arrive at the level of insight required from attempts at building civil peaces for the liberal puzzle in the future. Without placing both its feet firmly on legitimate ground, liberal peacebuilding may reduce, rather than promote the prospects for world peace by unintentionally blurring the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate interference in the internal affairs of weak states.



The aim of this project is not to give a final answer to what legitimate liberal peacebuilding is or drawing up normative guidelines for peacebuilding agencies to follow. The aim is of a more philosophical kind. It is to increase the ethical awareness of peacebuilding theory by sneaking in behind the conceptual scene of the contending portrayals of the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding in the literature; it is, thereby, to initiate a language for discussing the politics of peacebuilding. In the words of Martin Heidegger, it asks the question ‘What ought we to *do*?’ from the perspective of the more decisive question ‘How must we *think*?’ (Swazo, 2002: 69). The research question that should lead us in this direction is: *What are the political theoretical presuppositions of the contending positions on the legitimacy of peacebuilding in scholarly literature?* We will return to this question in the end of this introduction.

## **BACKGROUND**

Since the end of the Cold War, the intervention of international peacebuilding missions in war-torn states have been legitimized by the aim of building a ‘liberal peace’ (liberal-democracy, free market economy and jurisdiction in accordance with human rights) (Bellamy & Williams, 2004b: 4-5; David, 2002; Paris, 1997, 2004). This aim is found in all the major operations of this period, in Namibia, Nicaragua, Angola, Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique, Liberia, Rwanda, Haiti, Bosnia, Croatia, Guatemala, East Timor, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, and, most recently, in the Sudan (Paris, 2004). The post-intervention peacebuilding efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq also share this aim, although their pretext is markedly different.

The idea of liberal peacebuilding entered the wider circles of international politics through its formulation in the UN report *An Agenda for Peace* (1992). The purpose of *An Agenda for Peace* was to improve the capacity of the UN to ‘achieve the great objectives of the charter – a United Nations capable of maintaining international peace and security, of securing justice and human rights and of promoting in the words of the Charter, ‘social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom’’ (Boutros-Ghali 1992: §3). This objective was then adapted to the post-Cold War situation of ‘nationalist partition and globalization’, where civil conflict was seen as a major threat to international peace and security (ibid: §11). Acknowledging the limited

success of UN peacekeeping operations in creating a self-sustainable peace after civil wars, the need of ‘post-conflict peacebuilding’ that could ‘identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict’ was recognized (ibid: §21). It is, however, first in the ‘Brahimi report’ from 2000 that the definition of ‘peacebuilding’ is explicitly related to the aim of liberalization. Here, it is defined as ‘democratization and civil society building that includes effective civilian governance and a culture of respect for basic human rights’ (Brahimi 2000: §39).

Referring to a wide recognition and acknowledgment in the UN of ‘the key role of peace-building in complex peace operations’, the Brahimi report states that ‘force alone cannot create peace; it can only create the space in which peace may be built’ (ibid: viii-ix). This extended scope of UN peace operations has, however, simultaneously extended the role of the military. While peacebuilding was initially associated with a ‘post-coercive’ phase, it now has become the overall rationale of ‘peace support operations’ that combines military and civilian components (Bellamy, Williams & Griffin, 2004). Michael Pugh notes that in this role it stretches ‘increasingly closer to war in the name of peace’ (Pugh, 2004: 43). Today, the idea of liberal peacebuilding continues to expand in width and application, and has become more or less synonymous with the general concept of conflict prevention. This ideological turn of UN peace operations that portrays liberal democratic societies as inherently peaceful is often legitimized in scientific terms with reference to the influential ‘democratic peace thesis’ (MacMillan, 2004; Paris, 2004).

During the latest years, the concept of peacebuilding has not only become an important part of UN operations. It has also made its way to the strategies of a wide network of powerful governmental, intergovernmental- and nongovernmental organizations in global politics. In addition to the UN’s specialized agencies, the main agents of contemporary liberal peacebuilding operations are the OSCE, the EU, NATO, the OAS, the IMF and World Bank, national development agencies, international NGOs and private donors and corporations (Paris 2004: 22-35). Since the early 90s, when a consensus on ‘liberal market democracy’ as the only legitimate form of governance emerged in international politics, a precondition of receiving

international assistance from these principal practitioners of peacebuilding has been the acceptance of certain principles of liberalization (these observations are elaborated in the next chapter) (Paris, 2003: 445-8; 2004).

## FOCUS

In addition to defining the political character of contemporary peacebuilding missions in the host-country, the term 'liberal peacebuilding' points to their international political context that can be characterized as a project of building liberal peace on a global scale (see chapter 2).<sup>2</sup> As was mentioned above, it is only recently that this political context of peacebuilding has been explicitly addressed in scholarly literature. It opens a theoretical field within which it is possible to criticise and discuss the current theory and practice of peacebuilding and relate it to general issues of global politics. The limited success of peace operations in the 1990s, combined with the enhanced prestige of the concept of peacebuilding, led to an extensive literature on how to improve its efficiency (Paris, 2004). This literature is characterised by a problem-solving approach, focusing on the '*construction work*' of peacebuilding rather than on its '*political architecture*'. The answers are rendered in a theoretical vacuum, as they are not related to the political context that is both the precondition for and the primary constraint on the way in which peacebuilding mandates are formed and handled (Bellamy, 2004a:30; Paris, 2000).

One of the first writers to address the architecture of peacebuilding was Roland Paris. In the article 'Peacebuilding and the Limits of Liberal Internationalism' he criticises peacebuilding for being based on false assumptions about the peace dividend of rapid liberalization in its attempt at building 'liberal market democracy' in the ruins of civil war (Paris, 1997). In later articles he has investigated the politics of peacebuilding from different theoretical angles, with 'International peacebuilding and the 'mission civilisatrice'' as the most critical in terms of legitimacy (Paris, 2000, 2002a, b, 2003). In *At War's End* (2004), he returns to the theme of the first article and

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<sup>2</sup> The terms 'the liberal peace', 'the democratic peace' and 'the liberal-democratic peace' are used interchangeably in the literature. In the following, 'the democratic peace' will be used to denote the empirical assertions of 'the democratic peace thesis', while 'the liberal peace' signifies a larger political and theoretical

systematically assesses the political aims and means of the fourteen major international peacebuilding operations that were deployed between 1989 and 1999. In this book he traces the roots of peacebuilding in modern liberal theory related to the democratic peace thesis, and investigates how the current strategy of building peace through political and economic liberalization has affected the likelihood of stable and lasting peace within the host countries. The conclusion is devastating. Summing up on his findings, he claims that ‘the case studies do suggest that the liberalization process either contributed to a rekindling of violence or helped to recreate the historic sources of violence in many of the countries that have hosted these missions – a conclusion that casts doubt on the reliability of the peace-through-liberalization strategy as it has been practiced to date’ (ibid: 155). The reason why this is not realized by contemporary students of the liberal peace, he writes, is that they ‘have tended to take the existence of functioning states as a given. [...] Because the recent scholarship has largely ignored the problem of *constituting* governments, little guidance has been provided to those concerned with building stable market democracies virtually from scratch’ (ibid:176). This important insight on the inexpediency of directly adapting the ‘laws’ of the democratic peace thesis to peacebuilding undermines the scientific image of current theory and ‘downgrades’ liberal peacebuilding to an issue of conventional politics susceptible to unresolved theoretical disputes.

Rather than rejecting the liberal groundings of peacebuilding on the basis of his findings, Paris, however, attempts to fill this gap in the democratic peace literature by solving the problem of peace-through-liberalization. The solution, he claims, is not to revisit the aim of liberalization but to resist certain negative side-effects that are particularly strong in post-conflict situations. This can be done, he argues, by establishing strong and effective institutions before the standard procedures of liberalization are carried out. This requires a level of international governance that comes close to the ‘transitional administrations’ of Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor (ibid: 212). It is, however, these missions that have generated some of the strongest critiques of the legitimacy of peacebuilding (Bose, 2002; Chandler, 2002; Chopra,

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idea that often cites the democratic peace thesis in support of the further spread of liberalism throughout the world.

2000). It is therefore not evident that Paris solves the problems of liberal peacebuilding revealed in his case studies when limiting his solution to the enhancement of its means.

A more critical approach to this problem area can be found in the contributions to a special issue of *International Peacekeeping* on 'Peace Operations and Global Order' (Bellamy & Williams, 2004a). These writers share Paris's interpretation of the aims and assumptions of current peace operations, but distance themselves from the efficiency orientation of his solution. Instead, they introduce alternative theoretical perspectives that question the motives, priorities and narratives of the aims as well as the means of the orthodox idea of liberal peacebuilding. A recurrent theme in this volume is that the international political context of peacebuilding tends to gain priority over the domestic concerns of the host-countries when missions are formed. This critique goes to the core of the legitimacy dimension of peacebuilding because the setting of these missions is not only the relationship between the weakest and the most powerful players in global politics – a setting where the potential for genuine self-determination of the weak is highly constrained: It is a situation where the legal sovereignty of the host-country – often cited as the only defence of the weak against the strong – is set aside. There is, of course, a need of a formal mandate from the host-country in order for peacebuilding missions to be legal according to international law. When facing an offer of massive international assistance in the wake of civil war, however, a rejection on political grounds from the leadership is rather unthinkable, and such a hypothetical rejection would probably not be accepted as legitimate by the international community. In effect, peacebuilding is a situation where the future of political communities is rendered in the hands of international governance. This leaves the peacebuilding missions with a kind of responsibility that cannot be fully grasped in terms of the prevailing discourse of efficiency.

The reason why this has not been emphasised in writings on peacebuilding until recently may be that the legitimacy question has been channelled through more instrumental considerations on legality and consent. In this respect, a distinction can be drawn between the 'normative legitimacy' of peacebuilding – whether peacebuilding meets moral standards of international politics – which is our concern, and questions

of ‘legal legitimacy’ or ‘legality’ concerning whether it is in accordance with international law, and ‘descriptive (sociological) legitimacy’ of whether there is evidence of consent by the people affected (Beetham, 1991; Clark, 2005; Dahl, 2003: 6-10; Føllesdal, 1998: 36). In the light of legality, peacebuilding missions with a UN mandate have been regarded as unproblematic, and as a question of public acceptance in the host-country, legitimacy has been discussed as one of many preconditions for an effective peacebuilding process. The legitimacy challenge cannot, however, be reduced to these manifestations of the general concept of legitimacy, and must also take the ethical dimension of peacebuilding into consideration.

When seen from a liberal perspective on international politics, the (normative) legitimacy problem of peacebuilding takes on a paradoxical nature. The paradox of building liberal-democracy through international peace operations is that it seems to require a temporary benevolent autocracy imposing quasi-democratic structures from above. In the words of Larry Diamond:

All international postconflict interventions to reconstruct a failed state on democratic foundations confront a fundamental contradiction. Their goal is, in large measure, democracy – popular, representative and accountable government in which “the people” are sovereign. Yet, their means are undemocratic – in essence, some form of imperial domination, however temporary and transitional (Diamond 2005: 16).

This ‘peacebuilding paradox’ involves *intervention* for the establishment of *sovereignty*, *indoctrination* for the sake of *enlightenment* and *political coercion* in the name of *political freedom*.<sup>3</sup> These contradictions are a running theme in political theory. The way in which they clash in the case of peacebuilding is, nevertheless, exceptional.

Although the focus of this thesis is limited to liberal peacebuilding, it is therefore still of relevance to general debates on international politics. Above all, this goes for discussions on the legitimacy of international governance, and of peace operations, humanitarian intervention and forcible regime change in particular. As far as the latter three concerns, a recurring assumption is that international interventions in the name of democracy and human rights will be followed by a more legitimate post-

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<sup>3</sup> For elaborations on this paradox in relation to peacebuilding, see for instance Chandler, 2002; Chesterman, 2004 and Marten, 2004.

intervention order facilitated by peacebuilding. If peacebuilding in its current form suffers from a legitimacy problem, this also affects the legitimacy of these related manifestations of contemporary international governance.

As seen from the state-of-the-art of the peacebuilding literature, some of which has been reviewed here, it is not, however, evident exactly what the legitimacy problem reflected in the peacebuilding paradox implies. It rather seems like a combination of many problems born out of different theoretical perspectives that are not necessarily compatible. It would be premature to denounce the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding on its grounds. Nevertheless, it demonstrates that peacebuilding raises problems of legitimacy that requires further investigation. *Before normative standards for legitimate peacebuilding can be formulated and the current practices assessed, the philosophical groundings of the competing accounts of the legitimacy of peacebuilding found in scholarly literature must therefore be revealed. Digging up these roots and following their implications for the ethics of liberal peacebuilding is the main task of this thesis.*

This task directs our attention away from concrete missions and towards the ideas of those thinking about peacebuilding – be it scholars, politicians, consultants, or professionals in the field. This is not to distance peacebuilding theory from its empirical object but to enhance the ability of this theory to eventually absorb ethical dimensions of concrete cases. For instance, a local suspicion towards the aims of the peacebuilders is often found in empirical cases. The problem this involves in terms of efficiency can easily be related to general discussions in the current peacebuilding literature. However, the normative aspect of this suspicion that might be the crux of the matter is not grasped from this perspective of technical-instrumental generalizations. One way of mending this problem would be to systematically analyse the ethical dimensions of concrete cases and then induce a more general theoretical framework from it. The opposite way taken in this thesis is to investigate the presuppositions of the current generalization, placing them in a larger political theoretical universe that involves the ethical dimension, and deduce from this abstraction a language for the analysis of concrete cases. The best way would of course be to do both - developing this general theory in dialogue with concrete cases.

However, within the limits of this thesis there is no room for both discussing this philosophical aspect comprehensively and simultaneously analysing cases properly. An alternative would be briefly to refer to cases as an illustration, but this could preclude more than it illuminates because it would render the text with an apparent, but insufficient, empirical backing. Therefore the focus is exclusively on the level of generalized theory, and the important discussion of the relevance and implications of this focus for specific cases is left to further research.

## **PERSPECTIVE**

The theoretical universe that I place the ideas of liberal peacebuilding within in this thesis coincides with the meta-theoretical framework of International Political Theory (IPT) outlined in Chris Brown's *Sovereignty, Rights and Justice: International Political Theory Today* (2002) and Kimberly Hutchings's *International Political Theory: Rethinking Ethics in a Global Era* (1999).<sup>4</sup> IPT combines insights from Political Philosophy and International Relations (IR) by rejecting the paradigmatic significance of the distinctions between *domestic* politics and *international* relations and between *normative* and *positive* theory (Brown, 2002: 2-4; Hutchings, 1999). In this perspective, political philosophy's concern with rights and justice also makes sense when it comes to the international sphere. The difference springs from the relationship between these norms and the sovereignty of bounded political communities (Brown, 2002: 11).

For international political theorists, this bounded quality of politics is foregrounded; it becomes a key feature of political life. The existence of a boundary between domestic and the international is taken for granted by conventional political theory, but is contested and cross-examined by international political theorists (Brown, 2002: 11).

The meaning of legitimacy in IPT is therefore even more complex than in conventional political theory, as ethical considerations rely on a combination of the often colliding norms of sovereignty on the one side and human rights on the other

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<sup>4</sup> Rather than inventing a new field of study with their conceptualization of IPT, Brown and Hutchings attempt to give a meta-theoretical account of what is actually being written on international politics in a wide field that does not neatly fall in under the disciplines of political theory or IR. Whether this field is called political philosophy, -theory, IR, global ethics or international political theory is not important. In *Ways of War and Peace* (1997) Michael W. Doyle who is a central figure in this thesis characterises his work as 'a philosophy of world politics,' and this might be an even better notion than IPT for this thesis.



(Linklater, 1998; Semb, 2000; Walker & Mendlovitz, 1990; Walker, 1993). This antagonism is reflected in the distinction between two general approaches to international politics: An emphasis on the sovereignty of political communities distinguishes ‘communitarianism,’ while ‘cosmopolitanism’ is characterised by a primary concern for the realization of human rights and justice on a global scale (Brown, 1992).<sup>5</sup> This is not to say that communitarianism does not regard rights and justice as important but that these norms, due to their bounded quality, are regarded as embodied in the sovereignty principle. Cosmopolitanism, on the other hand, renders sovereignty as secondary to rights and justice because these are understood as universal phenomena that are not limited by the borders of the state, nation or political community. These traditions encircle the field of IPT as two poles. To this field Brown adds critical and postmodern international theory as new directions that no work on international relations ‘can safely disregard’ (ibid: 13). They are surely not disregarded in this work, and will be further introduced in chapter 3. It is these four strands of thought; cosmopolitanism, communitarianism, critical international theory and postmodernism, that constitute the theoretical universe of this thesis.

While Brown in *Sovereignty, Rights and Justice* engages the various voices within these strands in a common discourse defined by the subject under investigation, such as humanitarian intervention or global distributive justice, Hutchings keeps them as separate discourses. She adds the English School and feminism to the list, and emphasizes the different presuppositions of these discourses on the very nature of international politics. Furthermore, she demonstrates how these strands are locked up in a symbiotic relationship that makes it impossible to argue for one position without taking into account its contingency exposed by the other perspectives. This means that to Hutchings, IPT does not come up with clear prescriptive answers for political action. Its modest contribution, she claims, is to help disentangling the conditions of possibility and the implications of prescriptive positions. First and foremost, this has the potential of increasing the theoretical *self*-awareness of students and practitioners of international politics. Drawing on the writings of Hegel and Foucault, she proposes

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<sup>5</sup> Cosmopolitanism will be introduced further in section 2.3 (‘A Peaceful Crusade’); communitarianism in 3.1.

a meta-theoretical framework of ‘phenomenological adequacy’ and ‘genealogical honesty’ as the methodology of IPT:

*Phenomenological adequacy* means that the *categories* through which theorists understand and judge the world should be expounded as fully as possible in terms of their conditions of possibility in principle and practice. [...] [It] involves examination of the range of conditions which constitute the nature and possibility of agency in the current world order. [...] The main purpose of phenomenological analysis is the assessment of the ethical potential inherent in the current international order (Hutchings, 1999: xiii-xiv and 148-49, italics added).

*Genealogical honesty* involves the theorist in being clear about the conditions of possibility and implications of any given *judgement*. [...] One of the things that the theorist must do is to identify literally where their judgement is coming from, what are the concrete conditions of its possibility and what are its implication in terms of the acceptance or transformation of the realm of international politics (Hutchings, 1999: xiv and 150, italics added).

This is a helpful amplification of the approach to the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding taken in this thesis.

Studies of legitimacy in IR and political science are usually concerned with its descriptive (sociological) rather than normative meaning. This tendency follows Max Weber’s influential approach where the status of science is reserved for the former while the latter is rendered to the speculation of political philosophy. This takes us to the second defining feature of IPT – the rejection of the paradigmatic distinction between normative and positive theory. Political philosophy is often defined as a normative discipline, in contrast to the descriptive studies of political science, sociology and history (Wolff, 1996: 2). In this widespread understanding, political philosophy’s concern with legitimacy is confined to setting out general normative criteria for legitimate systems of government while political science takes as its point of departure the empirical belief systems of those subject to government (Clark, 2003: 79). Due to the influential epistemological distinction between normative and positive social science, political philosophy is defined out of the major theoretical debates on legitimacy by working with seemingly idealistic and ideological notions of legitimacy rather than the ‘brute facts’ of descriptive legitimacy. This view is reflected in mainstream IR scholarship where a rationalist explanatory orientation has long defined what the discipline can ‘talk about’ in a scientific manner (Brown, 2002: 73; Smith, 1996: 233).<sup>6</sup> It is only ‘normative IR theory’ (sometimes called international ethics)

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<sup>6</sup> Most writers on legitimacy as an issue of international relations therefore concentrates on how it ‘works’ as a stabilizing or transformative causal factor (Clark, 2003: 80; Hurd, 1999). This research is still relevant to

that explicitly applies a normative approach to the study of legitimacy. As a sub-discipline of IR, this normative theory often serves the function of judging which of the possible pathways of political action revealed by explanatory investigations that are the most legitimate (Brown, 2002: 12).

This is not the path taken by IPT. By rejecting positivism as the epistemological starting point of political theory and replacing this with an interpretive approach, it changes the primary perspective from questions of how political phenomena are and should be to questions of the conceptual underpinnings of such claims on international politics. It thereby discusses the ontological, epistemological and ethical premises of explanatory and normative theories of legitimacy. When delineating the phenomenological and genealogical premises of explanatory theories such as the democratic peace thesis, it becomes evident that these are closely related to normative positions – that is, already before their ‘normative implications’ are deduced. This opens the ethics of international politics for approaches that do not share the presuppositions of mainstream IR theory. The basic epistemological assumption that other ‘worlds’ are possible makes ethical approaches to legitimacy fundamental to the study of international politics in general (Brown, 2002: 12-14). If reality is not positively given to the student of international politics, the choice of theory is already an ethical one and an awareness of this ethical dimension critical. In other words, ‘international relations theory (...) is already an ethics, already profoundly linked to an ethical position and an ethical debate’ (Burgess, 2004: 210).

It is in this vein that Alex J. Bellamy and Paul Williams in the above mentioned special issue of *International Peacekeeping* criticise the ‘problem-solving’ approach of the mainstream literature on peacebuilding. Following Robert Cox’s distinction between problem-solving and critical theory (Cox, 1981), they counter this approach with a critical research agenda of ‘thinking anew’ about peace operations:

In our opinion, thinking anew requires an engagement with the dominant philosophical assumptions of the day relevant to the topic under consideration. This, in turn, throws up at least two challenges: one epistemological and the other ontological. The epistemological challenge involves addressing questions such as: What constitutes valid knowledge about contemporary conflict, human suffering and global responses? How is ‘common sense’ constructed and which type of knowledge and whose experiences are privileged, and with what effects? The ontological

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international political theory because it illuminates the reflexive relationship between ideas about legitimacy and the dynamics of international politics (see also (Steffek, 2003) and (Reus-Smit, 2003:607-610).

challenge raises questions about the nature of the crises that stimulate an international desire to respond, the relationship between global structures of insecurity and individual actors, and the relationship between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Bellamy, 2004a:2).

This critical approach breaths life into questions of normative legitimacy, as the phenomenon of peacebuilding is opened for alternative philosophical assumptions that put its ethical dimension into question.

## **RESEARCH QUESTION**

This perspective draws the attention of an investigation of the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding to the following research question:

**1) *What are the political theoretical presuppositions of the contending positions on the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding in scholarly literature?***

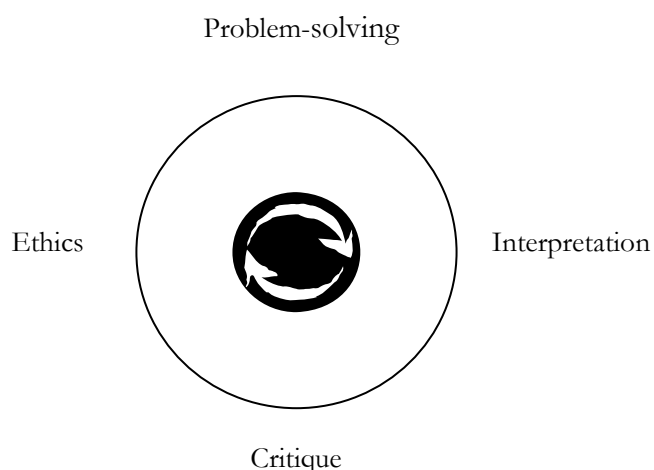
This entails the following sub questions that will be answered in the three main chapters of the thesis:

**2) *What are the political theoretical presuppositions of the idea of liberal peacebuilding?* (Chapter 2)**

**3) *What are the presuppositions of the critical assessments of the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding in scholarly literature?* (Chapter 3)**

**4) *What alternative visions of legitimate peacebuilding can be derived from this critique?* (Chapter 4)**

The sequencing of the sub-questions above corresponds to a theoretical circle from the *interpretation* of ‘common-sense’ representations of peacebuilding in *problem-solving* literature (including both explanatory and normative theory), to *critique* based on insights from such interpretation, to *ethics* in the sense of theoretical reconstructions of the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding, delivering conceptual premises for better *problem-solving* accounts. This ‘hermeneutic circle,’ illustrated in ‘Figure 1.1’ below, might serve as a general model for studies in international political theory.



*Figure 1.1: The 'hermeneutic circle' of international political theory*

### **META-PERSPECTIVE**

This method of 'ethical reconstruction' of political ideas can be related to Andrew Linklater's concept of 'praxeology' (Linklater, 1998: 5-6). In his interpretation, the method of praxeological analysis 'is concerned with reflecting on the moral resources within existing social arrangements' that can serve as fuel for positive social change. 'It is preoccupied not with issues of strategy and tactics but with revealing that new forms of political community are immanent within existing forms of life and anticipated by their moral reserves' (ibid.).

Opening peacebuilding for ethical debate does not imply that the critics of liberal peacebuilding are right. On the contrary, its strong support in international politics indicates that the case for liberal peacebuilding is a strong one. However, this does not preclude that placing this case under critical scrutiny might add fruitful insights from other theoretical domains. And if they do not, such an acknowledgement would itself represent an advance, grounding current practices soundly in a comprehensive political theory of peacebuilding. Furthermore, it is likely that the full social significance of current peacebuilding practices is not grasped by the dominant strand of peacebuilding theory (Stamnes, 2004). Complementing this strand with alternative perspectives might therefore not only result in ethical debate on its

legitimacy, it might also raise the general theoretical awareness of the immanent ethical meaning of current practices.

The project of placing the political architecture of peacebuilding under ethical scrutiny may be claimed to be unrealistic in political terms. For peacebuilding, the alternative may, however, be less realistic in the longer run. By abstaining from taking the legitimacy dimension into consideration, a slippery slope towards more effective but even more problematic measures of peacebuilding is opened. This development would risk draining peacebuilding of its ethical potential. It is exactly this potential that makes it worth questioning the legitimacy of current efforts. Not because it is inferior to other manifestations of international governance in terms of legitimacy, but because the idea of peacebuilding is a powerful seed of positive social transformation – a seed that should not be given less favourable growth conditions just because it is so virtuous.

## 2 INTERPRETATION

In this chapter, the political theoretical underpinnings of the idea of liberal peacebuilding will be addressed in order to reveal its ethical dimension. This establishes peacebuilding as a phenomenon of international political theory that can be countered by alternative approaches.

The idea of liberal peacebuilding has two basic political philosophical components: a notion of liberal peace and a conception of liberal state-building. The first implies an idea of positive peace that reflects liberal standards of justice; the second expresses a view of statecraft as a form of social engineering for individual emancipation. However, for these components to be relevant to liberal peacebuilding, they depend on certain assumptions on the nature and ethics of global politics found in liberal internationalism. Furthermore, this constellation of liberal political and – internationalist elements would not have been considered legitimate in liberal terms without a redefinition of the very meaning of state sovereignty. In the following, these foundational elements of contemporary liberalism will be related to peacebuilding in the above mentioned order. Thereafter, the particular vision of liberal peacebuilding that these elements merge into will be discussed at length.

For readers familiar with the theoretical foundations of liberal internationalism, its connection with peacebuilding may seem rather obvious. There are two reasons why a whole chapter is still devoted to this foundation: Firstly, that I have not found a united account of how these different elements of liberal thought converge in the idea of liberal peacebuilding elsewhere. Secondly, that making these ideas explicit makes it possible to see how the critique of liberal peacebuilding relates to its theoretical foundations.

## ***2.1 Foundations in Liberal Political Theory***

### **THE LIBERAL PEACE**

The idea of liberal peace springs directly from the basic ideological assertions of liberalism. Following John Gray, these can be reduced to four foundational elements:

[Liberalism] is *individualist*, in that it asserts the moral primacy of the person against the claims of any social collectivity; *egalitarian*, inasmuch as it confers to all [humans] the same moral status and denies the relevance to legal or political order of differences in moral worth among human beings; *universalist*, affirming the moral unity of the human species and according a secondary importance to specific historical associations and cultural forms; and *meliorist* in its affirmation of the corrigibility and improvability of all social institutions and political arrangements (Gray, 1986), (quoted from (MacMillan, 1998:10-11)).

These elements circle around the core principle of individual freedom. ‘Above all, this is a belief in the importance of moral freedom, of the right to be treated and a duty to treat others as ethical subjects, not as objects or means only’ (Doyle, 1997:207).

The basic argument of the liberal peace is very simple: If these principles constitute social relations, there will be no need to fight: for peace to be sustainable, a certain degree of liberty and justice is required, and liberalism is a political vision of how these fundamental human values can be realized. Furthermore, political arrangements that reflect and cultivate the ideals of liberalism are regarded as inherently peaceful. Under liberal guidance, democracy and capitalism are seen as such systems of peaceful competition where even the losers maintain the sense of justice and trust in the system required for peace to prosper.

These assertions are still compatible with the fact that liberal groups or states resort to war for the preservation of their way of life. However, because warfare is not rational with regard to the egalitarian and universal outlook of liberalism, it is assumed that liberals will solve conflicts peacefully when possible. According to MacMillan, liberalism is therefore essentially pacific, although not pacifist.<sup>7</sup> This does not mean that political communities associated with liberalism will always act peacefully, but the assumption is that the more liberal principles pervade their actions and external relations, the more pacific they will be (MacMillan, 1998).

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<sup>7</sup> In *Thinking about Peace and War*, Martin Caedel defines ‘pacifism’ as between ‘defencism’ and ‘pacifism’ on a scale from ‘militarism’ and ‘crusading’ to pacifism (Caedel, 1987). Pacifists reject the defencist view of war as an inescapable vice, but accept that violent means are necessary under certain unfavourable conditions



After having launched the democratic peace thesis in ‘Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs, Part 1’ (1983) to which we will return in the next section, Michael W. Doyle in ‘Part 2’ discusses his empirical finding that liberal states are no more peaceful in their relations with non-liberal states than are states in general. Ascribing this ‘failure in guiding foreign policy outside the liberal world’ to a flawed liberal representation of international relations outside the liberal zone of peace, this seems to go against the pacific image of liberalism. Doyle’s argument is, however, rooted in liberal principles. He sees in a revised liberal foreign policy that takes realist insights on the non-liberal zone of war into account a potential for cultivating the liberal peace also outside of the liberal pacific union (Doyle, 1983b). Hence, Doyle’s argument is in line with the claim that liberalism is pacificistic in principle, but it shows that this feature is not necessarily manifested in the foreign policy of liberal states.

The normative foundations of liberalism are comprised in the liberal notion of human rights. Doyle lists these as the right to freedom from arbitrary authority, the social rights necessary to protect and promote the capacity and opportunity for freedom, and a right to democratic participation or representation as a guarantee for the other two: ‘To ensure that morally autonomous individuals remain free in those areas of social action where public authority is needed, public legislation has to express the will of the citizens making laws for their own community’ (Doyle, 1997:207). When international intervention is undertaken in the name of human rights, it is therefore natural to initiate a democratization process where the citizens are given control of public legislation and their social rights are secured. The question of how this can be done takes us to the issue of state-building.

## **LIBERAL STATE-BUILDING**

The liberal conception of human rights is reflected in the institutions of the liberal state. Although there is no single consensus across the various strands of liberalism on how these rights can best be preserved and balanced, there is in political liberalism a

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that it tries to eradicate by political means. The ‘perpetual peace’ tradition in political philosophy holds a pacificist view of international politics.

shared commitment to four institutional requirements that cultivate the ‘civil’ liberal peace. Doyle sums these up as follows:

First, citizens possess juridical equality and other fundamental civic rights, such as freedom of religion and the press. Second, the effective sovereigns of the state are representative legislatures deriving their authority from the consent of the electorate and exercising their authority free from all restraint.... Most pertinently for the impact of Liberalism on foreign affairs, the state is subject to neither the external authority of other states nor the internal authority of special prerogatives over foreign policy.... Third, the economy rests on a recognition of the rights of private property, including the ownership of the means of production. [...] Fourth, economic decisions are predominantly shaped by the forces of supply and demand, domestically and internationally, and are free from strict control by bureaucracies (Doyle, 1997: 207).

It is these basic institutions that are built in liberal peacebuilding operations.<sup>8</sup> As a symbol of the core principles of liberalism, they need no further legitimization when built in rising liberal states. It is taken for granted that their presence is the best guarantee for the realization of individual freedom among the citizens, and hence for the liberal peace to grow strong.

The political architecture of peacebuilding, however, turns the Western liberal peace around by starting with the institutional structures that followed from liberal thinking in Western politics over centuries. When this is done in formerly non-liberal states outside the Western hemisphere, it has, as we saw in the introduction, been questioned whether these institutions are still the political manifestation of the ‘moral freedom’ of the local populations. Seen through a direct transferral of the liberal principles of individualism, egalitarianism and universalism the answer is, nevertheless, affirmative. This outlook of liberalism makes the peacebuilders assume that the urge for individual freedom as it is expressed in human rights is inherent in all people – also the unprivileged subjects of non-liberal regimes and ‘failed states’. Compromising these principles with notions of cultural or political relativism is therefore morally reprehensible because it would imply depriving people of their very

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<sup>8</sup> Compare Doyle’s list with the following statement by Paris: ‘[P]erhaps the most remarkable feature of the peacebuilding operations in the 1990s was that they all pursued the same general strategy for promoting stable and lasting peace in war-shattered states: democratization and marketization. The typical formula for peacebuilding included promoting civil and political rights, such as the right to free speech and a free press, as well as freedom of association and movement; preparing and administering democratic elections; drafting national constitutions that codified civil and political rights; training or retraining police and justice officials in the appropriate behavior for state functionaries in a liberal democracy; promoting the development of independent “civil society” organizations and the transformation of formerly warring groups into democratic political parties; encouraging the development of free-market economies by eliminating barriers to the free flow of capital and goods within and across a country’s borders; and stimulating the growth of private enterprise while reducing the state’s role in the economy (Paris, 2004:19).

humanity. Furthermore, due to the individualism of liberalism, there is drawn a clear distinction between the citizens of the state – the civil society – and its political structures. A regime can be non-liberal, and its supporters may hold non-liberal opinions, but under the right conditions, all people are potential liberals. The building of liberal institutions is therefore not only about building liberal state structures. It is also about opening a public space for the cultivation and reward of ‘enlightened’ rationality. This process will eventually result in a moral commitment to the fundamental principles of liberalism among the population, and hence to a pacific spirit. The faster liberal institutions are in place, the better the chances for a successful liberalization process therefore are according to this dominant understanding of liberal peacebuilding.

Although the most basic philosophical foundations of the idea of liberal peacebuilding are found in liberal political theory of the state, its immediate connection with liberal theory must be sought elsewhere. One can derive from the domestic focus of liberal political theory a presumption in favour of liberalization on a global scale, but it does not account for the question of how this ideal can or should be attended to in terms of international relations. Liberal *international* theory comprises a variety of answers to this question, differing both in analytical focus and prescriptive commitment. Tim Dunne distinguishes between three main theoretical trends: *liberal internationalism* with a focus on the international promotion of liberalism, *liberal idealism* concentrating on the democratization of international governance structures, and *liberal institutionalism* committed to the analysis of the role of institutions and regimes in international relations (Dunne, 2001). It is in the strand of liberal internationalism, the most influential of these three in international politics, that the political ideas of liberal peace and liberal state-building were gradually translated into the idea of liberal peacebuilding through the 1990s (Paris, 1997).

## ***2.2 Foundations in Liberal Internationalism***

### **THE LIBERAL INTERNATIONALIST PEACE**

Liberal internationalism combines the liberalist assumptions outlined in the prior section with 'internationalism' concerned with the promotion of transnational or global solidarity and international governance' (McGrew, 2002:286,note 1). While political realism regards world politics as a 'state of war', a jungle that cannot be cultivated, liberal internationalism sees it as a garden where the wilderness of war inhibits the possibility of growing peace (Doyle, 1997:19). In this image, peacebuilding is not only an aim in itself but a means of expanding the garden of peace through a transformation of states shattered by civil war. The neo-realist focus on great power relations renders this commitment peripheral to world politics with little impact on international peace and security (Mearsheimer 1994/95). Two of the most prominent proponents of this line of thought, Chaim Kaufmann and John J. Mearsheimer, challenge the whole idea of uniting war-torn states and suggest an alternative strategy of partition along ethnic lines (Kaufmann 1996, Mearsheimer and Van Evera 1996). Furthermore, if peacebuilding operations actually succeed in their venture of empowering weak states, they may from a neo-realist perspective simply endanger world peace by tipping the international power balance.

In 'Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs, Part 1' (1983), Doyle counters the assertions of this outlook by arguing that while the relationship between liberal and non-liberal states is best accounted for by the realist notion of anarchy, the relationship between liberal states is characterized by a different logic creating a 'separate peace'.<sup>9</sup> This influential contribution to the democratic peace thesis, inspired by Immanuel Kant's sketch on 'perpetual peace' (Kant, 1795/1991), was an important precursor for the revitalization of liberal internationalism – a development that eventually made the way for the idea of liberal peacebuilding. Charles-Philippe David lists three liberal internationalist assumptions on the nature of international politics that converge to form a foundation for this idea:

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<sup>9</sup> This article provoked realist counter-perspectives, resulting in the famous debate over the democratic peace thesis between neo-liberalism and neo-realism in IR (see e.g. Layne, 1994; Mearsheimer, 1995; Russett et al., 1995).

1) The appeal of values such as democracy is a force for peace among States and communities. In the Kantian view, the elements of a republican constitution (respect for individual freedoms, separation of powers, representative government, the rule of law) considerably reduce the belligerence of States. The modern thesis of 'democratic peace', according to which democratic States do not wage war against each another, stems from this idea. As democracy spreads so too do the chances for peace. [...].

2) Interdependence, particularly in the economic field, is also a force for peace to the extent that States (and communities) have more to lose than to gain by investing their resources in strategies of war. [...] According to liberals, the restructuring of a country according to free-market precepts is the best guarantee of integration into the world economy, prosperity, and hence stability. This thesis ... supplies a justification for the efforts to carry out socio-economic conversions made by most peacebuilding missions.

3) Finally, international institutions can profitably take over from States in order to advance the liberal ideal, given their capacity to induce change in the behaviour of states through the use of the resources and prestige which international cooperation provides (David, 2002:25).

The central assumption, statistically reaffirmed in the recent work of Russett and Oneal among others (Russett, 1993; Russett & Oneal, 2001), is that these elements – liberal democracy, transnational economic integration and the growth of international governance – through mutually reinforcing dynamics create 'the conditions for an expanding zone of peace in which war increasingly becomes an irrational or unthinkable instrument of interstate politics' (McGrew, 2002:268). While this democratic peace thesis concerns inter-state relations, it is cited as a proof also of the peace dividend of liberalization for intra-state relations (see Gates, Gleditsch & Hegre, 2004; Hegre et al., 2001 e.g.). However, the legitimacy of the civil liberal peace does not depend on it. As will be demonstrated in the following, the reason why the democratic peace thesis has had such a great impact on liberal peacebuilding is that it relates efforts of intra-state peacebuilding to the concern for international peace and security that lies at the heart of international law and the UN system.

Bellamy and Williams draw a distinction between a Westphalian and a post-Westphalian image of how the democratic peace thesis affects what role peace operations should play in global politics. In the Westphalian form, peace operations were limited to the purpose of assisting in the creation and maintenance of conditions conducive to long-term conflict resolution efforts by the parties themselves. Although they were the expression of a liberal attempt at reforming the international system, this reformation would happen within a Westphalian logic where 'the commitment to liberalism and democracy that lies at the heart of the democratic peace thesis was tempered by a concern to maintain the internal integrity and political independence of

sovereign states' (Bellamy & Williams, 2004b:3). The post-Westphalian image of the democratic peace deviates from this view by insisting that not only the international system but also the member states themselves should be liberalized for international peace to take root:

The principal aim of peace operations thus becomes not so much about creating spaces for negotiated conflict resolution between states but about actively contributing to the construction of liberal polities, economies and societies. In other words, post-Westphalian peace operations are intended to protect and spread liberal democratic governance (Bellamy & Williams, 2004b:4-5).

Mark Duffield writes that this commitment of peacebuilding (he calls it 'post-war reconstruction') policy 'to transform societies as a whole' represents a break with the past 'when development was something that was seen as following as its own accord from economic growth and investment' (Duffield, 2001: 82). He relates this shift to a merger of international development and security policy that springs from an emerging perception of, on the one hand, development as a precondition for domestic and international security, and on the other hand, security as a requirement for development: 'Given the related reproblematicization of security in term of underdevelopment becoming dangerous, development is now something that cannot be left to chance' (ibid.). Despite the altruistic appearance of liberal peacebuilding, Duffield sees in this international security agenda its underlying political rationale.

In 'A liberal view: preserving and expanding the liberal pacific union' (1999) Doyle explicitly outlines the geopolitical potential of liberal peacebuilding, rendering it a central tool of instigating the expansion of 'the liberal pacific union'. A first element of this instigation, he writes, is to create a global structural environment for illiberal authoritarian regimes that make them face the choice between liberal reform and collapse (Doyle, 1999:54). If they choose the former, it implies a promise of 'the opportunity to participate more fully in the liberal world market without security restrictions (such as COCOM) and with the protection of GATT standards and access to IMF programs', as well as 'membership in the liberal "zone of peace" and the consequent reduction in insecurity and, possibly, defence expenditures' (Doyle, 1999:55). If they nevertheless choose the latter and it results in civil war, Doyle continues, the UN should intervene with 'comprehensive peacebuilding' 'bringing

international involvement to areas long thought to be the exclusive domain of domestic jurisdiction' (Doyle, 1999:55):

Traditional strategies of conflict resolution, when successful, were designed to resolve a dispute between conflicting parties. Successful resolution could be measured by: (1) the stated reconciliation of the parties; (2) the duration of the reconciliation; and (3) changes in the way parties behaved toward each other.... But successful contemporary peacebuilding changes not merely behavior but, more importantly, it transforms identities and institutional context. More than reforming play in an old game, it changes the game (Doyle, 1999:55).

This is the essential feature of liberal peacebuilding that distinguishes it from former instruments of liberal internationalist policy and makes it a benchmark contribution to international politics. While earlier policies were limited to the structural and diplomatic instigation of liberalism 'from the outside', peacebuilding implies a direct involvement in the internal affairs of conflict-ridden states. This development would not have been possible, however, without a general change in the meaning of state sovereignty in international politics.

## **THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT**

Through most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a central element of liberal internationalism's prescriptions for peace was found in the rules of the Westphalian system. After all, this system was a precondition for the evolution of the liberal state in the first place. These rules include non-interference, legal equality, reciprocity, territorial sanctity and respect for religious and political diversity (Holsti, 1999:284, 286). Moral support of this principle was found in liberal notions of national self-determination, originally formulated in the writings of John Stuart Mill in the 1860s (Brown, 2002). In the context of a hostile international environment, this commitment rendered the hypothetical idea of liberal peacebuilding infeasible because it would compromise the Westphalian 'sovereignty game' (Jackson, 1990) and thereby open a Pandora's Box of interventionist strategies in international relations.

The liberal dominance in international politics in the post-Cold War era, combined with a widening recognition of the changing role of the state in a time of globalization, changed the liberal internationalist conception of the sovereignty game in a liberal direction. In this connection, globalization is normally understood as a process of 'economic, political, and social integration of states and societies, both

horizontal and vertically in tighter webs of interdependence' (Gleditsch & Soyza, 2002:26). This integration and interdependence transcends state borders to the extent that internal conflict and genocide are seen as an international concern, not only in a normative sense but also in terms of causality. This qualification of the role of the state in global politics entailed an amplification of when the principle of non-intervention was valid. While the Westphalian sovereignty principle comprises all states as long as they respect the rules of the international game, the liberal standards of self-determination are rooted in the liberal ideal of statecraft. It does not encompass non-liberal regimes that do not protect their citizenry from grave injustice. With the dominance of liberalism after the fall of communism, this qualified conception of sovereignty has become a significant challenge to the Westphalian rules of the game. It has one of its strongest proponents in the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. In 'Two Concepts of Sovereignty' he writes:

State sovereignty, in its most basic sense, is being redefined – not least by the forces of globalisation and international co-operation. States are now widely understood to be instruments at the service of their peoples, and not vice versa. At the same time individual sovereignty – by which I mean the fundamental freedom of each individual, enshrined in the charter of the UN and subsequent international treaties – has been enhanced by a renewed and spreading consciousness of individual rights. When we read the charter today, we are more than ever conscious that its aim is to protect individual human beings, not to protect those who abuse them (Annan, 1999:49-50).

In the same article Annan relates this redefinition of sovereignty to a developing international norm in favour of intervention to protect civilians across state borders and stresses that 'intervention' in this context should not be understood as referring only to the use of force. It also involves peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

This way of shifting the terms of the debate on intervention away from sovereignty vs. human rights and towards human rights based notions of sovereignty anticipates the groundbreaking report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) *The Responsibility to Protect*. This report's distinction between an outdated definition of 'sovereignty as control' and a 'modern' notion of 'sovereignty as responsibility' clearly resonates with Annan's two concepts:

The defense of state sovereignty, by even its strongest supporters, does not include any claim of the unlimited power of a state to do what it wants to its own people. The Commission heard no such claim at any stage during our worldwide consultations. It is acknowledged that sovereignty implies a dual responsibility: externally – to respect the sovereignty of other states, and internally,



to respect the dignity and basic rights of all the people within the state. In international human rights covenants, in UN practice, and in state practice itself, sovereignty is now understood as embracing this dual responsibility. Sovereignty as responsibility has become the minimum content of good international citizenship (ICISS, 2001:§1.35).

The responsibility to protect civilians from genocide, civil war and grave human rights violations, the report claims, primarily lies at the state. It is only when the state fails in upholding this responsibility that the international community must be involved. While this was seen as a *right to intervene* with military force in the debate over humanitarian intervention it is now termed a *responsibility* with regard to the people in need. This shift of emphasis is of direct relevance to peacebuilding because it takes into account the prevention and reconstruction components of external action to a much larger degree:

The responsibility to protect means not just the ‘responsibility to react [militarily],’ but the ‘responsibility to prevent’ and the ‘responsibility to rebuild’ as well. It directs our attention to the costs and results of action versus no action, and provides conceptual, normative and operational linkages between assistance, intervention and reconstruction (ibid: §2.29).

In this conceptual framework, peacebuilding is represented by the responsibility to rebuild. It involves certain ‘peace building responsibilities’ concerning ‘security’, ‘justice and reconciliation’ and ‘development’ (ibid: §§5.1-5.21). Furthermore, peacebuilding is also a part of the responsibility to prevent in the form of post-conflict peacebuilding where no prior military reaction is required. For a legal debate on peacebuilding this distinction would be crucial, because the responsibility to rebuild becomes an integral part of military intervention while the responsibility to prevent does not awake the non-intervention spirit of the UN Charter. From the political focus of this thesis, however, post-intervention- and post-settlement peacebuilding efforts call upon the same set of questions concerning the legitimacy of building peace through liberalization in non-liberal countries. Nevertheless, the coercive element of these missions is obviously more apparent in a post-intervention context of massive military presence.

Both Annan and the ICISS attempt to replace the military connotations of ‘humanitarian intervention’ with a broader notion of protection where civil measures are the main ingredient and military coercion is added to the strategy when needed. This sidelining of civil and military means makes the military component sound less at

odds with the non-intervention principle, while, on the other hand, making peacebuilding sound more like proper intervention. It thereby takes into account the extensiveness of the task of peacebuilding that was toned down in the language of ‘reconstruction’ and ‘post-conflict assistance’. Annan writes: ‘The aftermath of war requires no less skill, no less sacrifice, no fewer resources than the war itself, if lasting peace is to be secured’ (Annan, 1999:49-50).

The problem of undesirable effects of peacebuilding efforts, such as a dependency on intervening authority and a distortion of local institutions and economy, is acknowledged in *The Responsibility to Protect* (§§ 5.25-5.29). These effects are the sources of some of the main complaints from the critics of peacebuilding, and it is therefore interesting to see how they are suggested resolved in the report. The answer is found in ‘the achievement of local ownership’. This means taking steps to set up ‘a political process between the conflicting parties and ethnic groups in a post-conflict society that develops local political competence within a framework that encourages cooperation between former antagonists’ (§ 5.30). It also involves that the long-term aim of international actors is to return the society in question ‘to those who live in it, and who, in the last instance, must take responsibility together for its future destiny’ (§ 5.31). These praiseworthy, but rather obvious, suggestions follow directly from the core mandate of peacebuilding, and it is therefore surprising that they are left to two final paragraphs on how to counteract negative side-effects of intervention. No attempt is made at defining how this kind of local ownership can be achieved beyond the general recipes of peacebuilding that may cause the problem of dependency and distortion in the first place. From a legitimacy perspective, this question is the crux of the matter and therefore deserves much more attention from a responsible doctrine of peacebuilding – even if it entails a revision of established truths of liberal peacebuilding.

Although *The Responsibility to Protect* is based on a wide consensus among policy makers and practitioners in international organizations and NGOs concerned with issues of peace, development and human rights, it is still quite radical with regard to established norms and discourses of foreign policy. Without the liberal internationalist argument on how the maintenance of international peace and security

depends on the liberalization of states outside the liberal zone of peace, liberal peacebuilding missions would probably have been looked upon with stronger suspicion by powerful actors with an interest in preserving the current state of international affairs. In *Legitimacy in International Society* (2005) Ian Clark describes how the democratic peace thesis changes the logic of ‘international legitimacy’ by introducing a decisive international element in the ideals of good governance, democratic self-determination and the promotion of human rights. Although being ‘bedrocks of the post-1945 international society as a whole,’ these ideals ‘were never visualized as ends in themselves, whatever their inherent importance’:

They were originally seen, and have more recently been affirmed, as means to the wider international purpose of securing order and peace. The logic that has united these two ambitions is the assumed intimate connection between adherence to domestic legitimacy precepts and legitimate international conduct. The overarching theory that makes sense of both is that it is only in the former that there can be any proper guarantee of the latter. In a nutshell, this is the all-embracing legitimacy theory to which international society has increasingly, if intermittently, subscribed over the past century. It has reached an important culmination point at the end of the twentieth century, and in the early years of the twenty-first (Clark, 2005:188).

With this liberal internationalist impact on the sovereignty game, a niche is opened for liberal peacebuilding at the centre stage of international peace and security policy. As the embodiment of the responsibility to protect and prevent, peacebuilding builds the capacity for being in accordance with the new sovereignty norm. The success of operations that are legitimized by this norm therefore depends on it. From being a liberal ideal at odds with the sovereignty game, liberal peacebuilding now has become a key player of the game by building the capacity for democratic self-determination *in the very name of sovereignty*.

## ***2.3 The Vision of Liberal Peacebuilding***

### **CONTOURS OF A LEFT-LIBERAL VISION**

The aim of post-Westphalian peace operations is not to transcend the logic of the state system but to maintain the Westphalian order on liberal premises with ‘extra-Westphalian’ means when necessary (Richmond, 2004:91). In comparison with the more radical cosmopolitan visions of liberal idealism, this leaves peacebuilding with a rather conservative mission (Dunne, 2001; McGrew, 2002). In its liberal internationalist definition, peacebuilding is not a measure for a radical structural transformation of the global political and economic order, but a temporary, limited and more realistic means for the universalization of the Western liberal state, and, in effect, for the consolidation of the liberal zone of security and prosperity. The final culmination of this process would be the expansion of this zone to the whole world, creating a ‘global civil peace’ (Gates et al, 2004).

This does not only involve the perpetuation of an inter-state ‘peace treaty’. It also means a reinforcement of the neoliberal vision (what Gleditsch and Soysa call ‘the liberal globalist case’) that sees in global free trade and minimal political intervention regarding resource allocation the recipe for economic growth (Gleditsch & Soysa, 2002:26). For countries emerging from civil war to benefit from this growth, ‘good governance’ in line with liberal precepts is required (see for instance Chesterman, Ignatieff & Thakur, 2005). Liberal peacebuilding is an effective means for including these states into the global economy with mutual gains for the state and the neoliberal economic system. Rather than reforming the current liberal world order, peacebuilding optimizes it.

In ‘Whose Democracy; Which Peace? Contextualizing the Democratic Peace’ (2004) John MacMillan sheds light on this somewhat conservative feature of liberal peacebuilding by pointing out certain normative and prescriptive implications of the democratic peace thesis itself that are reflected in current practices. In particular the dichotomy between liberal and non-liberal states and between the liberal zone of peace and the remaining zone of war and disorder, creates a logic of international politics ‘that most closely resembles the more conservative strand and crusading wing of the

wider liberal tradition' (MacMillan, 2004:473). Compared to the more radical-liberal strands, it is conservative by implication because its vision of peace reaffirms the sovereign state system on liberal premises rather than engaging with supra-national projects of international organization, structural reform and distributive justice (ibid.). Although the mandate of peacebuilding operations is formed on these conservative premises, its dependence on international organization and foreign assistance, however, brings it closer to a *left-liberal* strand. According to MacMillan, this strand to a larger degree than the conservative one emphasises alternatives to military force in the interaction with non-liberals and engages with 'the perceived causes of violence in prevailing social and political conditions' (MacMillan, 2004: 487-488).

In *At War's End* (2004), Paris develops the theoretical implications of this left-liberal orientation. Based on the acknowledgement, presented in the introduction, of the incapability of current operations of reaching their high goals, he proposes a strategy of 'institutionalization before liberalization' (the IBL-strategy) that is more consistent with its objectives (Paris, 2004: 179-211). It is based on the finding, mentioned in the introduction, that the liberalizing effects of marketization and democratization are not sufficient for changing the political culture of formerly non-liberal states if they are not backed up by effective institutions that can enforce the principles of liberalism until they have found their way into the political culture of the host-country. Distinguishing between the nature of liberalism and liberalization, Paris therefore convincingly argues that a coercive element must be integrated in peacebuilding operations for them to be consistent with their aim of building liberal market democracies after a Western model. Because the introduction of economic and political freedom is itself a process of institutional reform, his IBL-strategy is, however, better characterized as 'coercion before liberty'. This is not a radical shift in the agenda of liberal peacebuilding, but represents a growing acknowledgement of the inertia of the liberal instincts of people who do not have an immediate economic or political interest in political change, or whose power even depends on the preservation of a non-liberal *status quo*.

This insight that was somewhat forgotten amidst the liberalist optimism of the early and mid-90s, Paris traces back to the writings of classical liberal thinkers such as

Locke, Smith and Kant (Paris, 2004: 46-51). In distinction from the contemporary writers on the liberal peace that take the existence of functioning states as a given, these liberals recognized the need of effective executive and legal authorities that could enforce the principles of liberalism when needed. The classical focus on the state of nature as immanent in domestic politics makes these thinkers more relevant to peacebuilding than current debates on the institutional design of century-old liberal states, he argues. This parallel, however, has two limitations as I see it. The first is that it channels the coercive element of the liberal state into a temporal logic where it *precedes* the remaining liberalization process. Paris explicitly calls for ‘the disappearing Leviathan’ (Paris, 2004: 46), and his recipe implies an enlightened authority that represents the liberal will of the people until they are mature enough to uphold a liberal system without external coercion. The second problem is that Paris associates the idea of ‘the state of nature’ with the nature of post-civil war politics. This adds up to his temporal reading and takes the allegory of how to move from a state-of-nature to a state of civil order literally. This allegory is appropriate as an argument of how the institutions of liberal states must be adapted to their political climate – the more conflictual a climate, the more coercive they must be for liberal principles to be promoted. As an argument for the need of coercive liberalization in non-liberal polities, however, this literal reading renders the political substance of the conflict environment in which peacebuilding is undertaken as an under-developed state of nature that naturally strives for the liberal peace as its logical opposite.<sup>10</sup> This parallel makes it possible for Paris to recognize the need for liberal peace-through-coercion without having to legitimize it further.

The analysis that this solution is based on – of the inexpediency of the neoliberal structuration-model for the task – is itself a typical left-liberal position. Rather than abandoning the idea of free trade and economic interdependence in line with *radical* liberalism, Paris suggests institutional solutions that can regulate the negative effects of liberalization. Another version of this vision can be found in Jarat Chopra’s call for more effective supranational governance of war-torn territories that

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<sup>10</sup> In *Global Governance and the New Wars* (2001) Mark Duffield demonstrates that this anarchic image of civil war as a total societal collapse without any political potential but liberalization is a recurrent feature of the policy

at the same time are far more accountable to the local population. This would imply a greater willingness to adapt the means of peacebuilding to local variations while retaining the overall objective of liberal state-building (Chopra, 1999, 2000; Chopra & Hohe, 2004). It is in line with Paris's solution because it requires more rather than less international presence and commitment for the building of local capacities.<sup>11</sup> In *Peace-Maintenance: The evolution of international political authority* (1999) Chopra develops the political theoretical framework of an evolving international capacity to respond to what he sees as the threat to humanity posed by warlords and tyrants in war-torn countries. In this framework liberal peacebuilding becomes an integrated catalyst for the political transformation necessary for peace to be maintained globally. Chopra has no faith in the Westphalian framework to preserve international peace and security – effective supranational measures must replace the ad-hoc character of peacebuilding of the 1990s (ibid: 18). Balancing between the *conservative* and the *radical* visions of peacebuilding, he sees in a permanent capacity for international peace-maintenance ‘not a luxurious result of a great peace plan or abstract theory of world order’ but ‘a real step towards a kind of transnational governance that is beyond the periodic intervention symptomatic of a community of sovereign states’ (ibid: xii).

Adding to this left-liberal picture, Tom Woodhouse and Oliver Ramsbotham in ‘Cosmopolitan Peacekeeping and the Globalization of Security’ discuss the possibility of making peacekeeping (in a wide definition that includes peacebuilding) a more universal measure of global politics that is less susceptible to great power interests and inconsistent application. The touchstone of setting up a permanent UN Emergency Peace Service or a mechanism similar to it at the global level, they conclude, ‘should be to develop forms of peacekeeping that serve, not primarily the interests of the powerful, but mainly the interests, represented globally, of what Edward Said called ‘the poor, the disadvantaged, the unrepresented, the voiceless, the powerless’’ (Woodhouse & Ramsbotham, 2005: 153). In a similar, but less reformist, vein Graham

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oriented literature on conflict resolution and peacebuilding (Duffield, 2001).

<sup>11</sup> Based on the UN's performance as a transitional authority in East-Timor, Chopra is, however, pessimistic when it comes to the ability of the UN organization to handle this task, and proposes an alternative framework of privatized coalition missions led by single countries with a UN mandate, where the transitional administration of war-torn countries is subcontracting its tasks ‘to whatever international, national, non-governmental or private agency has the expertise and capacity to perform the function’ (Chopra, 2000:35-36).

Day and Christopher Freeman recently launched ‘the policekeeping approach’ as an operationalization of ‘the responsibility to protect’ (Day & Freeman, 2005).

The current idea of peacebuilding is probably best seen as a configuration of these left-liberal visions and the more realist notion of peacebuilding in the service of the pacific union of liberal states. While one from the outlook of *The Responsibility to Protect* might derive a notion of post-Westphalian global governance that radically supersedes the Westphalian rules of the international system and places peacebuilding at the core of this development towards the realization of a global liberal peace, a more sober understanding of the meaning of liberal peacebuilding therefore roots this left-liberal moment in its dependence on a conservative interpretation of the democratic peace thesis. Without the convergence with the ‘enlightened self-interest’ of the powerful actors of the current system it would also belong to ‘the great peace plans and abstract theories of world order’ that Chopra dissociates his vision from. Nonetheless, after having raised doubts on the liberal internationalist presuppositions of this vision in the next chapter, it will be discussed whether such ‘abstract theories’ might still have something to offer for a legitimate realization of the left-liberal vision.

## **A PEACEFUL CRUSADE**

In addition to its left-liberal aspirations, the vision of liberal peacebuilding is characterized by a ‘political cosmopolitan,’ ‘solidarist’ or ‘crusading’ agenda founded in a moral cosmopolitan outlook.<sup>12</sup> MacMillan sees this as a general feature of the democratic peace position, and explains the difference from pluralism as follows:

In brief, whereas pluralist liberals are either sceptical or else downplay the moral/political importance of establishing universal agreement upon values at the international level, crusading liberals tend to think that such an agreement is a prerequisite of their broader goals of order, liberty and/or peace’ (MacMillan, 2004:473).

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<sup>12</sup> ‘Traditionally, cosmopolitanism as a normative ethos is associated with three different sorts of claims: first the claim that all human beings share a common moral identity; secondly, the claim that there are universal (cosmopolitan) standards of normative judgement; thirdly, the claim that there should be a cosmopolitan political order. In recent work, which has revived the concept of cosmopolitanism to capture the nature of an approach to normative international theory, a standard distinction is made between moral and political cosmopolitanism. Moral cosmopolitanism refers to the first two strands mentioned above, political cosmopolitanism to the latter’ (Hutchings, 1999: 35-36). When applied to concrete issues of international politics such as ‘humanitarian intervention,’ the distinction between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism often overlaps with the distinction between ‘solidarism’ and ‘pluralism’ in the English School or ‘International Society’ approach to International Relations (Bellamy, 2003; Wheeler, 2000).



Alex J. Bellamy puts this approach into perspective by drawing a historical parallel between the logic of the holy war tradition of the middle ages and ‘the much more recent work of solidarist theorists of international society and law who argue that the obligation to help citizens of other states in distress is a moral duty founded in common humanity’:

In the contemporary era, the cosmopolitanist logic replaces papal authority with either the legal authority of the UN Security Council *or the moral authority of Western liberalism*. The protected populations are no longer merely Christians, but all humanity (Bellamy, 2004b:139, italics added).

Liberal peacebuilding is a peaceful manifestation of this ‘crusading’ outlook. It is the means by which the values of liberalism are to be installed for sustainable peace to develop on the domestic as well as the international level.

The pluralist or ‘communitarian’ critique of the solidarism of humanitarian intervention does not seem to bite on the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding. Its defence of state-sovereignty against interventionist claims primarily focuses on the legitimacy of intervention by military means and is not a critique of human rights based agendas as such. Pluralists regard the state system as the best framework for protecting human rights, and to the extent that peacebuilding upholds this system by building the capacity for legitimate sovereignty it should be fully in line with the pluralist stance on humanitarian intervention. When disassociated from its military aspect in post-intervention situations and Peace Support Operations, liberal peacebuilding may even be seen as part of the toolbox that liberals critical to the benefits of military intervention for domestic emancipation would like to replace humanitarian intervention with. Therefore, the peaceful crusade of liberal peacebuilding seemingly has the full backing of the moral contestants over humanitarian intervention that have dominated the debate on sovereignty and intervention over the latest decades (Wheeler, 2000).

The difference between a liberalization process evolving in Western states over centuries and liberalization initiated in non-liberal states through more or less coercive peacebuilding missions is, however, striking. From a communitarian point of view, it raises the question of whether it is consistent with the liberal core principles of moral freedom, democratic self-legislation and freedom from the external authority of other states. One part of the liberal internationalist answer, we have found in the moral value

attached to liberal institutions *per se*. Underlying this value is a fundamental presumption against any alternative political system. The development of non-liberal rule in the wake of civil war or a re-emergence of violence is taken as a much worse scenario than the possible compromising of liberal principles in a transition period from non-liberal to liberal politics. In addition to the domestic harm such alternatives would cause, it also involves a threat to regional and international security. Hence, peace-through-liberalization is understood as a political rescue operation that secures the building of just and peaceful liberal institutions on a domestic and international basis. This view is strengthened by the idea of liberalism as the endpoint of a historical progress encompassing all of humanity, a narrative prominently expressed in Francis Fukuyama's somewhat impatient declaration of the end of history (Fukuyama, 1992, see in particular 'Toward a Pacific Union,' pp. 276-286). This narrative is underscored by the great number of countries that have adopted liberalism as their formal political system in 'the third wave of democratization' (Huntington, 1991). A widespread impression is therefore that liberal peacebuilding is not an exceptional activity but an integral element in a global liberalization process: It does not impose an ideology that is foreign to the people of the host-countries but assists them in realizing an emancipatory political development towards a perpetual peace that they would not otherwise have the resources or capacities to take part in.

This is the hallmark of a political cosmopolitan position: to represent the interests of all of humanity through universalized moral and political standards that implicate a certain vision of global peace and development – in other words, a vision of a just world order and how to get there. While communitarians refute the possibility of representing the interests of peoples across social, political and cultural borders, cosmopolitans see no contradiction between communal variation and the development of a common normative and political order that regulates the interaction between these communities on a global scale. On the contrary, cosmopolitans regard global order as a precondition for peace and development on the community level in 'a globalized world'. Therefore, cosmopolitans usually reject the vision of a unified, homogenous world, and rather portray their concern as the balancing of the universal and the plural in world politics.

Cosmopolitanism does not entail a particular set of political solutions. Still, the great majority of applied research and policy on world order is limited to the specific liberal internationalist version behind the current aim of peacebuilding. Phillip Darby describes this consensus as follows:

What stands out about contemporary conceptions of global order is their oneness. Observe the way particular doctrines, each with its own constituency and lineage, come together to outline a larger project. Simply to name the discourses tells a story: neoliberalism, democratization and good governance, civil society, ... humanitarian intervention in complex emergencies. A grand narrative if there ever was. It holds out the prospect of global management along with the promise of popular ratings: elements of a blueprint, yet humanised and often appealing to immediate need. There is also a oneness in another respect: that of one world. The vision is of peoples everywhere, linked together, bound for a single destination. Its evangelical appeal meshes neatly with the reassertion of Western leadership (Darby, 2004:8).

This unified conception of global order is reflected in the broad consensus and lacking debate on the current aim of liberal peacebuilding. The massive trust in this vision does not make it less, but even more important to question this aim and counter it with alternative cosmopolitan and communitarian positions in order to maintain the critical and ethical potential of international political thinking for peacebuilding theory. This is the aim of the next chapter. First, however, the insights of the present chapter will be recapitulated in an argument for the normative legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding in its current meaning.

## ***2.4 The Case for Liberal Peacebuilding***

Millions of human beings remain at the mercy of civil wars, insurgencies, state repressions and state collapse. [...] What is at stake here is not making the world safe for big powers, or trampling over the sovereign rights of small ones, but delivering practical protection for ordinary people, at risk of their lives, because their states are unwilling or unable to protect them (ICISS, 2001:§2.1).

*This is the case for liberal peacebuilding:* Peacebuilding is rooted in the highest of liberal principles: individualism, universalism, egalitarianism, meliorism, human rights and democracy – circling around the core principle of individual moral freedom. In today's world, these values can only be guaranteed through their institutionalization in truly liberal democratic states with a free market economy (or 'liberal market democracies' as Paris calls them). Therefore, democratization is the only legitimate form of peacebuilding, and marketization the only realistic way to development. Any other development of war-torn countries would be much more of a hazard game of social engineering: Although liberal peacebuilding constrains the self-governance of the population of the host-country in a transition period, this constraint is insignificant compared to the permanent constraints of alternative political systems. Furthermore, if this liberal strategy is able to hook the host-country on to the train of global liberalization, this opens a field for political manoeuvring that would otherwise be closed. As Doyle writes, the alternative is further collapse. Therefore, in the age of globalization, the choice of political system is not in the hands of individual governments: For peaceful and prosperous conditions to develop domestically, the choice of political framework is limited to liberalization.

Furthermore, the alternative to liberal peacebuilding is not peacebuilding undertaken by an almighty global authority with unlimited resources. As long as such a divine political body does not exist, the alternative to liberal peacebuilding is inaction. An element of self-preservation on the side of the liberal peacebuilders is therefore not a hindrance but a precondition for peacebuilding to come about. If the alternative to liberal peacebuilding interventions was a completely internal process building sustainable peace on local premises, the latter would probably be most legitimate. However, liberal peacebuilding is only undertaken in situations characterised by an evident absence of the capacity for such a process on the state level. It is exactly this capacity that liberal peacebuilding aims at reconstructing: 'The

objective overall is not to change constitutional arrangements but to protect them. ...[I]ntervention means endeavouring to sustain forms of government compatible with the sovereignty of the state in which the enforcement has occurred – not undermining that sovereignty’ (ICISS, 2001: §5.26). Therefore, an argument that abandons the idea of peacebuilding on behalf of the principle of state sovereignty in situations where the capacity for peaceful self-governance is nothing but an abstract ideal would be based on false premises with severe, possibly violent, implications for the local population. Chopra therefore describes the unqualified commitment to the sovereignty principle as a doctrine of ‘the violence of non-intervention’ (Chopra, 1999: 198).

This case for liberal peacebuilding leaves the burden of proof to the critical perspectives of the next chapter. In order to be convincing, this critique must go to the presuppositions of this case on which the left-liberal vision rests. These foundations can be summed up as the civil liberal peace, liberal state-building, the liberal internationalist peace, the liberal sovereignty principle, and the cosmopolitan prescriptions of liberal internationalism. Together, they form the backdrop of a liberal internationalist theory of peacebuilding.

### 3 CRITIQUE

In this chapter, the liberal internationalist theory of peacebuilding will be placed under the critical scrutiny of three additional strands of international political theory: communitarianism, critical international theory and postmodernism (see table 3.1 in the end of this chapter for an overview). It is the result of an attempt at crystallizing and categorizing the presuppositions of the critical literature on the politics of peacebuilding. The alternative underpinnings of these theories will bring new meanings and dimensions to the legitimacy question. In the final section, the ‘inter-theoretical’ relations of the chapter will be summed up, including a brief liberal internationalist ‘response to its critics’.

It is important to emphasise that the theoretical perspectives that are discussed in this chapter do not compete with the problem-solving approach as a practical guide for efficient missions. Neither do they question peacebuilding’s right of existence. What they contribute with are complementary frameworks for the analysis and assessment of its *aim*, of the peace to be built. Rather than undermining the *practice* of peacebuilding, they thereby enrich it with a broader theoretical universe.

As was emphasized in the introduction, the aim of this effort is not to end up with a final verdict but to make it clearer what the philosophical issues at stake are when the legitimacy of peacebuilding is questioned. It thereby draws up the wider theoretical picture behind this critique and opens it for alternative prescriptive frameworks.

### ***3.1 Communitarianism: Whose Peace?***

After having outlined the cosmopolitanism of liberal peacebuilding in the previous chapter, it is expedient to begin a critique of the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding with its communitarian opposite.<sup>13</sup> In international political theory this position is primarily associated with a defence of state sovereignty rooted in what Michael Waltzer coins the right of political communities to self-determination and non-intervention (Walzer, 1992). It springs from a long tradition in political thinking where Rousseau, Hegel, and the general reaction in Romanticist thought to Enlightenment's universalism are central elements (Brown 1992; MacIntyre, 1988). It is not, however, the arguments for nationalism or state autonomy in this strand that are at stake in this chapter, but the implications of their social philosophical presuppositions for peacebuilding theory. In 'the case for liberal peacebuilding' above, the defence of state sovereignty against peacebuilding was convincingly refuted due to the absence of a capacity for peaceful self-determination in the states where it is undertaken.<sup>14</sup> This does not, however, rule out communitarianism as an important critique of the *aim* of liberal peacebuilding.

Communitarianism is the theoretical perspective that most directly coincides with an ethical critique of liberal peacebuilding as founded on the premises of external liberal actors rather than on local premises. It represents the general concern that the universalization of liberal values such as democracy, capitalism and secularism undermines the traditions and practices of non-Western cultures. Because morality is seen as embedded in local culture, this culture itself acquires a moral value to communitarians. It cannot be normatively assessed on outside premises, and the

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<sup>13</sup> 'The communitarian perspective in international political theory has its most recent origin in a central debate in moral and political theory between 'liberals' or moral universalists and 'communitarians' or moral particularists. The former include schools of thought (Kantian, utilitarian, contractarian) that attempt to derive the legitimacy and universal applicability of substantive social, economic and political arrangements from abstract rational (liberal) principles. The latter (communitarians) argue that the principles by which social, economic and political arrangements are legitimized are always grounded in concrete practices, traditions and communities. The implication of the communitarian argument is that morality has to be redefined in much more concrete and particular terms. One consequence of this is that the community or collective which grounds the validity of institutions and provides the condition for normative action and judgement acquires an intrinsic value' (Hutchings, 1999: 42).

<sup>14</sup> Actually, as Chris Brown points out, Waltzer's defence of communal autonomy in *Just and Unjust Wars* (1977/1992) does not preclude intervention when the state does not further this autonomy (Brown 2002: 90): 'If

imposition of an international ideological agenda that does not take the local conditions of the host-country as its moral and political point of departure violates the intrinsic moral value of the communities affected. This difference of perspective from liberal internationalism makes different dimensions of peacebuilding visible. Rather than non-liberal societies in need of social engineering, communitarianism renders the situation in the host-countries as the 'natural' state of affairs, and the peacebuilders as foreigners whose impact can be negative as well as positive.

### **MISSION CIVILISATRICE**

With 'International peacebuilding and the 'mission civilisatrice'' (2002), Roland Paris added fuel to this communitarian argument. Here, he argues that liberal internationalist peacebuilding by transmitting 'standards of appropriate behaviour from the Western liberal core of the international system to the failed states of the periphery,' resembles an updated (and more benign) version of 'the *mission civilisatrice*, or the colonial-era belief that the European imperial powers had a duty to 'civilise' dependent populations and territories' (cited from the Abstract). Oliver P. Richmond picks up this thread and writes that the liberal understanding of peace that currently informs peace operations enables liberal states and organizations to intervene in civil conflicts 'in order to educate others in their ways of peace, without necessarily renegotiating the peace frameworks that have arisen from the recipients' experience, culture, identity or geopolitical location' (2004: 91). This lack of reassessing the assumptions that lie behind the current aims of peacebuilding – 'assumptions mainly created by the outcome of major 'world' conflicts and the conduct of Western diplomacy in order to address problems related to the preservation and advancement of contemporary order' (ibid.) – is not recognized a problem when seen from outside the conflict environment. However, the actual consequence of this gap between idealized outside perspectives and the realities on the ground, Richmond warns, may well be a virtual peace kept artificially alive by continual external engagement: 'Peace on the ground is simulated to be as it is in liberal states, though in practice it may be more like the situation that

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no common life exists, or if the state doesn't defend the common life that does exist, its own defence may have no moral justification' (Walzer, 1992: 54).



existed in former colonial dependencies' (ibid: 85, see also Paris, 2002a). Richmond does not relate this analysis to the communitarian tradition. However, his challenge to the current international consensus on peacebuilding of adapting its 'peace' to the premises of the people affected is typical for communitarianism.

Robert Escobar adds to this picture in a study of the representation of the Third World in the general development discourse that we have seen is represented in liberal internationalist peacebuilding policy. He describes a tendency of reducing the societies in question to discrete technical problems open to professional solutions (Escobar, 1995, referred in Duffield, 2001: 83). By framing the development professionals as independent spectators to the problems of the South, an illusion of being detached and objective while, still, interacting with the object is maintained. Escobar writes that in the modern form of this development discourse, the peoples of the South are no longer diagnosed in terms of race as in the colonial period, but through 'the more modern categories of want and scarcity in relation to health, education, nutrition, capacity, and so on' (ibid.). This tendency we saw in the liberal internationalist logic of building peace after a standard model of liberalization. What this technicized model lacks from a communitarian perspective is the ability to grasp the specific identities, norms and world-views of the host-communities that give notions such as health, education, capacity, liberty, peace and justice their peculiar, contextual meaning. This also involves a dimension of global politics that will be elaborated on in the next section on 'critical international theory', namely that this discourse renders as irrelevant the relations of power and inequality that underpins the encounter between the peacebuilders and their 'problem' (ibid.). Furthermore, the technical nature of peacebuilding discourse will be problematized further in the postmodern critique.

These communitarian perspectives do not imply a refutation of peacebuilding as such, although such a conclusion can be drawn from the conventional debate on the ethics of intervention. On the contrary, it is fully compatible with the general definition of peacebuilding as the encouragement of 'the development of the structural conditions, attitudes and modes of political behaviour that may permit peaceful, stable and ultimately prosperous social and economic development' (Smith, 2004) that was given in the introduction. However, it follows from the presuppositions of the

communitarian critique that *the aim of peacebuilding must be in accordance with the practices, traditions and communities of the host-country in order to be legitimate*. And this is why peacebuilding in its current international meaning suffers from a legitimacy problem. If the communitarian position is taken seriously, it is only by following this requirement that peacebuilding will respect the individual autonomy of the people affected. It is therefore even compatible with the idea of *liberal* peacebuilding as long as the meaning of building peace in accordance with the liberal principles of individual freedom, human rights and democracy are channelled through the presuppositions of communitarianism (this argument will be developed further in section 4.1). What are these presuppositions, and how can it be that they deviate so radically from the liberal internationalist perspective?

### **THE QUESTION OF CULTURE**

The communitarian objection to moral and political cosmopolitanism springs from a focus on how communities form the identity, interests and values of individuals. Hence, to communitarians, the liberal assertion of the moral primacy of the person against the claims of any social collectivity, rooted in a conception of the individual as a ‘pre-social’ being, is mistaken. It thereby challenges the notion of individual self-governance on which liberal internationalism is founded (McGrew, 2000; Sandel, 1996). On this background, the communitarian critique implicates ‘that liberal democratic legal and political culture is relative to a particular history which cannot simply be assumed to be applicable to states with a radically different history and culture (Hutchings, 1999: 163). Thereby opposing the conditions of possibility of generalizing Western liberal democracy to ‘states which do not share the peculiar history of Western Europe and its New World colonies’ (Hutchings, 1999: 163), it renders the strategy of peace-through-liberalization a seriously flawed process of imposing Western culture (Huntington, 1996; Waltzer, 1983, 1994). From a communitarian perspective the relationship between the peacebuilders and the host-communities is therefore not reducible to a distinction between liberal and ‘under-liberalized’. Liberalization efforts are accompanied by a more fundamental cultural

process on which the success of liberal peacebuilding depends. Either, local culture and morality is effectively undermined, or the mission will fail.

This cultural dimension of peacebuilding is of course acknowledged in the literature in terms of efficiency. It explains some of the unforeseen problems that the peace-through-liberalization strategy meets on non-liberal ground. The standard response is to invest in (liberal) education, support liberal fractions in the local population, engage local traditions and conceptions within a liberal framework and, finally, to a larger extent including ‘the locals’ in the work of the peacebuilding agencies (not only as drivers and translators) in order to transfer sufficient capacity for peace to be maintained when international agencies depart. This managerialist solution to the cultural problem does not, however, solve its ethical dimension from a communitarian perspective. As long as the *aim* of peacebuilding is not rooted in local practices, identities and traditions, the achievement of this aim involves a legitimacy problem.

From a liberal point of view, however, the cultural process on which liberal internationalist peacebuilding depends is not about undermining societies but about freeing individuals from their archaic societal constraints. What communitarians portray as a process of decay, liberal internationalists see as a process of emancipation. If both perspectives have a point, then liberal peacebuilding should integrate the communitarian counter-perspective in order to be more aware of the destructive potential immanent in its reconstructive agenda. Again, it must be emphasised that it is not the legitimacy of peacebuilding as such that is the question here. If communities are seen as having a moral value that is not reducible to the individual member, *the protection and reconstruction of communal life becomes a moral responsibility in line with the liberal responsibility to protect individuals*. The bottom line is that this communitarian aim of peacebuilding cannot be attended to through a universal recipe of peace-through-liberalization.

## **THE LEGITIMACY PROBLEM**

Why is this critique not acknowledged as a legitimacy problem in liberal peacebuilding theory? Recalling Paris’s analysis of the liberal foundations of

peacebuilding, the answer can be found in its portrayal of war-torn states as representing an anarchic 'state of nature'. Having the universal recipe for the freeing of individuals from this pre-liberal condition through the building of well functioning states, local practices and traditions become more of an obstruction than a solution. To liberal internationalism in its most crusading meaning it is the local communities that suffer from an intrinsic legitimacy problem and liberal actors that come to the moral rescue (MacMillan, 2004: 473). From a communitarian perspective, however, the idea that war-torn states represent a situation of societal anarchy that can only be resolved through liberal order is totally flawed. Its focus on the social and cultural embeddedness of politics frames civil conflict as the continuation of communal life rather than as the negation of enlightened liberal politics. Only from within this conflict environment can peace be built. This perspective overlaps with conflict resolution theory that focuses on the social and identity aspects of conflict rather than the political interests involved (Miall et al., 1999). We will return to this conception of peace in section 4.1.

This communitarian critique relies on a fundamental distinction between the interveners and their 'hosts' that precludes the possibility of communal affinities that might legitimize liberal peacebuilding on the very premises of communitarianism. Such communitarian support for the current aim of peacebuilding would require a merger of the identity, culture and morality of the peacebuilders and the affected communities. The liberal internationalist framing of peacebuilding as benevolent assistance from an enlightened international community to under-liberalized communities outside the pacific union undermines the imagination of such a merger. It is this basic theoretical presupposition immanent in the aim of 'social engineering' for the building of a liberal peace, and not the empirical lack of commonality that makes the communitarian perspective relevant to a general debate on the idea of liberal peacebuilding. In this perspective, the problem is not that legitimate liberal peacebuilding is impossible, but that the liberal internationalist conception makes it possible to impose external identities, practices and traditions on the host-communities with the best of intentions.

### ***3.2 Critical International Theory: Which Peace?***

Critical international theory shares with communitarianism a critique of liberal peacebuilding as not being in accordance with the local interest. However, while this assertion is rooted in a politics of the *local* in communitarianism, critical international theory grounds it in the *global* political dimension of peacebuilding. From this angle, the legitimacy problem is not that missions are based on an external political agenda *per se*, but that this particular agenda is the wrong one. This difference can be illustrated by recalling MacMillan's categorization of the 'orthodox' liberal peace mirrored in liberal internationalist peacebuilding as conservative and crusading. While communitarianism opposes the latter characteristic, critical international theory opposes the former along the right/left dimension of international political theory. It therefore rests upon a more complex political argument against the presuppositions of liberal internationalist peacebuilding than the cosmopolitanism-communitarianism nexus of individual/community, universal/particular and Western/non-Western.

This is the strand of critique that best resonates with the framework for thinking anew about peace operations that Bellamy and Williams suggest in the special issue of *International Peacekeeping* that was presented in the introduction (Bellamy & Williams, 2004a). Their meta-theoretical proposals, when seen in light of the remaining contributions (Michael Pugh's article on 'Peacekeeping and Critical Theory' in particular), represent the most elaborated attempt in the research literature at establishing an alternative to liberal internationalism as the political theoretical framework of peacebuilding (although their focus is on peace operations in general).

Critical international theory (in the following, just 'critical theory') was established as a strand of international political theory through 'the Third Debate' in IR (Brown, 1992; Price & Reus-Smit, 1998). It combines insights, some would say eclectically, from a wide range of theoretical fields, including critical social theory (the Frankfurt School), liberalism, realism, postmodernism, feminism and hermeneutics.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Among its canonical sources of inspiration we find Immanuel Kant, Karl Marx, Jürgen Habermas, Michel Foucault and Anthony Giddens, while Robert Cox and Andrew Linklater are among its strongest proponents (Cox, 1996; Linklater, 1990, 1998). As mentioned in the introduction, Bellamy and Williams base their theoretical approach on Cox's distinction between 'problem-solving' and 'critical' theory. In note 6 of his article 'The 'Next Stage' in Peace Operations theory?' Bellamy explicitly ascribes his focus to the Frankfurt School

Critical theory is of particular relevance to an examination of the presuppositions of liberal peacebuilding because it is opposed to liberal internationalism's prescription without rejecting the conditions of possibility for the general idea of liberal peacebuilding. It shares with liberal internationalism the refutation of the a-historical statism of realist international theory based on a common appreciation of the analytical and ethical significance of the sub- and trans-state economic, cultural and political forces that uphold the Westphalian state-system. Furthermore, it shares a Kantian optimism towards the moral potential of modernity immanent in the core principles of liberalism (Hutchings, 1999). However, critical theory deviates markedly from the liberal internationalist prescriptions of global capitalist economy and the universalization of the Western nation-state as the manifestation of this potential. While liberal internationalists such as Michael Doyle regard the separate zone of liberal peace as a manifestation of Kant's *Perpetual Peace*, critical theory portrays the prescriptive commitment to this pacific union as a reactive reaction to globalization – a reaction that is perfectly at odds with the underlying principles of Kant's situated vision (Cavallar, 2001). Rather than a seed of perpetual peace, critical theory renders the affluent core of the democratic peace as an exclusive elite that is sustained by an unjust global distribution of power, wealth and security that perpetuates unrest in its peripheries. In this connection, peacebuilding gains a broader political meaning than preserving and expanding the liberal internationalist peace. In order to live up to its 'responsibility to protect' it must initiate the global structural transformation required for sustainable peace to take root in Third World countries *in addition to* addressing the local dimension of this task. In a parallel discussion of the role for peacekeeping in global politics, Pugh states that in order to address the larger structural problems that civil war in the periphery of the liberal peace is a symptom of, it must transcend its current role in 'policing' the liberal peace: 'For critical theory, structural transformation based on social struggles immanent in globalization processes will introduce new forms of democratic peacekeeping in the short term if not rendering it largely obsolete in the long run (Pugh, 2004: 54).

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variant of critical theory (Bellamy, 2004a: 35). Furthermore, the idea of 'next stage' is borrowed from Andrew Linklater's 'The Question of the Next Stage in International Relations Theory: A Critical Theoretical Point of

On this theoretical background, the problem with liberal peacebuilding in its current form is not only that it does not address the global dimension of its responsibility, but that it straightforwardly reinforces the current world order through an orthodox commitment to the liberal peace (Duffield, 2001, 2005; Pugh, 2002, 2004; Richmond, 2002). What appeared as a revolutionary program of international peacemaking when compared to realism becomes, in the perspective of critical theory, a conservative program for the consolidation of the *status quo*. A critical international theory of peacebuilding therefore brings up a particular problem of legitimacy: *Liberal internationalist peacebuilding in Third World countries maintains an unjust world order that benefits the liberal forces behind peacebuilding more than the populations affected*. This assertion rests upon three elements that will be elaborated on in the following: 1) That the liberal internationalist strategy of liberal peacebuilding is not adequate for building sustainable peace in the Third World; 2) That this framework reinforces a liberal hegemony in global politics; 3) That this hegemonic character, combined with its incapability of fulfilling its ‘responsibility to rebuild’, is at odds with the liberal principles that legitimize peacebuilding in the first place. This critique is also relevant to the perspectives of communitarianism and postmodernism.

## **WRONG MEDICINE**

Central to this case against the prescriptions of liberal internationalist peacebuilding is the idea that globalization changes the role of the state in global politics, and that the real sources of global governance are no longer reducible to this entity: ‘As international regime doctrine has taught, global society is not anarchic, it is governed by a network of controls and countervailing powers, in short, an international system of ‘governance without government’ (Archibugi, Held & Köhler, 1998b: 3). In this globalized political environment, internationalism’s dependence upon the theoretical foundations of modern liberal-democratic thinking becomes a paradox, ‘for just at the historical moment when liberal democracy is being transformed by the forces of globalization it is proposed to erect a version of it at the global level’ (McGrew, 2000: 410). From this argument it follows that liberal internationalism actually undermines

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View’ (ibid; Bellamy & Williams, 2004b; Linklater, 1992).

the peacebuilding potential of the liberal peace by imposing an outdated Western standard for sovereign statehood – supposedly on the basis of universal humanitarian norms (Chandler, 2002; Lawler, 2005: 429). Daniel Warner’s critique of the *The Responsibility to Protect* doctrine on intervention and state sovereignty can be seen in this light. He argues that the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty does not come up with solutions regarding ‘the responsibility to rebuild’ that are able to meet the implications of ‘the responsibility to protect’: In line with critical theory, it rejects the capability of states of protecting their citizens in accordance with liberal standards, but does not replace it with more capable permanent structures of liberal governance:

What the Commission has failed to do is to develop a robust argument for authority beyond the responsibility to assist/ intervene and beyond the authority of the original state. The Commission does not propose a responsibility to protect beyond the original state and it is in this sense that the Report is insufficient. It plays off against the state system by proposing certain actions, but it is ultimately irresponsible by not seeing the implications of its own position of prioritising responsibility. (Warner, 2003: 113).

Compared to more radical recipes for the redistribution of power and wealth to weak states on liberal premises, the intervention doctrine of ‘the responsibility to protect’ therefore becomes nothing but an *ad hoc* doctrine incapable of addressing the structural sources of civil war and illiberal statecraft. The problem of failed and failing states is thereby not framed as a local problem in need of limited interventions but as a pretext for global reconstruction.

Equally important is the way critical theorists question the peace dividend of economic liberalization. In accordance with Marxism, they interpret liberal internationalist policy and the democratic peace thesis as rhetoric that benefits the prosperous and undermines the interests of the needy (Pugh, 2004: 49):

Contrary to the more celebratory accounts of contemporary globalization, the current regulation of the global economy and orthodox development practices are encouraging configurations of inequality, exclusion, and under-development that are increasing the likelihood of violence in the world’s least developed states (Bellamy & Williams, 2004c: 198).

While scholars sharing the liberal internationalist vision assume that Third World countries adopt neoliberal policies because they realize that such economic policies best reflect their interest, the critical approach presumes that ‘an analysis of the self-



interest of the hegemon, and the use of coercive power, provides a more convincing explanation of why such policies have been adopted' (Hobden & Jones, 2001: 213).

Central to this argument is the assumption that liberalization increases economic inequality, both domestically and internationally. 'This is crucial,' Bellamy and Williams write, 'since it is inequality combined with social and political exclusion rather than absolute poverty that is often at the root of the world's protracted conflicts' (Bellamy & Williams, 2004c: 200). Rather than being about sheer inclusion, neoliberal political economy is understood as a system of inclusion *and* exclusion, where the majority of the affected populations fall under the latter category (Hoogvelt, 2001). This exclusion is a threat to peace because it implies a form of 'structural violence' that can evolve into direct violence and civil warfare if the opportunity rises (Galtung, 1969).

Furthermore, critical theorists doubt the benefits of neoliberal development models also for the absolute poverty levels of the poorest countries of the world. Referring to the Human Development Report 2003 (finding strong support in the 2005 edition), Bellamy and Williams conclude that 'the recent historical record suggests that liberal assumptions about the relationship between liberal-democratic capitalism and development are seriously flawed in certain parts of the world' (Bellamy & Williams, 2004c: 198; UNDP, 2005). In an even more critical vein, Mark Duffield writes that the difference between liberal war and liberal peace is small for the majority of the citizens in Third World countries, and that liberal peace has had little impact on the grievance caused by unemployment and poverty, which makes the way back to war short if coercive military structures are not established in order to hold such attempts down (Duffield, 2001: 187-93).

A range of studies have found a direct relationship between the economic liberalization that liberal internationalism promotes and the economy of the civil wars that peacebuilding reacts to (Kaldor, 1999; Münkler, 2003). An important feature of these 'new wars,' as they are often called due to their connection with globalization, is that the admission to transnational markets makes it possible for citizens in developing countries to finance warfare independently of established governmental structures. It also creates incentives for establishing transnational networks that benefit from civil

warfare by taking control of natural resources that may be sold with high profit on the world market (Duffield, 2001; Keen, 2005). These new wars are not ‘civil’ in the ‘Western’ sense of being restricted to the territorial borders and political and economic logic of single states. They also involve global, regional and local political and economic agendas, and, on these premises, their response from peacebuilders should do likewise (Duffield, 2001; Kaldor, 1999; Münkler, 2003).<sup>16</sup>

It follows from this critical perspective that without taking into account these radical insights on the global politics of contemporary conflict, the liberal peace will be undermined in the long run by initiating grievances and opportunities for new conflict lines to develop along the fault-lines of the liberal internationalist peace. Duffield, for instance, suggests that the way neoliberal development and security policies build structures of social exclusion provokes the formation of transnational non-liberal political complexes for the self-preservation of excluded groups (Duffield, 2001). On this background, some writers warn against the evolution of transnational conflict on a global scale between liberal strategic complexes and their non-liberal counterparts, where terrorism and counter-terrorism is part of the picture (Duffield, 2001: 15; Miall, Ramsbotham & Woodhouse, 1999: 79; Münkler, 2003: 11).

## **HEGEMONIC PEACEBUILDING**

In *Global Governance and the New Wars* (2001), Mark Duffield describes liberal conflict resolution and reconstruction efforts as part of the global governance of ‘the liberal peace’, embodied in a powerful network of liberal actors:

[The liberal peace] is part of the complex, mutating and stratified networks that make up global liberal governance. More specifically, liberal peace is embodied in a number of flows and nodes of authority that bring together different *strategic complexes* of state-non-state, military-civilian and public-private actors in pursuit of its aims. Such complexes now variously enmesh international NGOs, governments, military establishments, IFIs, private security companies, IGOs, the business sector, and so on. They are strategic in the sense of pursuing a radical agenda of social transformation in the interest of global stability (Duffield, 2001: 12).

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<sup>16</sup> This account of the relationship between liberalization, civil war and liberal peacebuilding is illustrated by studies of Paul Williams and David Keen on the role of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) in the conflicts and subsequent peace operations in Rwanda and Sierra Leone. Keen claims that the economic policies of these institutions that are central in peacebuilding efforts ‘gave rise to the war in the first place’ (2005: 85), while Williams writes that ‘IFI policies helped fan the flames of war and genocide which the peacekeepers were subsequently asked to put out’ (2004: 119).

This account that unites state and non-state, military and economic elements under a common ideological banner is typical for a critical theoretical approach to global politics. It shares with realism the agenda of delineating the element of self-preservation that underpins seemingly idealistic liberal agendas. David Chandler illustrates the relationship between the liberal ideals of peacebuilding and its geopolitical backdrop through a reading of *The Responsibility to Protect* that rather cynically reduces the influence of this report to its convergence with *realpolitik*. He claims that without being an instrument for legitimizing and giving moral authority to new, more direct forms of Western intervention and regulation, the morally-based ideas of the 'liberal peace' would never have gained admittance to the mainstream of international politics (Chandler, 2004: 75).

This critique can be depicted in a portrayal of liberal internationalist peacebuilding as 'hegemonic'. In Antonio Gramsci's interpretation, initially transferred to international political theory by Robert Cox, hegemony is a social phenomenon that is not reducible to its manifestation in military or economic coercion or formal inter-state relations. It is made up of a combination of material and cultural/ideological traits that transcend state borders and make global hierarchies of power seem natural and necessary (Cox, 1981). On this background, I use the term 'hegemonic peacebuilding' in the meaning of *a network of liberal actors maintaining unjust principles of organization of power and wealth in global politics through peacebuilding missions* (Duffield, 2001, 2005; Pugh, 2002; Reus-Smit, 2004).

The point with calling peacebuilding 'hegemonic' rather than 'imperialist,' which is more common in critiques of liberal solidarism/crusading, is that it would preclude an essential distinction between the hegemonic aim of maintaining the current world order and the imperial ambition of changing this order by dictating the rules of the international system according to the self-interest of the empire (Cox, 2003; Ikenberry, 1999, 2002, 2005; Reus-Smit, 2004).

Gramsci's broad concept of hegemony opens for perspectives on how peacebuilding reinforces an unjust world order in an *ideational* as well as material sense. Rita Abrahamsen presents such an argument with regard to the discursive underpinnings of liberal peacebuilding (Abrahamsen, 2000, 2005). Although she does

not address the issue of peacebuilding directly, her presentation is clearly relevant to a critique of its hegemonic character. Inspired by Michel Foucault's writings on the internal relationship between power and knowledge, she portrays contemporary development discourse as an instrument for the West of maintaining its superior position.<sup>17</sup> Abrahamsen writes that the discursive distinction between the 'developed' and the 'developing' world does not primarily express an attempt at describing the world as properly as possible in order to change it to the better, it is rather a way of legitimizing the unjust global distribution of wealth. By framing the poor parts of the world as underdeveloped, their poverty is projected as natural and self-inflicted. In this light the presentation of external liberalization efforts as peacebuilding can be seen as part of a 'discourse civilisatrice' introducing a self-conception in the host-countries that rules out indigenous notions of peace and justice as irrelevant for the current situation. Instead of provoking a grievance that might undermine the position of the liberal hegemony, grievance is channelled towards the inferiority of their own political culture, rendering international organisations as saviours. Phillip Darby elaborates on this instrumental role of liberal internationalist discourse:

In dominant international discourse [ethnic or communal identification and the turn to violence] tend[s] to be profiled as manifestations of the local, the assumption being that their roots lie in the malfunctioning of traditional societies, stretching far back in time. What is conventionally passed over is the role of external involvement – imperial or global – in reconfiguring local identities and introducing new axes of difference, such as between the secular and the religious, or history and traditional ways of remembering. Having thus settled for a selective history, local disorder serves to legitimise contemporary external intervention in the name of humanitarian relief, good governance or stamping out of terrorism' (Darby 2004: 10-11).

Francois Debrix extends this perspective on the role of ideas in preserving neoliberal ideology to the production of global opinion through the media. Drawing on the philosophy of Baudrillard, he characterizes peace operations as the 'simulacra' of peace, being simulated by language, images and the public presentation of interventions as if order is being kept in the face of poverty, wounds, rape and disaster. Referring to the expansion of UN peace operations in the mid 1990s, Debrix argues that they did not correspond to the international landscape in which they were asked to intervene - 'a global landscape that was, and still is, anarchic and disordered... but

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<sup>17</sup> Foucault's theory of power has also been used to analyse the 'governmentality' of liberal peacebuilding, see Foucault, 1997; Merlingen, 2003; Merlingen & Ostrauskaite, 2005 and Väyrynen, 2004: 131.

that supposedly longs for liberal peace, global security, and international democracy (Debrix, 1999: 216). Highly critical to the substance of this image of peace operations, he continues that they depict ‘a fantasy space or dream land of international affairs (where peacekeeping operations are successful, governance is realized, etc.) inside which claims to neoliberalism on a global scale can be made’ (Debrix, 1999: 216). When the consistency of peacebuilding with liberal internationalism and the proximity of liberal internationalism to the current state of international affairs (Hutchings, 1999: 172) is taken into consideration, this provocative assertion seems to ignore both the element of normative order in international politics and the element of realism in peace operations. However, when the face-value of peace operations as purely altruistic undertakings based on a universal and self-sacrificing mandate is compared to the hegemonic premises and unfulfilled potential of peacebuilding claimed by the critical literature, Debrix only pushes this disharmony of image and contents to the extreme. As Michael Pugh comments, ‘Debrix’s contention – that peacekeeping and related activities are simulations of an ideology camouflaging the absence of control over conflict – merits consideration as a serious critique of the role of peacekeeping in the neoliberal project to engineer a more humane world’ (Pugh, 2003: 109).

## **THE LEGITIMACY PROBLEM**

It follows from this perspective that liberal peacebuilding in its current meaning is not in accordance with the liberal principles it promotes. On the structural level, critical theorists argue that it reinforces a world order that precludes a radical improvement in the life conditions of the populations in Third World countries. Without reducing the poverty and disempowerment of these peoples, the conditions for individual emancipation, human rights and democracy will be poor. Reflecting an old debate between conservative and radical liberalism, this hegemony critique can be read in terms of an opposition between the ‘negative’ rights to liberty and the social or ‘positive’ rights to equality (see ‘The Liberal Peace’ in Chapter 2). Being built on hegemonic premises, the orthodox liberal peace does not, from a critical perspective, create the social preconditions for genuine democratic participation and self-legislation in Third World countries. The radical recipe for liberal peace does not start with the

institutionalization of *liberty*, but with the creation of material and cultural *equality* (Mouffe, 2000).

Critical theory deviates markedly from communitarianism in its strong commitment to a Kantian ideal of the autonomous individual human being, expressed in its defence of human (as ‘individual’) rights, -security and -emancipation (Hutchings, 1999: 135 and 159-160). On this individual level, the problem of hegemonic peacebuilding is that it does not treat the subjects to peacebuilding as aims in themselves but as objects or means to the preservation of an international order *where the peacebuilders themselves are the primary subjects*. The liberal norms of human rights and democracy depend on the principle of individual autonomy, and without the latter, the former will only seemingly be in place. Compared with the communitarian critique, the problem is not that peacebuilding’s reconstruction efforts deconstruct indigenous life-forms, but that this deconstruction is of the wrong kind.

This critique rests on the underlying assumption that other and better alternatives are possible. It represents an essentially different understanding of the politics of the civil wars of the post-Cold War era than the one accounted for in the previous chapter. While liberal internationalism portrays these wars as cases of state collapse and social breakdown in need of international assistance – local pathologies that threaten international peace and security and therefore must be healed by international doctors – critical theory opposes this de-politization of the global dimensions to the new wars. Rather than a managerialist reaction it implicates radical responses that address their structural underpinnings, internationally as well as domestically. A judgement on the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding therefore depends on the assumptions on peace, justice *and* war underlying it. This demonstrates how any assessment of the legitimacy of peacebuilding involves taking a stance on disputed ontological as well as normative assertions. It may be tempting to choose the liberal internationalist ontology simply because it is so dominant in international political discourse and ‘comes closest to the principles which already underlie international law and institutions’ (Hutchings, 1999: 172). Without ascribing to this dominance an untenable *evolutionary* meaning as representing the preliminary endpoint of human progress, this inference from *existence* to *legitimacy*, or *might* to

*right*, is, however, untenable (ibid: 175). From the counter-hegemonic perspective of critical theory, the dominance of the liberal internationalist model of political cosmopolitanism is rather the result of its ability of sustaining the current hierarchies of power than of any moral superiority. When reproducing what is regarded as an unjust world order, this is itself a sign of 'phenomenological inadequacy' and 'genealogical dishonesty'.<sup>18</sup> In the next section this discursive level of liberal internationalist peacebuilding will be problematized on its own philosophical terms without portraying these as the manifestation of underlying material or economic agendas.

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<sup>18</sup> See the quote from Hutchings on 'phenomenological adequacy' and 'genealogical honesty' in the introduction.

### ***3.3 Postmodern Meditations***

As a strand of political theory, postmodernism is defined by its opposition to modern political philosophy and its presuppositions, rather than to any agreement on substantive doctrines. It contains a rich arsenal of critical input on the foundations of the idea of liberal peacebuilding without replacing these on new and more solid grounds. In this respect, its impact on political thought is better depicted as *meditation* than *information*. Postmodernism thereby defines itself out of the realm of problem-solving approaches to peacebuilding. For interpretive approaches, however, it breathes life into categories and judgments that are taken for granted in modern political thinking, including the two former strands of critique. Postmodern theory, influenced by the thought of Nietzsche, Heidegger and Wittgenstein, is ‘questioning, examining, and coming to terms with our own assumptions and commitments’ about social and political reality (Pitkin, 1972).<sup>19</sup> This is often done either by ‘reading’ knowledge claims and discourses of international politics as texts, applying a Derridaean method of deconstruction, or by investigating their historical and contemporary conditions of possibility through Foucault’s techniques of ‘archaeology’ and ‘genealogy’ (Derian & Shapiro, 1989; Derrida, 1981; Foucault, 1997; Hutchings, 1999; Milliken, 1999). Postmodernism has already been introduced to this chapter through the theories of Foucault and Baudrillard in the former section. In the service of critical theory, they were used in an exposition of peacebuilding as unjust. The critical theoretical presuppositions upon which this normative judgement was made are, however, no less susceptible to postmodern critique than is liberal internationalism (Ashley & Walker, 1990; Hutchings, 1999: 78).

In this section, I will apply postmodernism in a critique of two of the central presuppositions of liberal peacebuilding, a critique that also affects the communitarian and critical theoretical strands. These are 1) the emancipatory potential of *modernity*, and 2) the *mechanical rationality* immanent in the idea of *building* peace. This implies

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<sup>19</sup> Postmodernism is often associated with extreme forms of nihilism and relativism. In this chapter, however, I use the term to designate work that constructively contributes to our knowledge about international politics, rooted in a well established philosophical tradition.



the legitimacy problem that liberal peacebuilding is founded on flawed philosophical premises concerning modern society and modern thinking.

## **PEACEBUILDING AS MODERNIZATION**

The common threads of liberal international theory ... include beliefs in progress conceived in terms of greater human freedom, the importance of cooperation to progress, and a process of scientific and intellectual modernization as the driving force behind cooperation and human progress. The key strands of the theory refer to the components of the modernization process (Zacher & Matthew, 1995: 120).

The liberal internationalist vision entails a continuation of the modernization process of 'the developed world' on a global scale. While this process has gone into a late phase in the First World, a phase that has generated substantial critique of its emancipatory power from postmodern theorists, it is still in an early phase of great expectations when liberal internationalists imagine the future of the underdeveloped (under-modernized) Third World. Critical diagnoses of modern society have a long history in social theory. Among the most influential of these accounts, we find: the anomy and alienation of the individual in modern society (associated with Emile Dürkheim and Ferdinand Tönnies, i.e.), the inauthenticity of modern man (Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger), the iron-cage of modern rationality (Max Weber), the system world's colonization of the life-world (Jürgen Habermas); the 'liquidity' of postmodern society (Zygmunt Bauman); risk society and the coming of a world risk society (Ulrich Beck); the end of the grand narratives of progress (Francois Lyotard, Claude Levi-Strauss); and the dissolution of identity and transformation of subjectivity in the postmodern condition (Frederic Jameson, Lyotard, Douglas Kellner) (Andersen & Kaspersen, 1996). It is rather surprising that this critique of modernity that has been so loud in the West has not had more influence on the optimism of the emancipatory potential of the liberal internationalist account of the democratic peace. It seems as if the common understanding is that the developing countries must get fully modernized before the insights of postmodernism become relevant. In the eyes of its proponents, however, the postmodern critique is not a surplus phenomenon of modernity. It entails a warning against an uncritical endorsement of an irreversible transformation of society on the contingent grounds of the Enlightenment illusion of enlightened

rationality. From this point of view there are therefore good reasons to integrate postmodern perspectives in the theoretical underpinnings of liberal peacebuilding in the first place.<sup>20</sup>

Zygmunt Bauman's *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989) is perhaps the best illustration of this doubt in the emancipatory and peaceful potential of modernity. Here, he counters portrayals of the Holocaust as a barbaric, anti-modern event with an exposition of the very modern conditions that made this genocide possible: a well-functioning bureaucracy, the differentiation of labour and responsibility, the central role of technology, and a technocratic, calculating and strategic rationality – the quintessence of Weber's designation of modernity (Bauman, 1989). This takes us to the second part of this critique: the technocratic or 'mechanical' rationality behind liberal internationalist peacebuilding.

## ON THE MECHANICS OF PEACEBUILDING

In the planetary imperialism of technologically organized man, the subjectivism of man attains its acme, from which it will descend to the level of organized uniformity and there firmly establish itself. This uniformity becomes the surest instrument of total, i.e., technological, rule over the earth. *The modern freedom of subjectivity vanishes totally in the objectivity commensurate with it.* (Heidegger, 1977: 152-153)<sup>21</sup>

In 'Peacebuilding and the Limits of Liberal Internationalism' (1997), Roland Paris describes peacebuilding as 'an enormous experiment in social engineering' where Western models of social, political and economic organization are transplanted into war-shattered states (ibid: 56). This claim that has found significant support in the 'interpretation' and 'critiques' of the preceding presentation, points exactly to where the problem lies also from a postmodern point of view. Postmodern theory is fundamentally incompatible with the idea of 'social engineering', because this presupposes a false idea of 'positive', 'objective' or 'scientific' knowledge about social phenomena, as well as the possibility of deriving from this knowledge scientific guidelines for political action (Gadamer, 1966; Husserl, 1970/1954; Kuhn, 1970;

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<sup>20</sup> In development studies, the problem of modernizing non-liberal societies by directly transferring the European imaginary is a central issue, and the simplest forms of modernization-theory were abandoned long ago (Törnquist, 1999). Nevertheless, liberal cosmopolitanism in general, and liberal peace theory in particular seem immune to the more critical insights of development theory (Escobar, 1995).

<sup>21</sup> Quoted from Swazo, 2002: 117 with his emphasis.

Rorty, 1982; Yung, 1979). In a study of the implications of Wittgenstein's philosophy of language for social and political thought, Hannah F. Pitkin describes the problem of the idea of social engineering as follows:

On the social and political level, we think in terms of 'social engineering', manipulatively; we see the problem as one of channelling men by neutral, administrative measures. Feeling that we know the real, objective courses of other's actions and social condition, we no longer need to listen to their views; feeling that we can determine their needs scientifically, we become impatient with their wants. Both individually and socially, human relations are resolved into technical problems (Pitkin, 1972: 320-321).

If already being a problem on the domestic scene, this critique gains manifold in strength when applied to the paradox of building the liberal peace with non-liberal means under the provisions of the scientific laws of the democratic peace thesis.

With the aid of Heidegger, Norman K. Swazo in a similar vein criticizes the normative, technocratic and metaphysical conceptions of world order in contemporary international relations and peace research (Swazo, 2002). He finds in this field a total dominance of strategic reasoning, built upon what he portrays as ambiguous and untenable suppositions on the primacy of Western rationality. Referring to Heidegger's commentary on Nietzsche's *Will to Power*, Swazo relates the cosmopolitan ambitions of this rationality to the 'death of God' and the inauguration of the Cartesian modern subject in its place. This subject sees as the task of humanity to master the world in its own image. Conceiving of society as an economy and nature as machinery, it reduces man to his utility in this system (ibid: 115). Duffield shows the relevance of this critique, arguing that the dominant understanding among peacebuilding agencies 'is essentially Newtonian and machine-like in conception'. He continues by asserting that 'the approach by aid agencies to conflict resolution and societal reconstruction is precisely that of attempting to close down one machine so that another can be 'kick-started' into life' (Duffield, 2001: 85).

Swazo writes that it is on this mechanical background that politics becomes dominated by *techne*, by fabrication or craftsmanship, and becomes 'architecture' (Swazo, 2002: 114-117). This modern logic of statecraft was related to the foundations of peacebuilding in section 2.1. The idea of being an architect of society is reflected in the very concept of *building* peace. This perspective strengthens the communitarian critique of liberal peacebuilding as representing an external, Western political

rationality. Furthermore, the assertion that this rationality reduces man to a mechanical object carries on the critique that liberal peacebuilding does not treat the people affected as autonomous subjects but as means to the preservation of an international order where the liberal actors are themselves the subjects.

## **THE LEGITIMACY PROBLEM**

The impact of the postmodern critique on the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding is well summed up in Lyotard's announcement of the end of grand narratives of human progress (recall Darby's description of liberal internationalism as a grand narrative in section 2.3) (Lyotard, 1984). From this perspective of 'the crisis of modernity', liberal internationalist peacebuilding furthers a grand narrative of which the source has died – just like the light from a vanished star. It implies that liberal peacebuilding suffers from a legitimacy problem because *it promotes a grand narrative of peace-through-modernization that is founded on 'dead' presuppositions of the emancipatory and peaceful potential of modern society and strategic rationality.*

What alternative does this leave peacebuilding with? Where do we find the source of non-technocratic, viable narratives of peace?

How is one to understand peace and legitimate its agenda in the midst of nihilism, when there are apparently no privileged position in the Western philosophical tradition; when even Western reason itself is confronted with a 'discourse of dissent' from representatives of 'Third World' cultures not at all inclined to share in 'the crisis of European humanity,' and even less inclined to acquiesce in explicit or covert assertions of the hegemony of Western reason? (Swazo, 2002: 23)<sup>22</sup>

Swazo outlines a range of possible responses to this question: defending modernity; recovering the pre-theoretical world; restoring neo-Aristotelianism; dismissing postmodernism. The response he arrives at is the advancement of a form of 'essential political thinking' that takes into account Heidegger's critique of the metaphysics of modernity. However, although his elaboration on this alternative results in a thought-provoking proposal of 'how we must think' about global politics, the crucial connection between this answer and the question of 'what we ought to do', remains vague. Duffield, in a more social scientific manner, suggests replacing the analogy of a 'cosmic machine' with an analogy of 'living systems' rooted in 'the new

physics' of 'the complexity sciences' such as quantum theory and cybernetics that have superseded the Newtonian world view in the natural sciences: 'rather than mechanical precepts, this is based on organic, holistic and ecological principles' (Duffield, 2001: 84). While machines are 'controlled and determined by their structure and characterised by linear chains of cause and effects,' an organism is a system 'concerned with self-renewal'. Only by aiding this process of self-renewal can the organ be healed. This idea resonates with the critique from communitarianism of the transplantation of Western organs of peace. With a different organic analogy, it may increase the ability and will to find in the societies in need of peacebuilding seeds of peace that can be grown, cultivated and fertilized rather than replaced through experiments with germs from different political climates. Or perhaps the first step in this direction would be to reinstall the peacebuilder in this organic analogy, tearing him down from his godlike position as the mechanic, doctor or gardener of earth.

There is no reason, however, why postmodernism would find these ideas of 'essential' or 'organic' peacebuilding thinking less problematic than the Newtonian one. Nevertheless, it represents an alternative that opens a space for non-technocratic notions of peacebuilding. It may raise the awareness of its immanent assumptions, and inspire new lines of thought, new forms of theorizing and additional paths of problem-solving prescription.

Admittedly, these postmodern meditations, underscored by the communitarian and critical theoretical critiques that preceded it, has made it more difficult to answer the questions of 'Whose peace?' and 'Which peace?' than it seemed from the convincing case for liberal peacebuilding. And yet, it has made us much better prepared for the task. It installs a measure of self-scrutiny in prescriptive thinking about peacebuilding that seems to be required in order to live up to the high ideals that it promotes. That is, a serious effort at looking beyond technocratic models and seeing the people in need as autonomous aims of the peace – not as pieces in a divine liberal puzzle. This sets a high standard for the formulation of alternative visions for peacebuilding in the next chapter.

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<sup>22</sup> Here, Swazo refers to the work of R. B. J. Walker on the problem of universalizing a conception of world order from Western reason (Walker, 1982, 1984, 1988).

### ***3.4 Relations***

How do these critiques relate to each other, and how does liberal internationalism relate to them? Are they complementary or incompatible? These questions have been illuminated throughout this chapter, but a summarizing review, singling out their normative foundations and conceptions of peace can still be clarifying. This also gives liberal internationalism an opportunity to ‘respond to its critics’.

#### **NORMATIVE FOUNDATIONS**

The **communitarian** critique of liberal internationalism also comprises the moral cosmopolitanist foundations of critical international theory. This critique it shares with postmodernism. **Critical international theory**, on the other hand, rejects the cultural relativism of communitarianism and the moral relativism of postmodernism. However, it shares with communitarianism the critique of liberal internationalism as incapable of representing the local interest. Furthermore, **postmodernism** disagrees with the universalization of the categories of bounded community, society, identity and culture upon which communitarianism’s relativism relies, without replacing this with an individualist equivalent. Nonetheless, most postmodern political theorists reject nihilism, and rather seek alternative, relative and non-rationalistic sources of ethics (Bauman, 1993; Campbell & Shapiro, 1999; Walker, 1993).

#### **CONCEPTIONS OF PEACE**

The relationship between these theories can also be described through the questions ‘Whose peace?’ and ‘Which peace?’. These questions we will elaborate further in the next chapter, so the following are only preliminary and general answers on the background of the preceding exposition. In the **liberal internationalist** presuppositions of peacebuilding we found a ‘civil peace’ on the state level, built for the members of an expanding liberal pacific union that the host-state will be included in if the liberal peacebuilding process is successful. From **communitarianism** we can derive a ‘communal peace’ that belongs exclusively to the host-community and is designed on the background of its unique premises. Compared with liberal

internationalism, **critical international theory** implicates an unconditional ‘cosmopolitan peace’ for all people in need, everywhere. It relies on a mutual accommodation of the liberal and non-liberal, Western and non-Western, powerful and weak, affluent and poor fractions of the world. Furthermore, its conception of ‘just peace’ equalizes equality with liberty, and implies the absence of ‘structural’ as well as direct violence. It is not possible in a similar manner to deduce an answer to ‘whose and which peace’ from **postmodernism**. On the background of the discussion above, however, certain contours of a postmodern peace appeared as the mere negation of the conceptions it rejects: a peace for people in need, based on mere impression and intuition rather than an overarching political rationale. Furthermore, the non-mechanical character of this peace opened for an alternative conception of ‘organic peace’.

### **COMPATIBILITY WITH LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM<sup>23</sup>**

**Communitarianism** adds to liberal internationalist peacebuilding theory an understanding of the moral significance of the social and cultural context of peacebuilding missions. It raises the awareness of the cultural bias of the western glasses that theorists and practitioners of peacebuilding regard the host-communities through. It also contributes with insights into dilemmas of individual emancipation from the identities, practices and traditions of non-Western communities. Here, it fills in a blind spot that does not necessarily undermine the liberal internationalist vision. It can be channelled into more radical forms of ‘local ownership’ that maintains the aim of building liberal market democracies but aims at involving local ‘partners’ in the process of defining and achieving this objective. Liberal internationalism, however,

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<sup>23</sup>As far as I am aware, there has not been made any serious effort from liberal internationalist theorists at responding to the critical literature discussed in this chapter. This is probably because this critique in the context of current scholarly peacebuilding discourse seems both irrelevant and utopian. Perhaps the closest recent parallel to such a response is Jean Bethke Elshtain’s article ‘Against the New Utopianism’ where she responds to Anthony Burke’s designation of a moral crisis of liberal internationalism in ‘Against the New Internationalism’ (Burke, 2005; Elshtain, 2005). Burke’s concern is the development of an internationalism built ‘not on the developing dialogue, normative consensus, and collective decision-making of the international community, but on the physical power, and ethical vision, of the United States and its allies’ (p. 74). To this critique, Elstain objects that it is based on a lack of empirical rigor, that it seems to assert that the UN is the only political player in global politics, and that it rests on a utopian idea of a better alternative available. This response can easily be translated into an internationalist response to the critiques of this chapter.

rejects communitarianism's relativization of its basic liberal principles – the ideals of individual freedom, human rights and democracy are absolutes. Furthermore, from this perspective, the communitarian critique of its state-focus is flawed because state-building is seen as the only realistic way to a degree of communal autonomy: It is not the West that needs a strengthening of state sovereignty in the South, it is a response to a demand from Third World peoples of which sovereignty is the only defence against unwanted external interference, and, for that matter, against Westernization. Finally, there is the question of where moral communitarianism derives its universal presumptions from if not from a cosmopolitan perspective, and of whether this objection undermines its general communitarian case. This parallel to the question of where postmodernism derives its relativism from if not from a universalization I leave at this point, as it is discussed at length elsewhere in the literature (Brown, 1992, 2002; Hutchings, 1999; Morrice, 2000, e.g.).

**Critical international theory** complements liberal internationalism with a caution against negative effects of economic liberalization, the insufficiency of state-building, and the conservatism of 'orthodox' liberal peacebuilding. However, liberal internationalism does not accept the Marxist presuppositions of the critical theoretical analysis of the political economy of civil war and peace. Neither does it share the conception of 'structural violence'. Nor does it recognize the negative associations of its hegemonic character. On the contrary, liberal internationalism portrays the current liberal principles of organization of power and wealth as the best alternative possible with a long term profit for all of humanity. From this point of view, the critical theoretical conclusions on its medicine is the result of an impatience that leads to wrong conclusions, even without presenting alternatives that could possibly be realized within the near future. If liberalization is seen as the central component of peacebuilding, Paris's negative conclusions on the peace-through-liberalization strategy based on short term effects would not be accepted. The fact that a liberalization process is set in motion, with its long term effects of expanding the liberal zone of peace, makes temporary set-backs subordinate, although unfortunate. Finally, the liberal internationalist outlook is not in accordance with the critical theoretical argument on the excluding effects of liberalization, because it, due to the



basic distinction between the liberal garden and the non-liberal jungle, portrays the non-liberal world as initially 'excluded' until it is included in the liberal peace.

**Postmodernism** brings to liberal internationalist peacebuilding theory an awareness of the negative effects of modernization and the 'metaphysical' conceptions of human rationality, society and nature immanent in peacebuilding thinking. To liberal internationalists, however, postmodernism is morally reprehensible because it 'deconstructs more than it reconstructs,' for instance by undermining the possibility of formulating civil war as an objective problem in need of response. If everything is relative, the liberal internationalist agenda of peacebuilding loses its theoretical backing and is reduced to a question of imagination. From the moral, ontological and epistemological point of view of liberal internationalism, postmodernism therefore becomes the optimal recipe for non-action and nihilism. From the postmodern counter-position, however, it reveals the only possible starting point *for* action. This bewilderment does not imply the cessation of peacebuilding practices, only a serious critique of its theoretical representation in positivist and Enlightenment political thought. Again, a partial liberal internationalist would never accept this contention as anything but troubling nonsense.

**In general**, it follows from the internationalist position that the normative critique of its 'external', 'hegemonic' or 'modern' character is completely misjudged because when compared to political realism and realist IR theory it represents a peaceful and inclusive agenda of global political transformation. Especially so in the post-9/11 environment where 'the war on terror' makes multilateral peacebuilding missions that do not follow in the wake of determined military action seem like toothless remnants from the internationalist idealism of the 1990s.

Nonetheless, this powerful response hits beside the target. What the theories of this chapter address is not its motive of assisting war-torn societies, but its consistency with this general idea. They point to problems with benevolently helping 'others' through social engineering – that it involves certain ethical challenges that must be taken into consideration. As we have seen, this does not rule out realist insights, but referring to realism in defence of the internationalist prescriptions takes the discussion onto a sidetrack. To the extent that international political theories convincingly

criticise liberal peacebuilding theory on its own terms, it does not undermine, but *sharpen* the case for peacebuilding *vis a vis* realist claims to its redundancy.

On the background of this review, the inter-theoretical relations of the international political theory of liberal peacebuilding can be summarised as follows:

**Table 3.1:** *Four strands of the international political theory of liberal peacebuilding*

<b>Theory/Issue</b>	<b>Liberal internationalism</b>	<b>Communitarianism</b>	<b>Critical international theory</b>	<b>Postmodernism</b>
<b>The legitimacy problem</b>	No serious legitimacy problem, but a question of efficiently accomplishing the current aims.	Liberal peacebuilding is founded in external identities, practices and tradition.	Liberal peacebuilding maintains an unjust world order that benefits the liberal hegemony more than the subjects to peacebuilding in the long run.	It promotes a grand narrative that is founded on ‘dead’ presuppositions of the emancipatory and peaceful potential of modern society and strategic rationality
<b>Whose Peace?</b>	The legitimate members of the expanding liberal pacific union.	The host-communities.	Persons in need, everywhere, eventually all of humanity.	? (People in need, independent of overarching moral agendas.)
<b>Which peace?</b>	Civil peace through liberal market democracy after Western model.	Communal peace rooted in local identities, practices and tradition.	Cosmopolitan peace. Equality before liberty. Absence of direct <i>and</i> ‘structural’ violence.	? (Non-technocratic, organic?)
<b>Normative foundations</b>	Individual freedom, human rights and democracy.	The morality of communities.	Individual freedom, human rights and democracy.	? (Moral relativism, not nihilism.)
<b>Adds to liberal peacebuilding theory</b>	The political framework of current theory.	Awareness of the moral significance of the social and cultural context. Insights in dilemmas of individual emancipation.	Awareness of potential downsides of economic liberalization, state-building and conservative peace-maintenance.	Awareness of negative effects of modernization and ‘metaphysical’ conceptions immanent in peacebuilding thinking.

Some of the contributions to the emerging critical literature fall neatly within one of the strands, some combine more or less compatible features from two or three strands, while others include elements of them all.

The question behind this chapter was what the presuppositions of the critical assessments of the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding in scholarly literature are. The answer to this question, summed up in ‘Table 3.1’ above, has taken us one step closer to an understanding of the ethical dimension of the politics of liberal peacebuilding. However, it raises more questions than it answers. Complex questions of ‘Whose

peace?’ and ‘Which peace?’. We have now established a political theoretical framework for critically assessing current answers to these questions. This is also a precondition for coming up with new answers on the background of the critique. In the next chapter, the theoretical framework of peacebuilding will be expanded further in order to prepare such ‘ethical reconstructions’.

## 4 ETHICS

Successful conflict resolution in the post-cold war era entails the reform of the international system and the establishment of a permanent, preventive fabric of peacemaking and peacebuilding at local, regional and global levels, through the opening of sufficient space for a diversity of actors to gain access to address the multiple roots of conflict in a culturally sensitive manner, but in a broader normative framework beyond that which the Westphalian system formerly enabled (Richmond, 2002: 202).

What alternative political visions of peacebuilding can be derived from the critiques from the former chapter? And again, how do these visions relate to the (left-)liberal internationalist ideal? In order to prepare the ground for answering these crucial questions more extensively in further research and debate, three alternative visions of peacebuilding will be suggested in this chapter.

The first vision concerns a reconceptualization of the aim of peacebuilding from ‘building liberal market democracy’ to ‘building the capacity for peaceful self-governance’. This vision responds to the critique from communitarianism and implicates an ethically motivated sovereignty principle that peacebuilding must integrate in order to be legitimate.

The second vision is ‘liberal idealism’. It counters the state-focus of liberal internationalism without excluding liberalization on the state level as an element of a more radical cosmopolitan re-visioning of peacebuilding. This is the model that most directly responds to the objections made by critical international theorists, and, due to its presence in current peacebuilding literature, it will be given most attention among these alternative visions.

The third vision, ‘radical democratic pluralism,’ will only be suggested briefly through a comparison with the liberal idealist framework. This political ideal also challenges liberal internationalism’s state-focus, but not with a more centralized democratic world order as liberal idealists prescribe. In its place, it suggests a radically decentralized cosmopolitanism.

Although these three frameworks are specially designed for the presuppositions of communitarianism, critical theory and postmodernism respectively, they are not reducible to these traditions. On the contrary, they all respond to aspects of the three

critiques from the former chapter. Finally, their inter-theoretical relations will be depicted as a continuous prescriptive field of liberal peacebuilding politics.

#### ***4.1 A Sovereignty Principle for Peacebuilding***

The key question for Liberalism at the dawn of a new century is whether it can reinvent itself as a non-universalizing political idea, which preserves the traditional liberal value of human solidarity without undermining cultural diversity (Dunne 2001: 179).

Easy assumptions about the transferability of liberal-democratic culture need to be called into question. The challenge is to rethink the issues of governmentality as they arise in different cultural contexts and to address how they might be negotiated in international politics (Darby, 2004: 20).

The communitarian critique raised a specific requirement for liberal peacebuilding to be legitimate: That the aim of peacebuilding must be in accordance with the practices, traditions and communities of the host-society in order to be legitimate. It was based on an assessment of liberal internationalist peacebuilding as being a particularly external approach that imposes foreign moral and cultural agendas on the host-communities. This analysis found indirect support in critical international theory's designation of 'hegemonic peacebuilding,' and in postmodernism's portrayal of peacebuilding as social engineering in terrains that do not match the cognitive map. How can this requirement be translated into a prescriptive framework for peacebuilding?

The answer I want to suggest is a reconceptualization of the aim of liberal peacebuilding: from 'building liberal market democracies after a Western model' to '*building the capacity for peaceful self-governance in accordance with the liberal precepts that peacebuilding promotes*'. As will be described below, the first part of this reconceptualization requires that the crucial questions of 'Which selves?' and 'What governance?' are answered on local premises. The second part presupposes the idea that peace can be built in accordance with liberal precepts without necessarily transplanting their liberal political institutionalization (see section 2.1).

The general argument behind this suggestion can be rephrased as follows: The cosmopolitan assumptions underlying the current theoretical approach to liberal peacebuilding need to be revised in order for problem-solving liberal peacebuilding

theory to be formulated in more legitimate terms. By assuming that liberal internationalism represents the interests of the citizens of the host-countries, the legitimacy challenge stemming from the absence of a capacity for self-governance in situations where peacebuilding operations are undertaken is overlooked. Without the ability to mediate and constrain this cosmopolitanist outlook, the initial right of these communities to self-governance is likely not to be sufficiently represented (section 3.1). For the idea of liberal peacebuilding to become more legitimate, the right of political communities to self-governance must therefore be *integrated* in its theoretical foundations. This idea can be described as a post-Westphalian sovereignty principle. It implies that agents of liberal peacebuilding voluntarily take on a self-restraining and complicating responsibility for the preservation of moral, social and cultural diversity. It is not state-centric but identity/culture-centric and, in theory, it opens for the possibility of protecting communities on all levels of global society.

### **BUILDING THE CAPACITY FOR PEACEFUL SELF-GOVERNANCE...**

In order to build the capacity for peaceful self-governance, the question ‘Which self?’ must first be answered. This requires a theoretical attitude that does not reduce the host-communities to negations of a general idea of civil peace. It is by answering this question with ‘the non-liberal others’ that foreign agendas can sneak in between the liberal benevolence and its political manifestation. From a communitarian perspective, it does not help ranging the host-countries after a sophisticated scale of regime type or ‘decency’, like the one John Rawls proposes in *The Law of Peoples* as long as this scale is formulated according to Western liberal standards (Rawls, 1999). In order to counterbalance this cosmopolitan orientation, liberal theory must therefore take into account insights from fields of theory that operate in the blind spots of liberal internationalism, such as critical-, feminist- and post-modern theory, and regional-, post-colonial- and cultural studies. Furthermore, the local population must be invited into this process (Chopra & Hohe, 2004).

The same goes for the question ‘What governance?’. It implies a willingness to engage with notions of politics that do not spring directly from the Western imagination, neo-liberal precepts or modern technocracy. According to Phillip Darby,

it is only through the adaptation of non-Western meanings of politics that forms of democracy can evolve that respond directly to the identity and interests of the broader layers of the populations of 'post-colonial' Third World countries. In order to grasp this meaning, the enquiry of 'what governance' must pursue 'a politics embedded in lived experience' that pays more attention to what happens in 'the zone of the private and personal' than in the public arena because the latter is still defined by the colonial past of these countries (Darby, 2004: 21-22). This approach to 'the local' is self-evident within some of the essentially non-political theoretical fields listed above. What Darby calls for, is a serious attempt at integrating these insights into Western political theory, thereby unlocking the discursive blocking for systemic change in North-South relations. In particular, this concerns 'the archive of IR, hobbled as it is by its insistence on the primacy of the state, the privileging of the modern (meaning Western) and a circumscribed understanding of what constitutes the political' (ibid.). This ideal of 'postcolonial politics' also responds to the problem of 'hegemonic peacebuilding':

It is my contention that the construction of the political in contemporary Western discourse marginalises the struggle of non-European peoples for economic justice and racial equality and discounts their historical experience and dispossession. Not to put too fine a point on it, established conceptions of the political underwrite Western dominance (ibid.: 3).

Furthermore, this approach might also ease the postmodern critique because it opens peacebuilding for a wider range of practical rationalities.

Also when it comes to the question of 'What governance?' the local population should of course be invited into the process of defining the meaning of the mission and not only of carrying out a predefined agenda. This requires creating political spaces that include all branches of society, where the traditions of different groups can meet, and where settlements of a transitional kind can be reached (Scott, 1999, Darby, 2004: note 43).

This brings us back to the question of 'what self,' as it is of course only within the ideal type of the Western nation-state that the host-country would constitute a unified *subject* with a common understanding of the meaning of politics and with a consensus on the priorities for self-governance. There will always be a question of host-communities, and especially so in the aftermath of civil war. Building the

capacity for self-governance therefore implies ‘building the capacity for peaceful conflict resolution’ so that transitional agendas of peacebuilding can be arrived at. The peace-through-liberalization strategy of holding early elections and institutionalizing democratic governance represents such an attempt at creating a space for peaceful conflict resolution. From the communitarian perspective, however, it will have to be up to the local communities to settle at more permanent political structures for their future. There is a genuine difference between this approach and the predefined aim of building liberal market democracy, because it involves creating the preconditions for an internal process of peacebuilding with external support, rather than an ‘external’ process of institution-building with internal support (see Baker (2001) for an elaboration on this distinction). While the latter alternative is probably much more efficient, it is only the former that can create a peace that springs out of the communities it affects. This argument somewhat parallels John Stuart Mill’s classic defence of self-determination that re-emerges in Waltzer’s *Just and Unjust Wars* (1992/1977). It is rooted in the assertion that it is not possible to establish free institutions through outside intervention - democracy can only evolve from the will of the people (Brown, 2002). This parallel is, however, not quite straight. While Mill based this argument on an idea of separate nations destined for the same democratic institutions at their own pace, the communitarian argument fronted here foresees communities as inhabiting substantially different meanings of politics that do not fit into a Western narrative of self-determination through the establishment of liberal state-institutions.

Furthermore, there is a difference between this communitarian approach and the idea of developing the meaning of peacebuilding through ‘dialogue’ with the host-population – an idea that will be elaborated further in the next section. While the idea of dialogue represents the peacebuilders and the people affected as equal partners in a rational ‘conversation,’ the communitarian perspective excludes the peacebuilders from this dialogue, except as committed organizers and generous donors.

This communitarian approach finds support in the prescriptions of Elisabeth M. Cousens and Chetan Kumar in *Peacebuilding as Politics* (2001). Here, they claim that ‘peacebuilding needs to sharpen and retain a focus on its original purpose:



consolidating whatever degree of peace has been achieved in the short term and, in the longer term, increasing the likelihood that future conflict can be managed without resort to violence' (ibid: 4). Their suggestion is that the defining priority of peacebuilding becomes '*the construction or strengthening of authoritative and, eventually, legitimate mechanisms to resolve internal conflict without violence*' (ibid.). On this background, they suggest limiting the peacebuilding role of international actors to facilitating the emergence of healthy intergroup relations along three political factors:

- *Capacity for dialogue and compromise* among concerned actors.
- *Public security* that guarantees heterogeneity of expression and debate among multiple groups and actors.
- *Participation* by all key actors and sectors in the formulation and operation of the political structures that manage conflict. (ibid.: 186).

These factors are abstracted from other 'extrapolitical' factors of peacebuilding; 'cultural, psychological, even spiritual' that are seen as 'domestic processes where international assistance has little comparative advantage and often questionable credibility or legitimacy (ibid: 12). This apparently communitarian argument, however, is not quite consistent. It presupposes that the meanings of dialogue, security and participation are not affected by this cultural dimension. Therefore, according to 'the sovereignty principle for peacebuilding' outlined above, even these concepts must be subjected to communitarian scrutiny before they can be transferred to concrete peacebuilding strategies. The meaning of 'building the capacity for peaceful conflict resolution' must therefore be defined on the basis the overall aim of building the capacity for self-governance, rooted in an exploration of 'which selves' and 'what governance'. Only then, the question of 'whose peace' can get an answer that lives up to communitarian precepts. But what about the liberal ones?

### **...IN ACCORDANCE WITH LIBERAL PRECEPTS**

Can this approach be reconciled with the liberal precepts that underpin the current meaning of peacebuilding? When seen from the ideal types of the communitarian and cosmopolitan positions, the answer is 'no'. The communitarian does not accept the principles of individualism, equity and universalism, and the cosmopolitan refutes

compromising these. However, the communitarian perspective is compatible with a form of 'liberal pluralism' that seeks political solutions that are in accordance with liberal standards without imposing them in a 'crusading' fashion (see section 2.3). For instance, this means that the commitment to individual autonomy is understood as *socially constructed*, which, furthermore, means that this commitment can be adapted to more collectivist understandings of personhood *in other socio-cultural contexts* without losing its essential liberal meaning (MacIntyre, 1988). It does not involve professing liberal politics in its Western meaning but expressing a liberal *attitude* or *way of thinking* that from a communitarian perspective is *more* in line with liberal norms than the crusading alternative.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, it follows from this argument that this is also the best way of *promoting* liberal norms because by acting in accordance with these standards, manifesting individual freedom, human rights and a democratic spirit, an example is set that might inspire those affected. The imposition of liberalism in a non-liberal fashion (that gives rise to the 'the liberal peacebuilding paradox') becomes a self-undermining alternative within this pragmatic communitarian outlook.

Would this imply undermining the liberal peace? According to MacMillan, it is from the normative roots of liberalism, and only secondarily in their institutional manifestations, that the liberal peace springs (see section 2.1). If one assumes with communitarianism that the transplantation of liberal democratic institutions does not carry these roots with it, it is only by successfully *imparting* these foundational norms that the liberal peace can eventually take root and expand the liberal garden of peace. This requires that the institutional focus of peacebuilding is complemented with a focus on the ideational (in IR terms, 'constructivist') dimension of the liberal peace.<sup>25</sup> If the peacebuilders through their *interaction* with the host-population succeed in expressing and imparting liberalism's stress on 'human freedom, the potential of agency over structure, the power of reason, and the faith in the reconcilability of interests' (MacMillan, 1998: 13), this will, according to this scheme, be the best way of transferring the 'pacifism' of liberalism. Although this complicates matters for the

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<sup>24</sup> In line with this argument, Chris Brown has suggested a revitalization of virtue ethical thinking in global politics where the promotion of liberal ideals is channelled into the question of 'how we must be' as a moral agent in international politics instead of 'what we should do' with reference to the consequences (utilitarianism) or formal, generalized maxims (deontology) of our actions (Brown, 2000: 210).

architects of liberal peacebuilding a great deal, it is the only way in which peacebuilding can be truly liberal, at least when MacMillan's interpretation of the liberal peace is channelled through communitarian presuppositions.

There will always be a cosmopolitan element in peacebuilding. Per definition, it involves an ethically motivated interference of international actors in the internal affairs of political communities. This element cannot be abolished through an exclusive focus on the premises of the host-community. What the idea of building the capacity for peaceful self-governance in accordance with liberal precepts contributes with is the possibility of integrating the communitarian critique of this cosmopolitanism into a 'critical cosmopolitan' framework. In this connection, 'critical' implies a commitment to the complicating ideal of manifesting a cosmopolitan agenda in political measures that maintain their ethical substance when seen from the perspective of those affected. With this vision of a post-Westphalian sovereignty principle rooted in a 'critical cosmopolitan' outlook, I wish to launch an alternative to the state-centrism of the liberal internationalist prescription without losing out the communitarian rationale for state-sovereignty. This has brought us a far step into the domain of the next section, namely alternative *cosmopolitan* frameworks for liberal peacebuilding.

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<sup>25</sup> On this distinction, see Brown (2001: 228).

## ***4.2 Liberal Idealism***

Liberal idealism starts where critical international theory ended in the former chapter: with the recognition of a hegemonic world order where the current organization of power, influence and wealth demands radical political measures (Dunne, 2001). On this theoretical background, an idealist re-visioning of the left-liberal vision can be made. This involves political cosmopolitan prescription of the kind of global transformation that is needed for the left-liberal vision to be realizable. More significantly for the present discussion, it also entails ideas of what liberal peacebuilding must be like in order to *contribute* to such transformation.

Concluding on the contributions to the special issue of *International Peacekeeping* on 'Peace Operations and Global Order,' Bellamy and Williams outline such a 'critical agenda' for the future of peace operations that 'might contribute to making peace operations more effective in the short-term and making them redundant in the longer run' (Bellamy & Williams, 2004c: 183). It is framed as an attempt at moving beyond the deconstructive potential of critical international theory by 'proposing reconstructive agendas based on possibilities immanent within the current global order' (Bellamy & Williams, 2004b: 7). Underpinning this agenda is a concern for placing 'the needs, interests and aspirations of the victims of war and tyranny' and not those of the peacebuilders at the heart of peace operations (Bellamy & Williams, 2004c: 205). In line with the approach of Critical Security Studies developed by Ken Booth and Richard Wyn Jones among others (Booth, 1991; Jones, 1999; Krause & Williams, 1997; Stamnes, 2004), this is supposed to be done by 'creating and consolidating political, social and economic processes that allow local populations to pursue their own political purposes in ways that do not prevent others from doing likewise' (Bellamy & Williams, 2004c: 202).

Evidently, this fully corresponds to the concern with formulating a sovereignty principle for liberal peacebuilding. However, while this principle implies adding a communitarian restraint on liberal internationalism, the critical agenda involves a further *expansion* of the cosmopolitanism of liberal peacebuilding. According to its analyses of the globalization and fragmentation of world politics, it is only through the

development of post-Westphalian political structures that the capacity for self-governance can be achieved:

Far from being antithetical, communitarianism and cosmopolitanism provide complementary insights into the possibility of new forms of community and citizenship in the post-Westphalian era. They reveal that more complex associations of universality and difference can be developed by breaking the nexus between sovereignty, territoriality, nationality and citizenship and by promoting wider communities of discourse (Linklater, 1998: 60).

Instead of liberal internationalism's reliance on the emancipatory potential of the liberal state and the global economy, the critical agenda envisions a counter-hegemonic political agenda of empowering the excluded populations of the world through new and more democratic modes of global governance (Pugh, 2004; Williams, 2004). In the literature on global democratization, two such models stand out: 'cosmopolitan democracy' and 'radical democratic pluralism' (Hutchings, 1999; McGrew, 2000). Neither of these is particularly economic in nature, but they prescribe a world order that is supposed to enable marginalized populations to address the causes of their unprivileged position themselves.

The critical agenda outlined by Bellamy and Williams opens for both of these visions. Among the two, it is, however, clearly the model of cosmopolitan democracy that comes closest to their critical international theory of peacebuilding (Bellamy & Williams, 2004c, see for instance pp. 199-200). This model will be elaborated on in the following, as the point of reference for the invention of 'liberal idealist peacebuilding'. Thereafter, in the next section, a brief designation of 'radical democratic peacebuilding' will be discussed in comparison with its 'cosmopolitan democratic' equivalent.

## **THE LIBERAL IDEALIST PEACE**

The proponents of cosmopolitan democracy share with liberal internationalism the assumption that democracy and peace are intertwined, but see in the internationalist recipe for cosmopolitan democratization an outdated notion of democracy incapable of building an international liberal peace founded on truly democratic forms of governance. On this background, they argue that a democratization process at other global, regional, trans-state and sub-state levels must complement the building of

democratic state institutions (Archibugi, Held & Köhler, 1998a; Falk, 1995; Habermas, 1998; Held, 1995: 279-280; Held & Archibugi, 1995; Hutchings, 1999: 161). Furthermore, they share with liberal internationalists a portrayal of civil war as related to a crisis of the post-colonial state, but instead of prescribing 'good governance' and neo-liberal structuration models, they seek the remedy in new sources of political organization.

In this role, the model of cosmopolitan democracy becomes a continuation of liberal idealism's models of collective security and peace that are based on the idea that international peace is nothing natural but must be actively created and consolidated through international institutions. Compared to Michael Doyle's interpretation of Kant's 'perpetual peace,' liberal idealism promotes a more universal and transnational version of what might be called 'global liberal peacebuilding'. Its proponents see it as being more in line with the essence of Kant's cosmopolitanism when the implications of 200 years of increasing globalization are taken into consideration (Burke, 2005; Doyle, 1983a, 1999; Habermas, 1998: 178; MacMillan, 1998: 24; McGrew, 2000: 413). The reformist implications of liberal internationalism are regarded only as a precursor to the international reconstruction required for the establishment of sustainable global peace that can hinder the emergence of civil as well as international warfare. From this perspective, liberal internationalism overlooks 'the central fact that growing interdependency is also a significant source of global conflict' (McGrew, 2000: 410). As did liberal idealism in its golden age after World War I, the 'neo-idealist' advocates of cosmopolitan democracy see in the end of the Cold War a historical opportunity for global liberal peacebuilding. This time, however, a UN based on the Westphalian state-system is not progressive enough. A more radical and democratic kind is needed:

There is no guarantee that new and stronger conflicts will not break out between rival areas of influence. In different historical conditions, and among different geographical and political areas, forms of international conflict no less intense than those we have seen are still possible. The end of the Cold War must be seen as an opportunity for creating a more progressive, stable system of interstate relations (Archibugi, Held & Köhler, 1998b).

This does not mean the creation of a world government or federal super-state but the establishment of a transnational, common structure of political action 'involving all levels of, and participants in, global governance, from states,

multinational corporations, international institutions, social movements, to individuals' (McGrew, 2000: 414). That is, all the levels and actors involved in peacebuilding operations. The proposals for such global reform revolve around issues of government, law, economy and war. Crudely synthesizing some of the central suggestions of cosmopolitan democracy, mainly from David Held's model of 'cosmopolitanism from above' (Held, 1993, 1995; 1998: 25-26) and Richard Falk's 'cosmopolitanism from below' (Falk, 1995, 2002), an illustrative list can be reproduced:

- *Global government*: reform of the UN system to give developing countries a significant voice and effective decision-making capacity in its governing institutions, or the replacement of the UN with a genuinely democratic and accountable global parliament; establishing a 'Global Peoples Assembly', possibly within the UN system, for the representation of movements within global civil society that are not sufficiently represented by state authorities due to their radical 'counter-hegemonic' orientation.
- *Regional government*: enhanced political regionalization and use of transnational referenda; the creation of regional parliaments and the extension of the authority of such regional bodies.
- *Law*: realizing Kant's ideal of cosmopolitan law, beginning with a strengthening of international law, including the powers and enforcement mechanisms of the International Criminal Court and the entrenchment of human rights conventions in national parliaments;
- *Economy*: regulation of the global economy for development purposes, like the suggested 'Tobin-tax'; systematic experimentation with different democratic organizational economic forms; pluralization of patterns of ownership and possession; and the provision of resources to those in the most vulnerable social positions to defend and articulate their interests.
- *War*: greater reliance on third party procedures for dispute settlement and conflict resolution; the establishment of an effective, accountable, international military force and the transfer of an increasing proportion of states' military capability to transnational agencies and institutions with the ultimate aim of demilitarization.

In this vision, 'states become subject to external and internal standards of accountability, the Rule of Law, and the discipline of democratic practices' (Falk, 2002: 169). To proponents of cosmopolitan democracy, *The Responsibility to Protect* only takes the first step in this direction, and a second step of global institutional reform is needed in order to keep the balance when state sovereignty is fundamentally challenged.

## **LIBERAL IDEALIST PEACEBUILDING**

What are the implications of this neo-idealist vision of liberal peacebuilding in more concrete terms? If directly transferred, some elements of a preliminary answer can be sketched as follows: 1) The formulation of general peacebuilding policy should be subjected to a more democratic process on the global, regional and local levels of

governance involved – including the UN Peacebuilding Commission, the broader UN system with the Bretton Woods institutions, and the remaining organizations involved in peacebuilding operations. Through this democratization of the general frameworks of peacebuilding, the recipients would indirectly be given a stronger voice in the development of local strategies. 2) Premised on such a democratization process, significant resources, both economic and military, should be transferred to these peacebuilding agencies in order to decrease their dependency on the political and economic agendas of powerful donors. Together, these two elements would make peacebuilding less susceptible to hegemonic premises. 3) In the economic realm, more influence on the economic premises of operations should be given to the wider populations of developing countries, and not only their economic elites in power. 4) When it comes to international law, one may derive that peacebuilding should be integrated in international law as a right of humans lacking a minimum level of protection from their state. This right would subject the peacebuilders to certain standards of legitimacy, and make it impossible to get away with the undertaking of interventions without respecting the autonomy of the citizens of the host-country. A right to peacebuilding assistance would also reduce the room for selectivity with regard to the self-interest of donor countries and organizations. 5) Finally, as part of a general reform process of cosmopolitan democratization, peace operations in civil wars should be reinvented as operations of cosmopolitan law-enforcement, and peacebuilding change its meaning from building liberal market democracies after a Western model to the integration of the conflicting parties into institutional structures more capable of representing their interest. Instead of being forced to re-marry with the enemy in a common state-of-fate incapable of addressing the global dimensions and solutions to their grievance, they would be included in a system where political strategies are awarded and violent strategies punished as criminal acts.<sup>26</sup>

In such an idealist utopia of peacebuilding, the individual self-determination of the people in need would arguably be more respected than in a coercive process of building quasi-liberal state institutions. However, the extent to which it relies on a

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<sup>26</sup> The idea of handling civil violence as crime is discussed in Mary Kaldor's work on global governance (1999, e.g.) (see also Day & Freeman, 2005)



reduction of the hegemony of the leading centres of state power calls for pessimism of its feasibility. As with classical idealism, it provokes a realist response. It seems like the middle road taken by the left-liberal vision of liberal peacebuilding between the radical cosmopolitanism of cosmopolitan democracy and the conservative cosmopolitanism of mere 'riot-control' is also a middle road between realism and idealism. This recalls Hutchings's observation:

Paradoxically, the implications of liberal internationalism push equally in realist and cosmopolitan democracy directions. Reliance on the state and global capital as such seems likely to return us to the realist world view; recognition of the problems with this reliance in the light of liberal internationalist ideals seems to lead us to a much more interventionist social democratic cosmopolitanism (Hutchings, 1999: 174).

Hence, a realization of the utopia of liberal idealist peacebuilding sketched above seems to depend on a general change in the international political environment. Therefore, from a liberal idealist perspective, it is in accordance with the liberal internationalist ideals of peacebuilding that it takes on a form that can contribute to the development of such change. In pragmatic terms, this implies that peacebuilding should be integrated in a broader idealist agenda of global liberal peacebuilding, but only to the extent that it does not collide with its geopolitical conditions of possibility or the immediate interest and preferences of its donors.

A communitarian critique of cosmopolitan democracy is as sobering as the realist moderation. The assumption that the freedom of the individual is best preserved through transnational democratic structures presupposes the existence of highly rational citizens with a liberal spirit that are capable of representing their own interest and arriving at consensus on complex issues of global dimensions. Chris Brown writes that this would require the existence of a cosmopolitan democratic community guided by a common civic culture – a community that simply does not exist at present (Brown, 1995; 2002: 222-225). He acknowledges that globalization creates a sense of universal connectedness and that it leads international politics in a post-Westphalian direction, but not to the extent that a global community based upon shared beliefs, interests and values has yet emerged. Therefore, the idea of world community as a political community in cosmopolitan democracy theory is a flawed derivation calling for considerable communitarian hesitation (*ibid.*). This means that rooting peacebuilding in a process of cosmopolitan democratization would have to take into

account the constraints to this project posed by the boundaries of political communities as well as by *realpolitik*.

Andrew Linklater counters these constraints in an attempt at saving the liberal idealist vision from its communitarian and realist critiques (Linklater, 1990, 1992, 1998, 1999). The basic argument is an ethical one: neither realism, nor communitarianism is able to come up with credible ethical foundations for a post-Westphalian world of ‘globalization and fragmentation,’ where ‘fragmentation has highlighted the disjunctions between the boundaries of cultural and political community in many parts of the world, while globalisation casts considerable doubt on the supposition that the nation-state is the only significant moral community’ (Linklater, 1998: 216). By consolidating the exclusionary character of states and communities in international politics, they reinforce unjust systems of inclusion and exclusion. Countering this cementation of political boundaries, Linklater seeks to extend the principles of inclusion inherent in these systems to the cosmopolitan level. In this effort, he embraces the notion of ‘citizenship’ – ‘the right of political participation, duties to other citizens and the responsibility for the welfare of the community as a whole’ – due to its combination of political inclusion and a sensitivity to difference (Linklater, 1998: 184-185). He sees in this notion of citizenship a potential of an extension, not only to marginal communities within the state, but also to ‘foreigners’ outside the state (Heater, 1990; Linklater, 1998: 204-205). The universal principles implicit in the modern liberal state therefore carries with it the potential of a self-transcendence to the cosmopolitan level without precluding inclusive versions of the morality of states or communities. This implies a ‘thin’ rather than ‘thick’ form of cosmopolitanism, where the objective is not the creation of a world community but the peaceful regulation of inter-communal relations when dealing with pressing global political issues (see also Waltzer, 1994): ‘Thin conceptions of cosmopolitan citizenship revolve around compassion for the vulnerable but leave asymmetries of power and wealth intact; thick conceptions of cosmopolitan citizenship attempt to influence the structural conditions faced by vulnerable groups’ (Linklater, 1998: 206). Peacebuilding can be seen as one of the contemporary issues

that invoke such a ‘thin’ cosmopolitanism.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, Linklater writes that dealing with such global issues is what opens the way for thicker conceptions, which is the ultimate goal of ‘the transformation of political community’. It is the condition for the kind of polities and politics envisaged by ‘cosmopolitan democracy’. If undertaken in line with a thin cosmopolitanism peacebuilding is therefore one of the issues that could lead towards thicker conceptions. In this account, peacebuilding is not only dependent upon the transformation of realpolitik and political communities – it is itself a potential catalyst for such transformation. As I claimed above, this puts the contribution of liberal idealist peacebuilding theory in its right perspective: The point with seeing liberal peacebuilding as an aspect of idealist models of global peacebuilding is not to suspend local operations until the model of cosmopolitan democracy is realized. The challenge is rather to conceptualize operational aims and means that are in line with its cosmopolitan political ideals. In the following, a framework for such a conceptualization will be developed, revolving around a liberal idealist notion of ‘dialogic peacebuilding’.

## **A DISCOURSE ETHICS OF PEACEBUILDING**

Linklater’s vision is heavily influenced by the discourse ethics of Jürgen Habermas, rooted in a dialogic ideal of ‘the free speech situation’ (Habermas, 1990). The development of the intermediate step of thin cosmopolitanism, Linklater writes, depends upon the unfolding of an all embracing, non-totalizing discourse committed to arriving at consensus without regard to the power of the participants. The core of a universalization of the liberal peace therefore lies in the mode of communication that guides cosmopolitan political rationality.<sup>28</sup>

Collaboration across the frontiers to produce arrangements which are more universalistic, more sensitive to cultural differences and more committed to reducing social and economic inequalities

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<sup>27</sup> Linklater, of course, does not himself mention peacebuilding, as this issue is not established in the vocabulary of general debates of international political theory.

<sup>28</sup> Unlike Linklater (and Habermas), Vivienne Jabri relates ‘the Habermasian model of discursive ethics’ directly to peace without going via a political cosmopolitan vision: ‘The force of the model in conceptualising peace is ... its capacity to locate a process which allows for the emergence of dialogic relationships. [...] The model ... does not provide a substantive definition of the contents of peace, but provides for a process of which peace is by necessity constitutive. It also provides a framework through which war as an institution can be put to question’ (Jabri, 1996: 166).

than their predecessors is entailed by domination-free communication. A global narrative of universal emancipation which aims at this ... is immanent within the dialogic ideal. The ethical foundations of political community in the post-Westphalian era should revolve around these convictions (Linklater, 1998: 108).

From this ideal it follows that dialogue is the principle by which the liberal peace should be expanded: not by imposing liberal norms but by entering into open dialogue with the vulnerable populations outside this zone in line with liberal principles, or, as Linklater puts it, ‘engaging the systematically excluded in dialogue about the ways in which social practices and policies harm their interests’ (Linklater, 1998: 7). This contrasts markedly with Doyle’s recipe of ‘divide and rule’ for the benevolent expansion of the liberal peace (Doyle, 1999) (see section 2.2). While Doyle grounds this recipe in a realist account of international relations outside the liberal zone of peace (Doyle, 1983b), Linklater bases his vision on a change in the communicative mode of these relations so that realist strategies are made redundant. This is where ‘dialogic peacebuilding’ enters the liberal idealist picture: By being guided by discourse ethics, liberal peacebuilding can expand the liberal idealist peace without entailing the legitimacy problem of current practices.

Firstly, the ideal of dialogic peacebuilding implicates that the ‘ethical rationality’ of current peacebuilding thinking should be exchanged with a ‘communicative rationality’ (Habermas, 1984). In Habermas’s theory of communicative action, it is only the latter that can transcend the hegemonic subjectivity of liberal peacebuilding (see ‘The legitimacy problem’ in section 3.2). In this account, ethical (or ‘bounded’) rationality is caught up in the subjective value-systems and conceptions of the ‘sender’, *and excludes the ethical rationality of the ‘recipients’ of this devotion*. As long as the motive of liberal peacebuilding is not formed by communicative rationality, it is therefore possible for the peacebuilders to channel their ethical commitment into instrumental solutions without rooting these in the ‘lifeworld’ of the subjects of peacebuilding.<sup>29</sup> It is only if the cosmopolitanist vision of peacebuilding is opened for communicative rationality – the rationality of legitimate cosmopolitanism – that the interacting parties can ‘overcome their merely

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<sup>29</sup> This fully resonates with the ‘sovereignty principle’ outlined above. However, their implications are different because this communicative perspective involves an ideal of cross-communal consensus that communitarianism rejects.

subjective views and ... assure themselves of both the unity of the objective world and the intersubjectivity of their lifeworld' (Habermas, 1984: 10). This would require that pre-established instrumental recipes of peacebuilding were abandoned and replaced with an approach of recognition that engages the subjectivity of the people in need when recipes are formed (for general perspectives on the problem of recognition in world politics, see Honneth, 1995; Haacke, 2005; Jones, 1999, and in peace operations; Stamnes, 2004).

The second implication of 'dialogic peacebuilding' is more self-evident: that concrete missions should be developed in dialogue with its recipients. It adds to liberal idealist peacebuilding a method of channelling its general vision into a concrete mission. This is needed because, although pretending to represent the local interest in a better way than does the orthodox approach, the liberal idealist peace is still an 'outside' perspective on how the interest of the 'insiders' can be represented. Alex Bellamy acknowledges this problem, and briefly outlines a remedy that serves as an excellent illustration of 'dialogic peacebuilding'. He calls it a 'pragmatic solidarist' approach that suggests three techniques for creating alternative strategies for peace operations 'while avoiding the inadvertent construction of totalizing discourses' (see also Bellamy, 2002):

The first is a form of dialogic ethics: actors should engage in constant free and open dialogue, and agreement about what constitutes 'good practice' should be arrived at through consensus openly arrived at. Second, inclusivity: the dialogue should include all parties that might be affected by the course of action under discussion, and different perspectives should be evaluated according to the weight of their content rather than the ideational or material power behind it. Third, fallibility: theorists and practitioners of peace operations must recognize that even their most dearly held beliefs are fallible and therefore open for revision on the basis of the first two techniques' (Bellamy, 2004a: 33).

These dialogic techniques, however, presuppose that all the relevant parties share the same principles of rationality by which to evaluate each other's arguments. This supposition seems to be inconsistent with the pragmatist claim that 'there is no independent arbiter to evaluate between different knowledge claims constructed by different communities on a particular issue' (ibid.) that Bellamy cites in support of his pragmatist solidarist method. If such an independent arbiter viz. a universal rationality existed, it would not be so crucial to bring in the local population because their knowledge and interests could be represented externally. Bellamy seems to suggest a

middle position where there is enough overlap between the rationality of the peacebuilders and the affected parties for a genuine dialogue to take place. This position is in line with the philosophy of Habermas and Linklater, but more pragmatic than for instance the presuppositions of John Rawls's *The Law of Peoples* (Rawls, 1999). However, from the more consequent pragmatism of Nietzsche and Rorty who Bellamy quotes in support of his approach, this 'thin' cosmopolitan rationality mediating between the knowledge claims constructed in local communities on particular issues is also impossible: As long as the parties affected are not defined as members of the same community or 'sphere of rationality,' then the power of the better argument lies in the hands of those defining the legitimate rationality, which will usually be the benevolent peacebuilders, be they radical or orthodox. This objection coincides with the postmodern and communitarian critiques in this thesis. The mantra in defence of Habermas's discourse ethics, however, is that, although not perfectly realizable, a commitment to 'the ideal speech situation' functions as a constraint on less dialogic forms of rationality that are incapable of including and recognizing 'the other' (Habermas, 1998; Honneth, 1995). In this perspective, the method of inclusion on the premises of discourse ethics is a possible technique of counteracting, if not resolving, the problem of formulating peacebuilding policies on external premises. It relies on the assertion that, although all human beings do not (yet) share a common moral identity and that there are no(t yet) universal standards of normative judgement, a pragmatic and procedural commitment to discourse ethics makes it possible to arrive at consensus across the borders of peacebuilding politics. Within Linklater's scheme of the transformation of political communities, this ideal of dialogic peacebuilding does not only address the current legitimacy problem of peacebuilding – it also contributes to the development of a global political climate where currently utopian forms of liberal idealist peacebuilding can be realized.

### ***4.3 Radical Democratic Pluralism***

We are now living in a unipolar world where there are no legitimate channels for opposing the hegemony of the United States which is at the origin of the explosion of new antagonisms which, if we are unable to grasp their nature, might indeed lead to the announced 'clash of civilizations'. The way to avoid such a prospect is to take pluralism seriously instead of trying to impose one single model on the whole world, even if it is a well meaning cosmopolitan one (Mouffe, 2005: 115).

Proponents of radical democratic pluralism strongly oppose the centralizing and consensus-seeking logic of the model of cosmopolitan democracy. In this role, they have more in common with communitarianism and postmodernism while still proposing a highly normative vision of global political transformation. Both cosmopolitan democracy and radical democratic pluralism are distinguished from liberal internationalism by their emphasis on extra- and trans-state sources of political agency in global affairs, but while cosmopolitan democracy implies the inclusion of these sources in a global political body, radical democratic pluralists seek alternative formations of political organization in regional bodies, NGOs and radical social movements beyond the framework of international law and institutions (Hutchings, 1999; McGrew, 2000; Mouffe; 2005; Walker 1988). They see in these elements a counter force to the established international system, a system that is portrayed as completely incapable of meeting the global challenges of the current world order. Therefore, this system should not be *reconstructed* as cosmopolitan democracy suggests – the solution must be found in *alternative* structures of global governance (McGrew, 2000). In this vision, the real democratic politics start where established political systems are replaced by social activism. In crude terms, the difference in how these two models transcend the state-system is that cosmopolitan democracy relies on 'a generalization of the domestic', while radical democratic pluralism, on the contrary, 'generalizes the international' by introducing an 'international analogy' to the domestic sphere of political theory (Edkins & Zehfuss, 2005). In accordance with postmodernism, all foundational sources of morality are rejected, including the individualism of internationalism and idealism and the collectivism of communitarianism. This entails a form of moral 'expressionism' that takes as its starting point a plurality of fluctuating ethical sources, such as political movements, cultural affinities, regional organizations, gender and personhood. This relativization

of autonomy also implies a relativization of the sovereignty, be it individual, communal or state-based, that peacebuilding is supposed to rebuild (Walker & Mendlovitz, 1990; Walker, 1993).

## **MULTIPOLAR PEACEBUILDING**

Radical democratic pluralism is not a single model but a collective term for diverse political cosmopolitan visions that seek alternative sources of global democratization. It is therefore not possible to derive from it a clear vision for liberal peacebuilding, and within this approach, the formulation of general guidelines or prescriptions, even in the form of a sovereignty principle, would be contrary to its basic presumptions. This is the bottom line of a radical democratic pluralist framework of peacebuilding: that instead of international efforts at integrating and streamlining the aims, means and agencies of peacebuilding (and this is perhaps the most prominent theme in policy-oriented peacebuilding theory at present), its diversity should be cultivated. Without answering the question of ‘Whose and which peace?’ three core elements of such a vision of ‘multipolar peacebuilding’ can be suggested. These are, however, only intuitive derivations, and a more consistent conceptualization of multipolar peacebuilding remains to be developed.

**Pluralism:** First, this vision implies a pluralization of the normative foundations and political agenda of peacebuilding. Rather than seeking a common political framework that the agents of peacebuilding should follow, the politics of peacebuilding should spring organically from the agency of the people involved. This should hinder that peacebuilding becomes an instrument for the imposition of Western hegemony (Mouffe, 2005: 126).

**Activism:** From the idea of pluralism follows that the agents of multipolar peacebuilding should be defined through the activism of peace movements rather than as centralized ‘cosmopolitan peacebuilders’ like the UN Peacebuilding Commission and powerful intergovernmental organizations concerned with formal political processes (Walker, 1988). This would imply transferring more resources and support to local and regional peace initiatives and NGOs engaged in conflict resolution and peacebuilding activities on all levels of society. These activities actually represent a



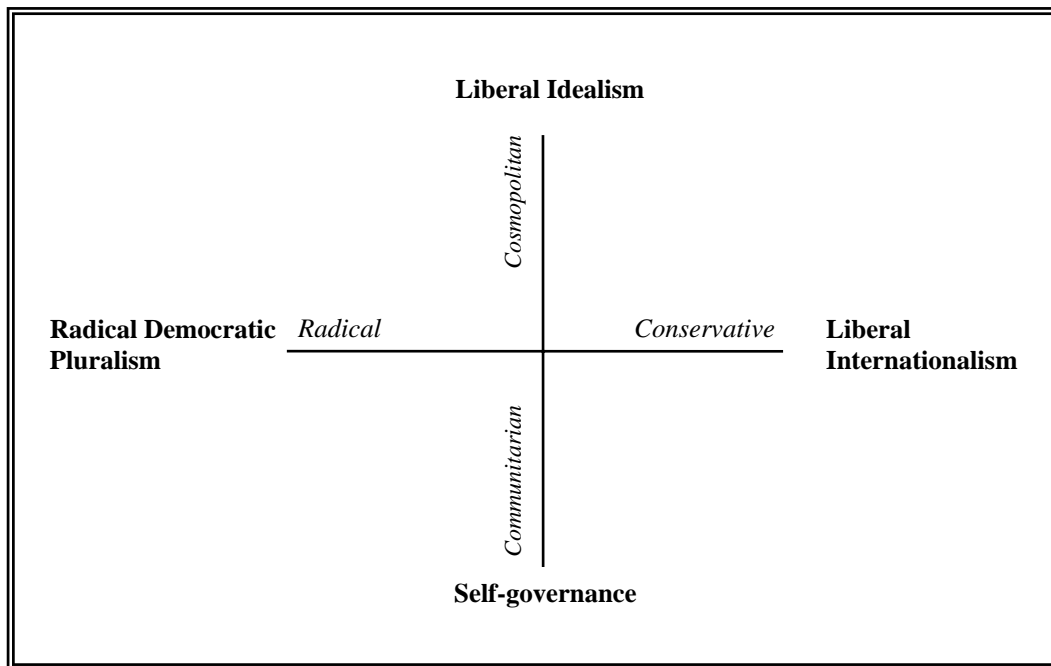
great bulk of what is being done in the field of peacebuilding at present, and it is poorly represented in the other political visions of peacebuilding presented in this thesis. In the framework of liberal internationalism, for instance, these actors are reduced to facilitators of a general liberalization process. This, however, is not how these agencies and initiatives usually represent themselves and their work, and the framework of multipolar peacebuilding might be more fitting to their apparently apolitical peace activism (for elaborations on this approach, see for instance Anderson & Olson, 2003; Lederach, 1997, 1999; Tongeren et al., 2005).

**Regionalism:** In the chapter ‘Which World Order: Cosmopolitan or Multipolar?’ in *On the Political* (2005), Chantal Mouffe strongly rejects the cosmopolitan dream of a post-hegemonic world order because this ideal negates the hegemonic nature of *every* political order (ibid: 118). She therefore writes that ‘the only conceivable strategy for overcoming world dependence on a single power is to find ways to ‘pluralize’ hegemony’ (ibid.). This, she claims, can only be done through a multiplicity of ‘regional powers’. (I interpret this untypical essentialization of ‘the regional’ as a pragmatic argument on how to strengthen ‘the decentralized’ versus ‘the cosmopolitan’ in the current world order, and not as a valorisation of ‘the regional’ *per se*.) For peacebuilding, this regionalism both implies that regional rather than global organizations should set the agenda for the formal, non-activist parts of peacebuilding within their regions, and that their influence on the formulation of the general peacebuilding strategies in the UN etc. should be strengthened. This would create a political space for genuine debates on the politics of peacebuilding where a plurality of visions could be confronted (ibid: 3-5).

## ***4.4 Relations***

We have now established four political theoretical frameworks for answering the ethical questions ‘Whose peace? Which peace?’. With the risk of oversimplification, liberal internationalists and liberal idealists can be said to answer the former question through the latter. The communitarian sovereignty-principle, on the contrary, renders the question of ‘Which peace?’ as a function of the answer to ‘Whose peace?’. Finally, radical democratic pluralists resist any general answers to these questions, except from in the negative as ‘not universal’ and ‘not hegemonic,’ and leave them in the hands of a multiplicity of peacebuilding activists to decide upon.

If reduced to positions within a common political theoretical framework of liberal peacebuilding, these four visions fall along two axes. First, liberal internationalism and radical democratic pluralism are sheer oppositions when it comes to the political nature of their prescriptions. While liberal internationalists forecast a steady development towards global liberal governance as the way to perpetual peace, radical democratic pluralists portray this vision as the development of a subversive, homogenizing and hegemonic ‘geo-governance from above’ (Hutchings, 1999: 167), and seek peace in alternative political formations. This axis therefore stretches out between a conservative and a radical pole of international politics, where the visions of ‘self-governance’ and ‘liberal idealism’ take a middle position. These visions, on the other hand, are radical oppositions along the communitarianism-cosmopolitanism axis of international politics. This leaves us with the following model of the prescriptive field of liberal peacebuilding politics, a model within which current policies can be positioned and future strategies envisioned:



*Model 4.1: The prescriptive field of liberal peacebuilding politics*

This chapter started with the question of what alternatives to the liberal internationalist vision of legitimate peacebuilding that can be derived from the presuppositions of the critiques presented in chapter 3. The answer to this question can be summed up through an attempt at describing the centre point of ‘model 4.1’: First, in order to get peacebuilding out of the liberal internationalist corner, the current meaning of peacebuilding would be reconceptualized as ‘building the capacity for peaceful self-governance in accordance with liberal precepts’. The communitarian weight of this reformulation would then be counterbalanced by approaching this aim in a dialogic rather than self-reducing manner within a clear cosmopolitan vision of the global political dimension of liberal peacebuilding. Finally, in accordance with ‘radical democratic pluralism,’ non-governmental actors, local initiatives and regional organization would be given equal priority and latitude as the centralized, intergovernmental agencies, without setting the agenda for their work.

*What is the right position for liberal peacebuilding to take within this prescriptive field of liberal peacebuilding politics?* This question I leave open to you, the reader, to answer. It is an old philosophical insight that sometimes the hardest task is to pose the right question. With this in mind, it is with a clear conscience that I hereby conclude this investigation.

# 5 CONCLUSION

## RETROSPECT

What are the political theoretical presuppositions of the contending positions on the legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding in scholarly literature? On the background of the preceding exploration, this research question can now be answered as follows: The foundations of the dominant idea of liberal peacebuilding in international politics can be found in the presuppositions of liberal internationalism. These render liberal peacebuilding an altruistic project of building liberal market democratic states for the inclusion in the liberal zone of peace. The critics that claim that this venture suffers from a legitimacy problem do not represent a single theoretical counter-perspective, but can be related to three strands of thought that partly complement and partly exclude each other and the current presuppositions of liberal peacebuilding. These are communitarianism, critical international theory and postmodernism. The most forceful critiques, like the ones of Mark Duffield and Oliver Richmond, combine aspects of all these strands in broad-ranging efforts at shaking the current peacebuilding consensus (Duffield, 2001; Richmond, 2004). However, this investigation has shown that an uncritical mixture of insights from these strands might preclude as much as it reveals by being based on diverse presuppositions that can be mutually exclusive. In this respect, the exposition of these presuppositions contributes with a tool for critically examining the *critics* as well as the *proponents* of liberal internationalist peacebuilding. Finally, in the critique of liberal peacebuilding more or less immanent sources of alternative visions of peacebuilding can be found. Delineating these represents the most independent, but also the least original chapter of this thesis. *Most independent*, because few attempts have been made at rooting such prescriptions in a critical discussion of the legitimacy-dimension of peacebuilding (the exceptions I am aware of are the IBL-strategy of Paris, the brief sketch of ‘a critical agenda’ by Bellamy and Williams, and Woodhouse and Ramsbotham’s cosmopolitan response to that agenda (Bellamy & Williams, 2004c; Paris, 2004; Woodhouse & Ramsbotham, 2005)). *Least original*, because an abundance of intersecting proposals can be found in

the efficiency oriented literature. To this literature, however, it contributes with a prescriptive field within which such proposals can be positioned and compared.

## **PROSPECT**

This exploration has contributed with a new field of research to **international political theory**. It has shown that the issue of liberal peacebuilding raises problems that are not reducible to existing debates on peace operations, humanitarian intervention and forcible regime change. To these debates it has contributed with insights on ethical problems of post-intervention peacebuilding efforts that affect the overall arguments *for* and *against* intervention in contemporary international politics. Although one might expect that this will only strengthen the latter category, the communitarian argument against humanitarian intervention is for instance complicated by the communitarian argument *in favour* of a form of peacebuilding that is defined by the aim of building peace on local premises.

For **problem-solving theory**, the thesis has raised a range of questions concerning ‘*whose peace*’ and ‘*which peace*’ to pursue. The *six alternative positions* to the liberal internationalist analysis and prescription of peacebuilding place it within a wider theoretical universe that opens for a myriad of paths towards the formulation and assessment of theories, policies and practices. The fact that this thesis is kept on a general level, makes the elaboration on concrete cases a fruitful starting point for further problem-solving research within this universe.

What then about the **practice** of peacebuilding? Can this philosophical approach have any impact on the work of policy makers and professionals without being mediated by problem-solving accounts? First and foremost, it raises the practitioner’s awareness of what she is doing. It does not come up with the practical answers, but will help her finding them in an informed and self-reflexive manner. Hopefully, this will prepare her for making the right decisions when confronted with difficult moral dilemmas.

## INTROSPECT

If we return to the beginning of the introduction, the initial questions that led to this research project where: Does liberal peacebuilding suffer from a legitimacy problem? If so, how can the positive potential of peacebuilding be preserved without these evils? I have not tried to come up with final answers to these questions but a theoretical framework for approaching them. Nevertheless, certain personal conclusions can be derived from this framework.

Firstly, I think liberal internationalist peacebuilding in its current form is legitimate, and that the rising left-liberal vision is a fruitful point of departure. As I argued in ‘the case for liberal peacebuilding,’ the alternative of non-action is not a viable one. In deontological terms, it would not conform to a duty of helping people in need whenever possible. In utilitarian terms, a potential relapse to war would have worse consequences than the potentially negative side-effects of trying, at least with regard to the knowledge currently available. In virtue ethical terms, inaction would simply not be in accordance with how agents of global politics ought to *be*: when confronted with the possibility of assisting populations on their path to peace, it should create a will to do so, not by duty but delight.

However, this does not exclude that liberal peacebuilding is confronted with serious problems of legitimacy that the liberal internationalist framework is not capable of taking fully into account. Therefore, I see the complementing of other strands of international political theory to peacebuilding thinking as an important contribution for living up to these ethical arguments. To the question of whether liberal peacebuilding is *done* in the best way possible today, I cannot respond on this basis. All I can say on the background of this thesis is that the *theoretical representation* of this practice in current policy oriented peacebuilding literature is very problematic. So, on the question of how the positive potential of peacebuilding can be preserved without its evils, I can only conclude that serious efforts at broadening the understanding of the perils and promises of the politics of peacebuilding should be made, but without overshadowing the fact that liberal peacebuilding is on the right track. Where such efforts would eventually lead this track within the prescriptive field of liberal peacebuilding policy I cannot foresee, but I hope that the centripetal force of

this field is strong enough to lead it away from its current position in ‘the right corner’ without taking it all the way to any of the other absolutes.

This is the ultimate potential of an international political theory of liberal peacebuilding: To enrich the construction work of peacebuilding with an adequate theory of its political architecture, and then, to transform this architecture for the full realization of the ideals underpinning it.

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