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### **State-building, Nation-building and Reconstruction**

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Denisa Kostovicova and David Rampton

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### **Abstract**

This chapter explores a new kind of interventionism in the post-Cold War era and challenges faced by global actors in the reconstruction of domestic political authority in the aftermath of conflict. The chapter reflects on the meanings and implications of different facets of comprehensive external involvement in state-building, nation-building and reconstruction, before addressing the theoretical framings of international intervention in terms of (post)liberal peace and its critique. What follows is a review and discussion of dilemmas and contradictions inherent in the outsiders' project to pursue liberal peace-based interventions by focusing on: sovereignty, legitimacy, ownership and accountability. The chapter turns to hybridity as an alternative conceptualisation of international peacebuilding and concludes with the policy implications on rethinking wholesale reconstruction of state and society by external actors.

**Key words:** State-building; nation-building; post-war reconstruction; sovereignty, legitimacy, accountability; ownership; liberal peace

### **Introduction**

The end of the Cold War has ushered in a new kind of engagement between external actors and volatile post-conflict states. Foreign states, multilateral institutions (such as UN, EU, NATO and OSCE), and international non-governmental organisations (such as Red Cross, Yellow Crescent, and Medicines sans Frontiers) have taken on the rebuilding of states, societies and economies in the aftermath of war. The involvement of a multitude of external actors in comprehensive governance (Caplan 2005a, 16-44) in foreign states has evolved alongside a reconceptualisation of post-Cold War threats whereby weak and failed states have emerged as a primary security concern. The understanding of state weakness and fragility as

a security threat represents a shift away from great power security competition where threat was judged as commensurate with the strength of the state (cf. Fearon and Laitin 2004; Rotberg 2007). Within this post-Cold War framework, conflict-affected space, understood as a distant 'zone of chaos', could no longer be isolated or ignored due to the intensification of globalization (Cooper 2004). Increasingly local governance failures have come to be perceived as sources of transnational insecurity, illustrated by criminal activity, terrorism and mass refugee and migration flows. Tracing insecurity to the state function has at the same time shifted the political and policy spotlight on intensified intervention in the aftermath of conflict, justified explicitly by the conflict legacy. Wars fought in a global context have been characterised by the coalescence of a multitude of state and non-state actors, military as well as civilian, legal and criminal, in the war enterprise. Their legacy is the criminalisation of both state and society, often combined with instrumental use of ethnic and sectarian identities to political ends (Kostovicova and Bojicic-Dzelilovic 2009).

Nearly two decades of external involvement in rebuilding local political authority in foreign environments has kept the recurrence of violence at bay, as for example in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, despite the changing scope and nature of external involvement, the goal of building sustainable and legitimate states remains largely elusive. Demonstrations of local resistance to external actors and their local projects, epitomised in the Taliban resurgence in Afghanistan, point to a crisis in both practice and theory. The international intervention in Libya suggests that a military intervention may not necessarily be followed by a comprehensive post-conflict engagement, as in Kosovo. And a critique of liberal peace - until recently a dominant framework for theorising external intervention - has given rise to alternative understandings of the rationale for and the nature of international engagement.

This chapter, rather than focusing on the role of international actors in ending violence, concentrates instead on the challenges inherent in the post-conflict reconstruction of domestic political authority by external actors. It first defines three approaches that have guided the involvement of external actors: state-building, nation-building and post-war reconstruction. The analysis then turns, to, firstly, the liberal peace framework and, secondly, the critique of the neo-colonial dynamics implicit in state-building. The subsequent review of dilemmas and contradictions inherent in the external project of comprehensive reconstruction of post-conflict states and societies focuses on the norms of sovereignty, legitimacy, accountability and ownership that are central to state formation and yet problematic within current mainstream frameworks of international state-building. This section is followed by a discussion of alternative theoretical perspectives. The chapter concludes with a reflection on policy implications.

### **Definitions**

At the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s, state-building became the centrepiece of international peacebuilding guided by the liberal peace idea that predicates stable peace on the existence of functioning and effective political and economic institutions. Following the logic that the absence and/or weakness of liberal institutions is the main cause of underdevelopment and insecurity driving armed conflicts in the global era, mainstream scholarship has defined state-building as ‘the creation of new governmental institutions and the strengthening of existing ones’ (Fukuyama 2004,17; Paris and Sisk 2009,8; Ottaway 2002,1004). In this narrow institutional understanding of state-building, the onus on external actors is to assist in putting in place institutional architecture across a broad spectrum encompassing representative democracy (e.g. elections; constitution, media, judiciary, rule of law), and a private market-based economy (e.g. private property, fiscal and monetary

institutions, open competition rules). This task is primarily concerned with propping up institutional capacity in order to supply adequate human, material and other resources to improve the functionality of key institutions, which are undermined by the combined legacies of conflict and *ancien régime* underdevelopment (Fukuyama, *ibid.* 30). Conceiving of institution building as a technical process of improvement in bureaucratic capacity, the relevant scholarly debates have emphasised a diverse set of priorities including the scale of required resources and the sequencing and pace of reforms (Ball 2001; Paris 2004; Wolff 2011). Paradoxically, the institutionalist state-building framework, which dominated the state-building scholarship for much of the 2000s, conceived of this process as an apolitical process of capacity building and evolved against the backdrop of the (European) nation state-building paradigm and its pre-eminent concern with forging political community. Nation building, according to Fritz and Menocal (2007, 15), is ‘a process of constructing shared sense of identity and common destiny, usually in order to overcome ethnic, sectarian or communal differences and to counter alternative sources of identity and loyalty’. Thus, it is embedded in a much larger process of the ‘shaping of economy, polity and society into a condition of possible sovereignty’ (Wesley 2008, 373). This broad agenda addressing every aspect of societal function has been the subject of voluminous scholarship on post-war reconstruction. In its minimalist expression, and echoing the original meaning of the concept at its inception in the aftermath of the World War II (Barakat and Zyck 2009), post-war reconstruction has been conceived of as ‘the restoration of the conditions of the assets and infrastructure [...] to the same or similar state in which they were found before the outbreak of hostilities’ (Etzioni 2007, 27). The broader definition of post-war reconstruction that gained ground in response to the empirical evidence of the scale of the task at hand, effectively conflates reconstruction and development, and redefines the goals of reconstruction, necessary for the attainment of stable peace as ‘reconstituting legitimacy, re-

establishing security and rebuilding effectiveness' (Brinkerhoff 2005, 3). These goals are pursued through a number of differentially prioritised, context-dependent processes, which include, *inter alia*, the rehabilitation of physical infrastructure, the design of new political institutions, security sector reform, macroeconomic stabilisation, social sector reform, reconciliation and the psychosocial healing of traumatised populations. Over time, discourses on both state-building and post-war reconstruction have moved in the same direction in recognising limitations of the rebuilding of state institutions as separate from the process of nation-building (Allen 2010, 414), especially in the context of politicised identity characteristic of many contemporary conflicts. The next section takes a more detailed look at the framings that govern both mainstream and alternative models and the impact that they have on peacebuilding outcomes.

### **(Post-)Liberal and Critical Framings**

State-building, nation-building and reconstruction represent overlapping and connected modalities in the international toolkit for the transformation of states and societies where issues of governance, statehood and frameworks of political community are seen to be reproductive of conflict and to represent a threat to security and regional and global order. This contemporary and normatively dominant interventionist international framework has been variously described as the liberal and/or post-liberal peace model. Although, this model itself produces both a powerful seam of critique (e.g. Chandler 2010; Cooper 2007; Cooper et al 2011) as well as qualified defenders (e.g. Paris 2010, 2002), there is a general consensus differentiating contemporary international state-building as a conscious and intentional project on the one hand from, on the other, both historical and contemporary state formation processes through which Western states emerged and which non-Western states experience but in a manner that is constrained by the very processes of state-building and development

which continue to be enmeshed in Western-led international structures of power (Bliesmann De Guevara 2010, 113). As a result, some critics have contrasted what they consider to be a 'classical liberal' from 'post-liberal' framework of statehood, with the former referring to forms of autonomy and self-determination which characterised the development of Western states and at least initially the principles of post-WWII sovereignty, sovereign equality and liberal democratic government whilst the latter refers to the reproduction of shell-like states that require permanent management of 'governance' through external diplomatic, developmental and humanitarian engagement (Chandler 2010).

This (post-)liberal peace framework operates through a particular understanding of the correct relationship between state, society and people and the kind of institutions that are conducive to peaceful and harmonious existence and therefore to development. Key to this framing is that a stable society cannot emerge without good governance, human rights, effective rule of law, a marketised economy and democratic institutions (Richmond 2006). According to this logic, these institutions and apparatuses will in turn act as a check upon predatory and authoritarian rule, clientelism and corruption whilst also providing for social integration (at local, national and global levels) through the socio-economic interdependence created by markets. Key to the liberal peace framework has been this core triangulation of markets, democracy and governance as a way of developmentally resolving the dynamics of conflict and the role of poverty and underdevelopment in the reproduction of cycles of war and violence (Duffield 2001).

Just as state-building is dependent on key institutions and concepts that constitute the Western experience of liberal democracy, liberal frameworks of nation-building ostensibly privilege the construction and consolidation of inclusive civic-secular and cosmopolitan

frameworks of identity that have been the outcome of the Western liberal parcelling out of politics, socio-economic and cultural activity, human life and conduct into the spheres of the public and the private, and of civil society and state. Indeed, civil society remains a key liberal concept and policy tool in both state-building and nation-building practices precisely because it describes the way in which society has become ‘civilised’ through the carving out of a space for the independent and autonomous association of interests that is potentially oppositional to both the predatory and authoritarian tendencies of the state (Taylor 1990), as well as the unreconstructed forms of religious and/or ethnic identity which have impacted upon conflict dynamics in both the West and Non-West. Civil society therefore becomes a tool for holding the state accountable through social contractual frameworks and, if necessary, for resisting forms of irresponsible state power and particularistic social forces. These aforementioned aspects of civil society have led to its revival as a tool for emancipation and social transformation at the end of the Cold War (Calhoun 2007, 77-101). Nevertheless, this has led to a hierarchical tension within civil society as both concept and policy tool, between those civic-secular identities acceptable to liberal order and “certain kinds of associational life” such as ethnic and religious identity which must “be reworked or even eliminated” (Williams and Young 2012, 9; see also Kymlicka 2005, 22-55; Nadarajah and Rampton 2012; Bojicic-Dzelilovic et al. 2013). In this way, the nation-building frameworks of liberal peace operate through a privileging of both civil society as a check on state power and predation and a rationalised civic nationalism (or post-national belonging) as the correct and inclusive form of identification between state, people and territory which is, as far as possible, stripped of its affective, *gemeinschaftlich* or populist dimensions (e.g. see Habermas 2001, 74-6).



Although such frameworks form the core goals for liberal peace and this is borne out in the mainstream frameworks of liberal policies, it is in the shifting short-to-mid-term practices of post-conflict reconstruction that one is confronted by the compromises and negotiation that international liberal actors engage in as a way of navigating the resistances to liberal peace frameworks they encounter in regional, national and local contexts. Such reconstruction processes have been widely criticised for a tendency to seek accelerated results in everything from the misuse of ‘post-conflict’ as a descriptive category for contexts undergoing ongoing insecurity, to the counter-productive reinforcing of conflict and therefore state-unbuilding that ensue from processes of accelerated democratisation and marketisation (e.g. Paris 2004; see also Mansfield and Snyder 2007). Other scholars have also censured reconstruction processes in Afghanistan, Iraq and Bosnia for the tendency to dilute democracy (Chandler 2010), to introduce forms of paternalist proxy governance or to compromise the liberal civic-secular framework through the ethnicisation of peace and thereby of state and social structures (Hughes 2011).

A number of different critical approaches including classical liberal, realist, political economy, poststructuralist and postcolonial perspectives share a core critique of the (post-)liberal peace framework. These perspectives state that the (post-)liberal peace is neo-colonial in a number of overlapping ways. Firstly, because it represents a novel form of the old *mission civilisatrice* diffused by colonial powers in their encounters with societies in the Global East and South (Paris 2002). Secondly, because it continues to reproduce subjugation and disqualification of forms of local existence, self-government and community in the Global South through the imposition of a Eurocentric, top-down, rationalist, territorialised, Westphalian framework and model of statehood and state-society relations (Richmond 2011, 8-9). Thirdly, that it represents the dominance of Western states and their perception of the

emergence of autonomous sovereign states in the Global South as a threat to liberal order. According to this understanding, international state-building seeks the perpetual external regulation and proxy governance of states that are subject to constant monitoring and the potential threat of intervention through justificatory discourses and categories which judge such societies and states as dysfunctional or as ‘failed states’ (Chandler 2010, 4-6, 45; Woodward 2009). Finally, it effects, according to political economy and post-structuralist approaches, a form of ‘global riot control’ in capitalism’s encounter with the unstable and conflict-affected ‘borderlands’ of the Global South as it seeks a containment of forms of social life perceived as threatening to liberal order and existence (e.g. Dillon and Reid 2009; Duffield 2007; Pugh 2004). These critiques, with the exception of Paris (2010), argue that liberal peace and the conflict dynamics it encounters on its periphery are doomed to a process of recurrence in so far as the liberal peace framework in its current form cannot produce anything other than instability and further conflict due to the social disruption, unravelling and state-unbuilding that these interventions effect. In this way liberalism is reproductive of its own nemesis, a facet of international state- and nation-building that is manifest in many of the tensions, contradictions and paradoxes that haunt its engagement with conflict-affected spaces and which are ultimately seen to produce recurrent failures in the construction of a viable social contract.

### **Dilemmas and Contradictions**

The aim of international interventions in post-conflict areas has been the establishment of a legitimate political authority, understood as a democratic, accountable and self-sustained state. It is premised on a belief that a state’s capability in dispensing its functions equitably,

impartially and effectively is a guarantor of peace and a precondition for the exit of external actors. However, a chequered record of state-building projects, from Bosnia-Herzegovina to East Timor, points to contradictions and dilemmas that beset external post-conflict interventions (Paris and Sisk 2009; Call 2008). The analysis of interaction between global and local processes and actors reveals a tension in the reconstruction of political authority by international actors, itself reflective of the tensions associated with global governance arrangements such as the ‘democratic deficit’ between policy makers and policy beneficiaries. These tensions are particularly pronounced in comprehensive reconstruction efforts since external actors assume direct control over a range of policies in local states while retaining only an indirect link to local constituencies. They are understood through concepts that originate in the nation-state context, and are used to describe and qualify the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. As an example of global policy, post-conflict reconstruction efforts involve multiple stakeholders both at a global and local level. Furthermore, these stakeholders look to and are behold by disparate sources of authority. Consequently, the challenges faced by the international community in reconstructing post-conflict states and societies need to be understood in relation to multiple actors and multiple sources of authority in terms of both interveners and policy beneficiaries. The following section looks at sovereignty, legitimacy, accountability and ownership as norms used to understand the policy of reconstructing local political authority and its challenges.

### *Sovereignty*

The concept of sovereignty is critical to understanding the justification for external actors’ intrusive role in domestic affairs of post-conflict states after the end of the Cold War. In state-reconstruction operations, external actors exercise power, to various degrees, on behalf of the

local population. Regardless of the degree to which external actors control executive authority, comprehensive interventions in the governance of local states embody a seemingly contradictory principle of ‘compromising sovereignty to create sovereignty’ (Woodward 2001). The rule of external actors runs against the idea of sovereignty understood to flow from the will of the people. Thus conceived, the international community’s intervention in local affairs may be considered to be imposed from above and inherently illegitimate. However, post-Cold War interventionism in reconstruction efforts has been accompanied by reformulation of the bases of international and domestic authority in a rapidly changing and increasingly interconnected world.

The involvement of international actors in domestic affairs of post-conflict states goes hand in hand with the reconceptualisation of the norm of sovereignty after the end of the Cold War; it is seen as the implementation of positive sovereignty. The invocation of positive sovereignty has shifted attention to the responsibilities of states to protect their populations and their rights, providing justification for international authority and denial of self-determination (Zaum 2007, 37, 323). States’ responsibility toward their constituencies has been directly related to their capacity and effectiveness, so that state sovereignty has become ‘contingent’ (Duffield, 2007, 28). Chandler (2010, 3) argues that sovereignty is understood ‘not as a ban on intervention but rather as necessitating intervention. The fact that states, which are held to lack capacity – or to potentially lack adequate capacity – are making sovereign decisions is held to be a major threat both to their own citizens and to the security of the international society itself.’

Echoing Jackson and Rosberg (1982), Ghani and Lockhart (2008, 3-4) point to ‘sovereignty gap’ between de jure sovereignty that dysfunctional states enjoy in the international system as opposed to the *de facto* capabilities of these states in serving their populations and contributing to international security. The state’s claim to autonomy based on its capabilities has been measured universally against a Western model of reconstruction and development measured in terms of liberal political development and economic growth (Suhrke 2007, 1929), which has been a basis of the critique of external reconstruction as neo-colonial. Within the liberal peace paradigm, local deviation from this model is not understood as evidence of ineffectiveness of the model itself. Rather, it has served as a justification for initiating and maintaining the intrusive intervention, yet without resolving the contradiction of ‘benign autocracy.’

### *Legitimacy*

For the external actors, reconstruction of the state, which is legitimate in the eyes of its citizens (Ball 2001), is expected to produce dividends in terms of endorsement of their state-building project. Legitimacy rests on a ‘belief in a government’s right to govern’ (Barker 1990, 27), and based on this, acceptance of a given political order, manifested as active compliance with rules which underwrite the reproduction of that order. Students of legitimacy identify different forms of legitimation (Kaldor 2009, 184-8; Holsti 1996, 92-8; François and Sud 2006). These correspond broadly to ‘input-oriented’ legitimacy, reflecting the sense of cultural and political community, and ‘output-oriented’ legitimacy, deriving from the capacity to solve problems and provide public goods (Scharpf 1999). Since legitimacy is not reducible to any one of its forms (Barker 1990, 23), this creates a particular challenge in

the state-building context of multiple sources, sites and actors involved in the legitimization process.

Internationalised state-building presents the ‘dual legitimacy’ problem which maps onto the dichotomy between external and internal, or international and domestic legitimacy (Rubin 2005; Bhatia 2007, 94; Knoll 2008, 294-8). International legitimacy derives from the operations of external actors and their takeover of the prerogatives of a sovereign state. It is linked to the legal and normative bases of their deployment. By contrast, the domestic conception of legitimacy is informed by the perceptions of the beneficiaries of the external state-building. Several scholars of comprehensive reconstruction have explored the relationship between international and domestic legitimacy, pointing to their positive correlation (Rubin 2005, 103; Morphet 2002).

Critics contend that the very illegitimacy of the state-building enterprise, derived from the denial of sovereignty, means there cannot be a legitimate outcome for either external state-builders or the local state (Ignatieff 2003; Knaus and Martin 2003; Bain 2003; Chandler 2006; Wilde 2008). As a form of internationalised governance, which is ‘a “dual-key governance” setting’ (Knoll 2008, 289), including external and domestic actors, post-conflict state-building and reconstruction expose the limited applicability of classical state-centred models of legitimacy (Stahn 2008, 531). Accordingly, scholars have explored how political constraints, innate in state-building by external actors, can be overcome or compensated; one example is the use of discourse and communication to overcome the lack of an ‘input’ validation for extraneous agents.

The distinction between external and internal legitimacy provides insight into normative and structural complexity of legitimization of external interventions in the affairs of states. It also offers a narrow understanding of legitimacy of the local state conceived entirely as a by-product of the legitimacy of external actors and their actions. Such a perspective denies the local state the Weberian ‘entitlement claim’ to legitimacy. The study of resistance to external liberally-framed intervention in post-conflict states has directed attention to the agency of local actors. While such a reversal of the perspective explains why a Western state cannot be implanted in a ‘non-Western context’ (Bliesemann de Guevara 2010), it falls short of offering an alternative to the rational-institutional Weberian state as a desirable norm and as an ultimate source of legitimacy for domestic constituency. However, as Kaldor (2009, 193) points out, in a global era, the notion of ‘legitimate political authority’ may refer either to a state, a municipal or regional government, or even an international administration. According to her, key to forging a relationship on the basis of trust which underpins legitimacy and ensures compliance with rules is the cosmopolitan outlook that ‘respects both human equality and the different ways of being human.’

### *Accountability*

External state-building and reconstruction interventions are characterised by the absence of formal accountability provisions available to local populations (Chesterman 2004, 151). This applies to interventions that encompass the exercise of authority by external actors on behalf of, and in the benefit of, local populations, as in Kosovo, where UNMIK effectively acted as a government in the immediate post-NATO intervention period, as well as those with a ‘light footprint’, as in post-2003 Liberia, where formal executive authority remained with the Liberian authorities but did not constrain international intrusion in policy matters (cf.

Andersen 2010, 129-135). Not unlike considerations of legitimacy, accountability becomes a problem because of an indirect relationship between foreign governors and local constituencies, despite a direct impact of policies pursued by international actors. As Sperling (2009, 8-17) points out, globalisation has altered accountability relationships, traditionally conceived as a relation between ‘agents’ (elected officials), and ‘principals’ (voters). In the context of global governance, and what Borowiak (2011, 152) calls the ‘unwinding of sovereign accountability’, questions have been raised as to whom representatives of international institutions should be politically and criminally accountable and how.

For international actors, upward political accountability has taken precedence over the downward accountability towards those affected by their actions. For example, transitional administrators, as implementers of comprehensive reconstruction efforts, have been accountable upwards to bodies that appoint them (Caplan 2005b). Thus, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the High Representative is responsible to the Peace Implementation Council (PIC), the *ad hoc* international body of 55 states and organisations that oversees international administration in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and to the UN Secretary General. When it comes to criminal accountability, a security dimension of comprehensive post-reconstruction efforts has highlighted the ‘fragmentation of responsibility’ (Kearney et al. 2011, 225) implicit in the established principle that any enforcement or disciplinary action for international police and military personnel remains a matter for the authorities of their home countries rather than for international missions in which they serve. Difficulties in conducting proceedings far away from the site of the incident also reduce the likelihood of conviction, which, in turn, undermines the legitimacy of security structures amongst the local population. An illustrative case in point is the lack of sanction for UNMIK officers who shot two protesters at a rally by a civil society movement Vetëvendosje! (Ibid. 226-9). Meanwhile, other alternative avenues,



such as local and global civil society and media, or an office of an ombudsman, have been relied on to expose transgressions. Nonetheless, these alternative channels have remained only a substitute for formal accountability mechanisms, without the establishment of responsibility, due process and punitive measures, what should be key defining features of international policy-makers' democratic accountability (Borowiak 2011, 3-21).

Furthermore, local power holders nominally remain accountable to their publics for policies under their control, but this has not necessarily increased their responsibility. A maze of relationships between external and domestic actors has incentivised each side to take credit for popular outcomes, while allocating blame for unpopular ones to the others (Andersen 2010, 148). In sum, accountability - a pillar of democratic legitimation and a means to building local capacity- has also led to abrogation of responsibility and delegitimation of international efforts. In fragile, often divided, post-conflict societies, a lack of accountability has fuelled nationalist reactions that have further obstructed reconstruction efforts.

### *Ownership*

Local ownership is an ultimate aim of the reconstruction effort, given that it represents a rationale for the exit and disengagement of external actors. However, rather than being a part of a solution, the concept of ownership has itself become a point of controversy in both the theory and practice of external state reconstruction since there is no coherent answer to a question 'who owns what?' (Donais 2012, 139).

First and foremost, the contestation concerns the nature of involvement and participation on the part of local actors. Ownership is variably interpreted in terms of consultation and

inclusion of local actors in the policy process or as power and control over policy that ‘means a power shift, which goes far beyond existing practices’ (Reich 2006, 15). Suhrke (2007, 1292) responds by arguing that, regardless of a power shift, ‘local ownership means ‘their’ ownership of ‘our’ ideas, rather than the other way round’. Neither is there any greater clarity about who is or should be the local subject. On the one hand, the dilemma of a local ‘owner’ concerns the levels of local governing structures, including national, regional and sub-regional or municipal authorities. On the other, consideration of the local owners of policy processes is more difficult in a fragmented post-conflict environment, characterised by deep ethnic, political, and geographic cleavages impacting upon both state and non-state spheres (Donais 2012, 40-77; Sheye 2008, 63-4). An additional challenge is the informal exercise of power behind the façade of formal institutions, which can be more legitimate in the eyes of the local populations (Reno 2008, 145). Therefore, to the extent that the purpose of external reconstruction is to build a capable and sustainable state, the dilemma of re-balancing authority in favour of the locals in external interventions also carries the risk of empowering the spoilers (Cf. Narten 2009, 260-262).

At the same time, the local ownership debate reflects a contested normative understanding of external reconstruction – either as liberal or neo-colonial project. The discourse of local ownership is intended to underwrite the liberal assumption of contemporary interventions as distinct from great power colonialism (e.g. Paris 2002, 652). Chesterman argues that attempts to frame the concept of ownership as a means rather than an end of external state-building are misleading, given that the lack of capacity for self-government was the original reason for the introduction of an intrusive intervention (2004, 144). Consequently, the ideal is that the contradiction found in the simultaneity of external rule and local ownership is to be resolved through a gradual transition in the course of intervention. The concept of ownership also

informs a critique of external state reconstruction as a neo-colonial enterprise. Thus, for Chandler (2006, 11-8), the language of ownership, and the related concept of empowerment of 'locals', plays a key role in understanding state-building as 'empire in denial', that is a hierarchical type of rule characterised by coercion despite its appearance of being consensual. This denial of capacities for autonomy, according to Hughes and Pupavac (2005), is related to the pathologisation of local populations whose portrayal as dysfunctional has served to legitimise intrusive international intervention that is ostensibly functional.

Originating in the development literature, appropriated in the peacebuilding theorising, the concept of ownership is associated with enhancing the effectiveness of international intervention. At a minimum, this rationale assumes that a local voice will ensure the appropriateness, and hence, sustainability, of reconstruction as well as increase the local stake in an externally-led project (Cf. Egnell 2010, 476). Tainted by a combination of a lack of clarity of its meaning, and the attendant challenges of its implementation, the concept of ownership has been a contributing factor to deeply fraught relationships between external and local actors (Martin et al., 2012). Local populations' calls for the exit of outsiders has, paradoxically, been justified by undelivered promises of transfer of power to local authorities rather than enhancing local capacity, which is seen as a guarantee of security (Cf. Caplan 2012, 315).

In sum, tensions in external state-building, as discussed through the prism of sovereignty, legitimacy, accountability and ownership, have proved irresolvable from the liberal perspective. They have fuelled the divide between proponents and critics of liberal peace, often set in 'zero-sum' terms, resulting in the present crisis of theories and practise of external state-building. In particular, liberal frameworks have been challenged by the

complexity of governance in the global context, including the multiplicity of actors in the global political space and the plurality of spaces/scales of politics.

### **New Emerging Alternatives: Hybrid and Post-liberal Peace, the ‘Local’, the ‘Everyday’ and Beyond**

As a means of confronting the previously described paradoxes and tensions and the tendency for the liberal peace to be confronted by resistance, crisis-ridden peace and state-building efforts and therefore freshly reproduced forms of conflict in the wake of intervention and/or engagement, a number of scholars have demanded a shift in the study and policy frameworks of ‘peacebuilding’. Taking their cue from postcolonial scholarship on hybridity and ambivalence (e.g. Bhabha Homi 1994), studies of the quotidian and everyday (e.g. De Certeau 1984; Le Febvre 1992; Heller 1985) and pluralist conceptions of peace, these scholars seek a way out of what they see as the top-down and domineering frameworks of hegemonic liberalism towards what they frequently term ‘post-liberal’ or ‘hybrid peace’. An alternative peace framework, which is more empathetic and emancipatory because it flows in the opposite direction to ‘liberal peace’, from the communities most directly affected by conflict, emergent as it is, is in part a ‘bottom-up’ approach which also emphasises the interface between these local and indigenous actors and the international spheres of liberal peace.

Consequently, these approaches seek to challenge the commonplace assumption that peacebuilding knowledge and practice must be based around liberal frameworks such as reconstruction pursued through a particular model or template of (the Westphalian) state and (civil) society. Instead, both the study of and engagement with local spaces and the practices and strategies of diverse populations directly locate agency for peace in the way that

communities deploy everyday coping strategies for protection, for intra-and inter-community engagement and access resources for peacebuilding and development at local levels, often in ways that ward off, subvert, resist or adapt hegemonic state-building frameworks and practices (Mac Ginty 2011,84-90). Typical examples that have been cited include forms of everyday local community protection in Northern Ireland, what Audra Mitchell has termed 'threatworks' (2010,19-22), or the way in which non-liberal actors produce alternatives to the civic frames of liberal peace frameworks such as Hezbollah in Lebanon (Mac Ginty 2011,181).

These models therefore frequently stress the local and everyday as a space of indigeneity, authenticity, tradition and 'feeling' typified by religious, ethnic, caste, gender and status identities and communities that are either disqualified or marginalised by liberal frameworks (MacGinty 2011; Richmond 2011), which is to be contrasted with the aforementioned rationalised, Westphalian, territorial and governmental architecture of international order. It is these spheres that meet to construct hybrid interactions, which can lead to co-option of local identities and communities within the dominant frame of liberal peace-builders (e.g. the *Loya Jirga* in Afghanistan is a classic example: see Mac Ginty 2011, 62) but also resistance and subversion on the part of local communities as well as dissonance and antagonism in the course of their engagement. However, as the hybrid peace scholars also assert, it also provides the potential for an alternative (and more self-aware) hybrid interaction between international and local actors and structures, which is more open and attentive to the harnessing of local and everyday agency and to peace as a plural field rather than a monopoly of liberal universal frameworks (Van Leeuwen et al 2012). In this way disqualified practices and the hitherto hidden script of local peacebuilding can be utilised not to displace the role of

international actors but to produce a greater sensitivity to and mobilisation of local peacebuilding practices.

Indeed, the hybridity framework has been used to try and revitalise the centrality of the social contract within international state-building. Rather than adopting the top-down frameworks of civil societal reconstruction, democratisation and marketisation, some scholars have argued for a social contract built out of the interactions of hybrid peace itself (e.g. Richmond 2011, 15; Roberts 2011, 8-10). In this framework, the 'social contract' so elusive in the aforementioned liberal frameworks is instead constituted by a direct engagement between international and local actors. According to this approach, the focus on international engagement at the local level facilitates the bypassing of a number of obstacles and problems present in the liberal peace paradigm. For some authors, this evidently includes the ability to bypass the state and national elites who currently dominate the international-to-local interface and who co-opt or disrupt the potential for a more bottom-up, organic and direct interface in the construction of an international-to-local social contract. Here, the construction of an international-local social contract would provide a responsive relationship between communities and structures of governance and development at the local level. For other authors, adopting a more traditional linear perspective, this can potentially serve as a first phase in the construction of more responsive governance structures that can be integrated into broader, more stable, traditional state structures (Roberts 2011, 15). Clearly implicit in the overall contractarian emphasis approach is a search for 'authenticity' in the social sphere, given the tendency for liberal peace frameworks to construct 'civil society' through a very Eurocentric lens and to build the state from the 'outside'.

Despite the novelty and the utility of the critique that the ‘hybrid peace’ approach provides, there are a number of pressing problems with the framework. The first is that despite its frequent self-description as post-liberal, it is more often a problem-solving critique of the liberal peace as the aforementioned social contract frameworks indicate. Secondly, despite strenuous attempts to either claim that the framework’s categorisation of the local and international is purely descriptive or that the framework is deliberately seeking to avoid the romanticisation of the ‘local’, there is a tendency to portray local communities as ‘traditional’ and pre-modern through the denial that frameworks of power that inhere in the international and Western sphere are at work in the locales of the East and South. As a result the hybrid peace repeats the subjugatory categories of colonial and neo-colonial power-knowledge. Thirdly and relatedly, the call for a closer international-local engagement or even social contract does not really address past critiques that have indicated the divide between the insurance and welfare frameworks of Western states and the lack of reciprocity and social responsiveness of international developmental and humanitarian engagement (Duffield 2007,19-24). Moreover it does not address the constant claim that the state structures created by international state-building are ultimately cosmetic, shell-like forms devoid of even rudimentary sovereignty (Chandler 2010). Fourthly, critics will also point to the lack of alternatives to liberal peace and the fact that a focus on post-liberal, local, everyday and facets of peace may end up privileging illiberal conduct through, for instance, the reinforcing of authoritarian and autocratic rule and/or repressive customary local practices (Paris 2010, 357-361; see also the acknowledgement of this risk by Mac Ginty 2008, 150). Lastly, there is an obvious tendency in the ‘hybrid’ peace and ‘everyday’ peace approaches to neglect the way in which conflict is also hybrid and present in the world of everyday existence so that a focus on hybrid peace must also acknowledge hybrid war more extensively than it currently does (Nadarajah and Rampton 2012).

## **Conclusion**

What is clear then is that the international state-building project, dominated as it has been by liberal frameworks, has been confronted by a series of challenges to its epistemic, conceptual and practical frameworks, evident in the failures and limited successes that it has generated in the recent period. This crisis in the expansion of liberal order is to a great degree a result of what has been described as “input incongruence” arising from the multiplicity of actors and dynamics in contention that impact upon state-building and the resistance it encounters in a globalised world (cf. Zürn 2012). The response to this crisis has produced both a recent, emerging approach advocating a wider participatory hybrid, local and quotidian peace as well as a long-running powerful set of critiques from liberal institutionalist, classical liberal, realist and political economy perspectives. Yet in a sense, these approaches frequently privilege certain processes, institutions and/or local and/or international actors, which dominate the frameworks of their understanding of who should participate and how in state-building, whether through the state-society relation or a social contract fashioned between the spheres of the local and international. What therefore needs to be addressed in a more fundamental way in both academic knowledge and policy frameworks is how a more holistic framework can be developed to encompass the complex, multipolar networked mesh of discourses, processes, actors and identities. A framework furthermore, which will have to encourage greater participation by avoiding the hierarchies of inclusion and exclusion characteristic of the liberal (or hybrid) peace whilst simultaneously avoiding the tendency for international state-building to generate the counter-productive illiberal effects it seeks to overcome. The development of such a framework will also have to involve the acknowledgement that solutions premised on a return to a (mythic) territorial, statist order cannot (by virtue of that order’s epistemological framework) even begin to apprehend or engage with the profound



complexity of the global and local actors and processes at work across conflict, peace and state-building.

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