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**Embracing difference and the deferral of self-government -
A critical analysis of the framing and practice of
contemporary peacebuilding**

Pol Bargués-Pedreny

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES HUMANITIES AND LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Abstract

This thesis analyses how dominant policy approaches to peacebuilding have moved away from a single and universalised understanding of peace to be achieved through a top-down strategy of democratisation and economic liberalisation, prevalent at the beginning of 1990s. Instead, throughout the 2000s, peacebuilders have increasingly adopted a commitment to cultivating a bottom-up and hybrid peacebuilding process that is context-sensitive and intended to be more respectful of the needs and values of post-war societies. The projects of statebuilding in Kosovo and, to a lesser extent, in Bosnia are examined to illustrate the shift. By capturing this shift, I seek to argue that contemporary practitioners of peace are sharing the sensibility of the theoretical critics of liberalism. These critics have long contended that post-war societies cannot be governed from 'above' and have advocated the adoption of a bottom-up approach to peacebuilding. Now, both peace practitioners and their critics share the tendency to embrace *difference* in peacebuilding operations, but this shift has failed to address meaningfully the problems and concerns of post-conflict societies.

The conclusion of this research is that, drawing on the assumption that these societies are not capable of undertaking sovereign acts because of their problematic inter-subjective frames, the discourses of peacebuilding (in policy-making and academic critique) have increasingly legitimised an open-ended role of interference by external agencies, which now operate from 'below'. Peacebuilding has turned into a long-term process, in which international and local actors engage relationally in the search for ever-more emancipatory hybrid outcomes, but in which self-government and self-determination are constantly deferred. Processes of emphasising difference have thus denied the political autonomy of post-war societies and have continuously questioned the political and human equality of these populations in a hierarchically divided world.

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Statement of Authorship

I hereby confirm that this thesis is the product of my own work. All sources used are referenced.

September 30th, 2014

Pol Bargués-Pedreny   Date

Introduction.
Narrating the face-to-face encounters with the Kosovars

While I was preparing to write the proposal for this thesis, at the beginning of 2010, I travelled to Kosovo to film together with three other colleagues an experimental documentary about the future of three young Kosovars.[1] During three weeks, in which we visited several cities and villages, I interviewed formally and informally over two dozen people, mostly between 20 and 35 years old. In these face-to-face encounters, I was curious to know more about their political preferences. Three (fairly interrelated) issues appeared in almost every conversation. The first was the status of Kosovo: this had been the major disagreement during the war and the post-war period and it still generated anxiety, especially among minority communities, in relation to whether Kosovo ought to be a sovereign state or whether it ought to be a province of Serbia. The second concern, also related to the notion of (internal) sovereignty, was the role and relevance of the international mission in Kosovo since the end of the war in 1999.[2] The third was the deep economic crisis characterised by high levels of unemployment and a high rate of inflation. My ignorance regarding economic matters limits my focus to the first two.

   a) Status of Kosovo: Kosovo or Serbia. Most of the people I met in Kosovo considered that Kosovo was an independent state from Serbia and that there was no possible concession on this matter.[3] They contended that they were the majority and that the historical and political events of the last decades had legitimised them to decide on their sovereignty. Still, those who identified themselves as Kosovo-Serbs desired that Kosovo was a province

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[1] The documentary '3 Kosovos' reflects upon three young Kosovars and their struggles in their everyday life. Miljan aims at improving his personal life. Milos seeks to change the wellbeing of his local community. Agon wishes to change his state and potentially the world. While the actual argument of the documentary has little to do with this thesis, some of the discussions with the participants in the pre-production phase were useful to frame this study.

[2] UNSC (1999a).

[3] In 2008, the Kosovo Assembly declared the independence of Kosovo and at the time of writing 110 UN member states recognise it as an independent state. Still, Kosovo is supervised by a rule of law mission from the European Union (hereafter EULEX), which operates under UN resolution 1244, which guarantees 'substantial autonomy and self-government in Kosovo', but the final status is 'pending' (UNSC 1999b: 3, EULEX 2009).

of Serbia. Not pretending to be representative in any case, the following were some of the arguments that Kosovars used to justify their positions. Arber, a librarian of the University in Pristina, stated: 'I wish that Kosovo becomes a full-independent state, this has always been my preference, and this is what the majority of the people in Kosovo also desire.' In a similar line of reasoning but with a different conclusion, Miljan, who had been struggling to find a job in North Mitrovica, said that 'Kosovo is part of Serbia'. He continued: 'the majority of the people here, in Serbia, agree with me'. Alban, an artist, put his views clear to me: 'Yes, I am an Albanian. But independently of the group I belong, I want Kosovo to be a sovereign state. There is no way back after the history of repression we suffered under Milosevic'. Milos, who worked for a local NGO in Gracanica, had a different opinion, but his argument followed a similar logic: 'I prefer Kosovo to remain as part of Serbia, not only because I am a Serb, but because I want protection for the Serbian community and the religious and historical heritage in Kosovo'.

From the encounters, it was clear (and predictable) that those who identified as Kosovo-Albanians wanted the independence of Kosovo. Alternatively, those who identified themselves as Kosovo-Serbs preferred Kosovo to be a region within Serbia. There were exceptions, of course. Agon, for example, a musician from Gjakova, did not want the success of any national cause and defined himself as a citizen of the world. Nevertheless, the two dominant positions were unambiguous and they all gave historical, political, economic and cultural reasons to justify them. Their argument seemed totally intelligible to me: they wished to be sovereign, albeit their desired state had a different name.

b) International mission and self-government. Most Kosovars agreed, to greater or lesser extent, that international administrators were corrupt and not interested in improving the political and economic situation. I demonstrate this with some examples of their views. Agon had a clear critical opinion: 'internationals are only here for their money. They do not take us seriously. They do not treat us as humans. They only decide what is good for us'. Regardless of their ethnic identification, Kosovars felt that internationals were not respecting their demands. Miljan argued that the US and Europe had stolen the sovereignty of Kosovo from the Serbian people. Alban put it differently: 'they give concessions to Belgrade all the time, they do not care about us'. The negative views against internationals were accompanied with a general concern to move on. Milos said that, after many years of tensions, it is time to progress: 'we [Serbian community] can still organise our lives here and start again'. Along similar lines, Arber suggested that, 'unless internationals do not leave completely, this will not be a normal country'.

I found more positive views regarding international assistance, of course. Oliveira, who worked for an international organisation in Pristina, said that, 'although internationals had failed to protect minorities in 2004, they bring security and a sense of calm now'. In short, from these conversations, I perceived a clear desire for self-government and a wish to move forward, regardless of people's ethnic identification. For them, the international presence seemed a relic of the war period and now they wanted to be responsible for their future.

International framing of the same questions

What called my attention about these thoughts and opinions was how these were framed and approached by international policy advisors and academics in the wide context of peacebuilding. Where I had understood the tension over statehood in Kosovo to be a problem of two competing claims about sovereignty [a], the Secretary-General of NATO, Javier Solana, for example, saw 'the demons of ethnic intolerance raising their heads again'.[4] The causes of violence appeared to be related to the inter-subjective understandings of the Kosovars. Reflecting on the episodes of violence perpetrated against minority Serbs and UN members in 2004, the influential International Crisis Group explained that Albanian society was 'damaged economically, politically and psychologically.' The report is worth quoting at length to grasp the Think Tank's interpretation of the 'problem' affecting Kosovo: 'It is a society in a lot of trouble, seemingly unable or unwilling to protect neighbours, minorities, or even itself from its own extremists and criminals'. The report also referred to 'people still traumatised by their experience' and warned about the 'secondary traumatisation of children'. It continued: 'state experience, habits and skills are lacking at all levels'. 'Pristina', the capital, is 'culturally and educationally underpowered'. 'Civil society is inadequate to absorb and dissipate shocks, instead, such shocks are liable to transmit immediately into violence'. One of the conclusions was that 'there need to be far-ranging changes and improvements in the media and education to give social change a chance for success'.[5]

The notion of a socially 'damaged society' to which there was the need for 'social change' puzzled me. It seemed a different story to the rational clash of interests and hopes for different statehoods that I had interpreted in my field experience. As Furedi argues, 'intolerance is far more likely to be one of the many expressions of a particular conflict that its cause'.[6] However, rather than considering violence the expression of a conflict of interests, most

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[4] Solana (1998).

[5] ICG (2004: 32–35).

[6] Furedi (2011: 10).

academic commentators – alike the ICG and other international organisations – identified the source of the problem at the subjective level of Kosovo's society: its intolerance to difference, its ethnic framings, its prejudices, its illiteracy, its premodern character or its readiness to embrace violence and extremism. [7] Proposals for peace, over and over again, contained measures for social improvement. Jene Narten explains that the dilemmas constraining the statebuilding process initiated after the war (1999 – present) 'could effectively be reduced if we were to invest more in educational projects for the general public'.[8]

Within these frameworks, it is unsurprising that Kosovars' demands for self-government were viewed with great scepticism [b]. To put it simply, while I interpreted the Kosovars requests to govern themselves as the willingness to master and own their future, they were seen in the literature as potentially catastrophic if they were granted. At best, these claims were seen as demands for 'ethnic sovereignty', a sovereignty that benefits nationalist entrepreneurs and resists and undermines transnationalism and pluralism.[9] At worst, self-government was seen as an opening the door for cleansing minority populations.[10]

Furthermore, while I identified rejection, frustration and disdain towards international administrators, their role was considered crucial and almost undisputable within international problematisations of the statebuilding in Kosovo. Proposals varied substantially from more pragmatic approaches that sought to achieve peace through land swaps or autonomous arrangements, [11] to others which emphasised a process of 'shared governance' to define peace at the 'micro-level', at 'the social and inter-subjective setting,' in order to cultivate 'pluralism and hybridity'.[12] These positions will be analysed in more detail in chapter 2. It is sufficient to recognise here that, without any intention to belittle the humanitarian crises that have affected Kosovo in the post-war period, the notion of shared or hybrid projects of peace was, at least, in tension with the views of the Kosovars I met. In short, whereas in my field experience I witnessed a problem of two competing claims about sovereignty much of the literature framed the problem to be situated at the societal and inter-subjective level of Kosovar society that had to be remedied with some sort of international supervision.

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[7] For some examples, see Mearsheimer (2000); Nikolic (2003).

[8] Narten (2009: 279).

[9] Devic (2006); Fawn and Richmond (2009: 230).

[10] ICG (2004: 33); Narten (2009).

[11] Economides, Ker-Lindsay and Papadimitriou (2010).

[12] Fawn and Richmond (2009: 231–232).

There is the chance, of course, that I was being naïve. Or that the Kosovars I encountered lied to me and they had hidden agendas behind their desires for statehood. Or that I only met those who constructed their ideas within a political framing, rather than as ethnic objectives whose aim was to eliminate the other group. Perhaps. Actually, my intention is not to claim that I have reached an objective understanding of politics in Kosovo in contrast to other academics who have got it "wrong". This introduction, the apparent misfit between my interpretation of the face-to-face encounters and (my interpretation of) the texts about Kosovo's statebuilding, is useful to raise a concern regarding the consistency of these dominant international framings and which seem almost commonsensical in the literature. Still, one may wonder, why is this questioning relevant? Why shall one bother about this "misfit" that the author identified through unrepresentative interviews in such a tiny place at the backdoor of Europe?

Formulating a hypothesis

The encounter with the Kosovars narrated at the beginning of this introduction obtains its relevance when juxtaposed in relation to a broader discursive shift underpinning dominant discourses of peacebuilding since the Secretary General of the UN, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, formulated the concept of 'post-conflict peacebuilding' in 1992. [13] It will be argued throughout this thesis that this shift, spurred by the alleged crises or failures of practices of statebuilding, reveals a tendency to move away from a universal basis for peace towards a focus on context-sensitive processes of peacebuilding, which seek to respect the needs and priorities of post-conflict societies.

To be sure, an ethical commitment to cultivate a sustainable and lasting peace while embracing diversity is at the core of the debates about statebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereafter Bosnia) and Kosovo, as it will be argued in chapters 1 and 2. For example, in Kosovo, the aim of the UN operation (hereafter UNMIK) was to promote tolerance among communities and build a 'free, pluralist and multi-ethnic society'. [14] However, academic critics have highlighted that the UNMIK policies to decentralise power on the basis of ethnicity have reinforced the divisive lines of the war and trumped the goals of building a pluralist and multi-ethnic state. Instead, these critical views have emphasised the need to rely on bottom-up initiatives that cut across ethnic identifications with the aim of

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[13] Boutros-Ghali (1992).
[14] UNSC (1999c: 16).

enabling a more representative and plural peace.[15] Along these lines, since 2008 the EU mission (hereafter EULEX) has sought to promote 'total ownership' and enacted a multi-ethnic institutional framing to de-emphasise ethnicity at the level of society.[16]

More broadly beyond the experiences in the former Yugoslavia, there is also a normative effort to shift away from top-down domineering practices of state-building, prevalent during the 1990s, towards bottom-up approaches. These propose are based on a process of deep reflexivity and mutual learning among a conglomerate of international and national actors in order to build peace in tune with contextual specificities. This has been apparent in recent policy reports, which emphasise the need for building peace as resilience, as it will be analysed in chapter 3. The OECD, for instance, writes: 'there is a belief that "the West" should not impose its models and norms on the rest of the world and that statebuilding must be understood as an endogenously driven process that is both political and context-specific'.[17]

As it will be argued in chapter 4, critical views have even more forcefully attempted to think of peacebuilding processes beyond the ethnocentric gazes, by engaging with resistance and local agency, and aspiring to a form of peace that is respectful with the everyday and the pluralism of post-war societies. Oliver Richmond, whose views will be analyzed in detail throughout much of this research, explains his interpretation of an emancipatory peace:

> Embracing difference in agonistic relationships within hybrid forms while producing political tensions over what it means to be liberal, neoliberal or local, holds potential for peace and emancipation in a far more deeply democratic manner than the continued privileging of the Enlightenment rights systems.[18]

The willingness to move away from strong interventionist missions towards peace projects driven by diverse local constituencies and constructively assisted by international agencies can be seen by focusing on the debate about 'national ownership', discussed in chapter 5. In the literature, there is a strong consensus about the importance that post-war processes are owned and led by local actors and gradually more efforts are devoted to enhance a more effective national ownership.[19]

In short, as they are interpreted in this research, the last two decades of 'post-conflict peacebuilding' reveal a discursive evolution from a universal

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[15] For some examples of these critical views, see Franks and Richmond (2008); Hehir (2006); Popolo (2011), Simonsen (2005).

[16] EULEX (2009: 9).

[17] OECD (2011b: 25).

[18] Richmond and Chandler (2014: 10).

[19] For an overview, see Donais (2009a).

model of peace towards processes of peace that are respectful of the needs and values of post-conflict societies. It is against this ethical predisposition of dominant discourses of peacebuilding that it is important to situate the sense of unease expressed by Kosovars during my early encounters with them. Indeed, the hypothesis for this thesis is that, *the tendency to embrace difference seems to have failed to engage meaningfully with post-conflict societies and it has done little to resolve the political concerns of these populations*. Before turning to analyse the argument and the structure of the thesis, some methodological clarifications are pertinent.

Methodological remarks

My journey to Kosovo in 2010 was useful to obtain an idea about the political dilemmas related to statehood, as viewed by several Kosovar citizens, that has constantly played back and forth against the theories of international peacebuilding. In November 2013, coinciding with municipal elections, I returned to Kosovo for a week. My foremost intention was to deepen my knowledge of the cause for self-determination and self-government, which had increased considerably in the last few years. For example, the former social movement, which is now constituted as a political party, Lëvizja Vetëvendosje (self-determination), had gradually gained more support among Kosovars and they won the elections in Pristina[20].

I did three interviews with members of Vetëvendosje, two of them with his leader, Albin Kurti. The party's openly nationalist views to defend the sovereignty of Kosovo are considered deeply problematic for international organisations and academic commentators dealing with post-war Kosovo. Indeed, that I carried out interviews with the party proved controversial with some of my University colleagues and was greeted with suspicion at international conferences where I presented my work. Still, academia is surely a forum in which we can seek to *understand* views, political arguments and interpretations of events without necessarily agreeing or sympathising with them.[21] In the interviews and the analysis of the data, I adopt the 'cultural sensitivity' of a 'social anthropologist', which 'entails a serious and unprejudiced engagement with local specificity from within, without necessarily sympathising with it or becoming its advocate'.[22] These are the words of the anthropologist Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers, whose careful

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[20] In the municipal elections of 2013, Vetëvendosje's candidate, Shpend Ahmeti, was sworn in as the Mayor in Pristina (Vetëvendosje 2013).

[21] See Hague's reflection on the possibility to 'understand' – without legitimising – suicide bombers in academic writing (2003: 65–68).

[22] Schwandner-Sievers (2013: 109).

approach to Kosovo and her analyses of Vetëvendosje's have inspired the conceptualisation of the case study of this research. While I was in Kosovo, I also interviewed Jolyon Naegele, UNMIK's Head of Political Affairs, and a member of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), who wanted to remain anonymous and did not give the authorisation to record our talk or quote it.[23] With these interviews, my idea was to investigate further the Kosovars' demands of self-government.

But this thesis is not about the concept of 'self-determination'.[24] Indeed, it is not even about Kosovo's post-war process. It is about the international discourses of peacebuilding and how they seek to cultivate peace in post-conflict societies. My analysis thus will carefully analyse these international discourses on their own terms – reflecting upon their internal logic and vigilantly interpreting their framing questions, assumptions and anxieties – beyond the conclusions they consciously pose.[25] The Kosovo case and to a lesser extent also the case in Bosnia are the ontological projections that are referred to, explicitly or implicitly, when investigating these approaches to peacebuilding. These projections are relevant to think through these different policy and academic frameworks and to problematise their shifts and expansions since the end of the Cold War.

Let me put two examples about how I use some ontological suppositions to understand the conceptualisations of leading frameworks of peacebuilding. The demands of self-government that are important many Bosnians and Kosovars alike may be in conflict with their respective statebuilding processes (Ch. 2); with approaches of building resilience through reflective conversations between international and local actors (Ch. 3); with hybrid agonistic approaches that seek to deterritorialise nations (Ch. 4); or with the debate about promoting ownership without contemplating self-determination (Ch. 5). In this case, what matters for this thesis is not an assessment of the claims of the people in the former Yugoslavia. Rather, it is important to understand the logic of the international framing of these claims and to question, for instance, why self-government appears in tension with current approaches to peacebuilding.

The second example has to do with the notion that Kosovo's statebuilding project is unique and eminently difficult to develop. Berend, for example, argues that 'there is no really good exit from the Kosovo trap'.[26] Clark refers

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[23] I regret not having interviewed any member of EULEX, which will be carefully analysed in the second chapter. This organisation only became important to my research after my return from Kosovo.

[24] Philpott (1995).

[25] I follow here the methodological guidance proposed by Chandler when he analyses the paradigm of international statebuilding (2010c: 10–11).

[26] Berend (2006: 414). See also Narten (2009).

to the north of Kosovo as an 'intractable Gordian knot'.[27] Diplomats and other commentators have continuously pointed to its 'unique' character or emphasized that it is an 'exception', a 'sui generis case' or a 'microcosm'.[28] This overstated emphasis on Kosovo's *difference* – which can be either positive or negative[29] – is indicative of contemporary framings of post-conflict societies. My point is not to say that Kosovo is like any other state or to ignore its historical specificities or cultural distinctions. But I contend that the focus on Kosovo's difference reveals more about "us", about our framings of peacebuilding, than "them". It is to "us" and how "we" understand "them" in processes of peacebuilding that the argument of this thesis is about.

The argument of this thesis

This thesis interprets how both dominant discourses of international peacebuilding (policy and academic frameworks) have moved away from universal assumptions of peace and have evolved throughout the 2000s towards a commitment to cultivating a hybrid process that is context-sensitive and respectful of the needs of post-war societies. However, it is argued that the tendency to embrace *difference* in peacebuilding operations has failed to meaningfully address the problems and concerns of post-conflict societies. The conclusion of this research is that, ***drawing on the assumption that these societies are not capable of undertaking sovereign acts because of their problematic inter-subjective frames, the discourses of peacebuilding have increasingly legitimised an indefinite role of interference from external agencies. Peacebuilding has become a process-based effort driven by local actors and facilitated by international partners that aims at appreciating difference. However, by emphasising difference, these processes have denied the political autonomy of post-war societies and have continuously questioned the political and human equality of these populations in a hierarchically divided world.***

Conceptual Clarifications: Discourses and Difference

Before I summarise the argument developed in each chapter, it is important to briefly clarify what the *discourses or approaches of peacebuilding* I am

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[27] Clark (2014: 543).

[28] See Hehir for an assessment of different views about Kosovo's apparent uniqueness (2010: 185–195).

[29] For a positive look at Kosovo's uniqueness see Duijzings (2000).

referring to are and what *difference*, framed with the lens of *culture*, means in this research.

'Post-conflict peacebuilding' was initially conceptualised at the end of the Cold War, broadly as the internationally led missions to prevent conflict from reigniting after the peace settlement.[30] Since then, this project of global governance has expanded and renovated its assumptions and practices by, for example, incorporating critiques, adjusting to international conjectures or learning the lessons from previous experiences. In this research, I heuristically draw out three discourses of international post-conflict peacebuilding that will help us to disentangle and think through the evolution of peacebuilding operations: *liberal peace*, *building resilience* and *post-liberal peace* or *hybrid peace*. In order to spell out a discursive shift – from the liberal peace to critical frameworks like building resilience and post-liberal peace – I will focus on how these frameworks have conceptualized "culture", which has become the lens to understand human differences. [31]

It is important to add that the use of different names for projects of global governance approaches might be misleading. Indeed, both 'building resilience' and 'post-liberal peace' frameworks are purposely not radical alternatives to or opposed to the liberal peace. They do not reject liberalism, but seek to critically reappraise the central tenets of the liberal peace in order to cultivate a lasting peace, which is more respectful with the everyday of post-war societies. As Paris argues, 'despite the disagreements, most share 'liberal principles' and the 'critical literature is actually espousing variations within, rather than alternatives to, liberal peacebuilding'.[32]

The term *liberal peace* was initially introduced by scholars to analyse the top-down projects of liberal governance in the context of post-war scenarios that were prevalent throughout the 1990s.[33] As it will be analysed in chapter 1 and 2, at the beginning of the decade, there was a widespread universal understanding that peacebuilding – informed by the belief that wars are rare between democracies – consisted of bringing processes of democratisation and economic liberalisations to war-torn societies.[34]

However, the difficulties encountered in the initial operations – for example, the experience that democratic processes could revive tensions

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[30] Boutros-Ghali (1992, 1992/1993).

[31] I am not interested in defining culture in this research (for a good overview of culture in peace studies, see Brigg 2010). Rather, I am interested, similar to Brigg and Muller, in understanding 'how we use culture to know human differences' and how it has been used in relation to conflict resolution and peacebuilding endeavours (2009: 124). See also Chandler (2010b: 373–377); Malik (1996: 128–209).

[32] Paris (2010: 339); see also Heathershaw (2008).

[33] For example, see Dillon and Reid (2000); Duffield (2001: 10–11); Mac Ginty (2008: 143); Paris (1997; 2004); Richmond (2006: 291–314).

[34] Boutros-Ghali (1992, 1992/1993, 1996); Doyle (1986); Huntington (1991); Levy (1988); Rummel (1995).

among groups rather than calm them – led to a questioning of the notion that peace is an inevitable outcome of democratisation.[35] The apparent 'limits' of liberal internationalism[36] came to be conceptualised and rationalised through the acknowledgement that people were culturally different: the inter-subjective processes or informal constraints of different societies explained divergences among them. Initially, 'culture' was framed in negative terms: these constructed subjective processes made people choose the wrong decisions in peace or development contexts.[37] On the assumption that post-conflict societies had problematic mental constructs, peacebuilding was increasingly reconsidered so that it included a process of building institutions in order to establish the optimal conditions from which democracy and peace could later flourish.[38]

Since the second half of the 2000s, international organisations have sought to radicalise the tenets of the institutionalisation approach in order to overcome the limits of top-down and externally driven peace processes. These approaches – which I will refer to as *building resilience approaches* – seek to build peace through facilitating resilience, thus picking up the concept increasingly used by international policy texts[39] and contributing to the academic debate on resilience,[40] in which the notion of culture has received little attention. In the framework of building resilience, culture has a more positive meaning: it is understood as a resource for peace that can be carefully explored and cultivated through iterative actions by international organisations and national actors.[41] I will contend in chapter 3 that these frameworks increasingly share the sensibilities of critical approaches of the liberal peace in academia.

Increasingly present in academic debates, *post-liberal* or *hybrid peace* frameworks argue that top-down and universal perspectives of peacebuilding have failed to engage with the deep particularism of post-war situations. As it will be analysed in chapter 4, these frameworks adopt a radically constructivist understanding of difference and contend that it would always exceed any attempt to conceptualise or represent it.[42] Rather than seeking to build peace from an externally driven perspective, these frameworks indicate that the tensions, resistances and clashes between international and local actors in contemporary post-war situations have

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[35] Carothers (2002).

[36] Paris (1997).

[37] Bova (1997); North (1990); Harrison (1992); Harrison and Huntington (2000).

[38] Ghani and Lockhart (2008); Fukuyama (2004); Paris (2004).

[39] EC (2012); DFID (2011); OECD (2008); UNISDR (2012).

[40] See the publication of a new journal devoted to 'Resilience' Chandler 2013d. Also Chandler (2014b); Joseph (2013).

[41] De Carvalho, de Coning and Connolly (2014); UNDP (2011); UNESCO (2010).

[42] For example, see Campbell (1998); Connolly (1995, 2002).

already opened up the possibilities to cultivate a locally engrained and inclusive peace.[43]

Structure of the thesis

The argument is developed in the course of five chapters. Chapter 1 (*Governance Failures and the Rise of Culture*) explores the shift from peace-through-democratisation approaches dominant in the early 1990s to a growing concern with the need to build institutions in post-war societies towards the end of the decade. While the literature has extensively documented this shift,[44] I seek to explain it by focusing on one of its preconditions: this is the notion of a hierarchically divided world between Western liberal democracies and states on the receiving end of peace-building interventions. At the end of the cold war, there was a widespread assumption amongst the international community regarding the universally applicable mutual confluence of peace, democracy and development. However, the difficulties encountered during the peacebuilding processes in the mid-1990s led to a reappraisal of this assumption. In other words, I argue that the failure to bring a lasting peace through universal frameworks such as democracy or economic liberalisation led to the perception that post-war societies were culturally different (for example, they had tribal thoughts, ethnicized politics or lacked a tolerant civil society). As a result, international peacebuilders found it increasingly necessary to develop institutions that could manage the deficient subjective constructs of these societies. The case of Bosnia will be used to interpret this policy evolution. It will be demonstrated that, because the democratisation process revitalised rather than pacified the nationalist feelings of the Bosnians, peacebuilders prolonged their mandate and initiated a process of developing appropriate institutional mechanisms to stabilise society.

This shift in the discourse of peacebuilding will be contextualised with a focus on the theory of institutions of Douglass North, Nobel Laureate in Economics Sciences. Dissatisfied with deceptive results produced by orthodox economic development policies in developing Third World countries, North argued that the unequal path of economies could be explained by the (efficient or deficient) 'subjective' or 'mental models' that govern societies through time.[45] For him, the key to economic growth was to provide an institutional framework capable of directing and correcting these subjective models. North is important for the chapter because, similar to

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[43] Belloni (2012); Brigg (2010); Mac Ginty (2010); Richmond (2010a, 2011).

[44] For example, Chandler (2000); Duffield (2001); Paris (2004).

[45] North (1990: 37).

peacebuilders who proposed to create an adequate institutional setting for post-conflict societies, his views represented a critical reappraisal of universal economic models in order to deal more successfully with a culturally divided world.

Chapter 2 (*Reframing Post-Conflict Kosovo: The ethnic Dilemma and the Indefinite International supervision)* focuses on the state-building process in Kosovo since 1999 – as illustrative of an institutionalisation approach to peacebuilding. In particular, it asks why the decision over the status of Kosovo (whether it will be an independent state or a province of Serbia) has been deferred continuously and why attempts have been made to resolve tensions between Kosovars through a technical process of crisis management.[46] It argues that the existence of an "ethnic dilemma" in the international framings of Kosovo. This dilemma, that exists both within the frameworks of international stakeholders and academic critics of the statebuilding operation, can be summarised as follows: what if democracy allows Kosovars to actualise their "ethnic" aspirations? The fear that democracy would exacerbate ethnic tensions has legitimised further external supervision and has ensured that the status of Kosovo has remained in limbo.

In the last section of the chapter I seek to undo this dilemma. I argue that international approaches have exaggerated the durability of ethnicity and, even if ethnicity is an experienced identification among Kosovars, the point that Kosovars think 'ethnically' is actually an international framing of the problems in Kosovo. Instead, as an exploratory way-out of the dilemma, I propose to rethink the tensions in Kosovo as two competing political visions of statehood, rather than a clash between ethnic groups.

Chapter 3 (*Realising the Postmodern Dream: Building Resilient Communities and the Promise of Peace*) is analytically the most ambitious, as it presents the three approaches investigated in this research: liberal peace, post-liberal peace and building resilience. It investigates the contemporary rise of building resilience as a policy strategy to stabilise peace in post-conflict societies. The strategy of building resilience is interpreted as a move away from the domineering and top-down liberal peace frameworks prevalent in cases such as Bosnia or Kosovo. I will capture this shift by focusing on the distinct conceptualisation of difference of the two approaches: while liberal peace frameworks identified the problem of peace in the subjective models of post-conflict societies, building resilience frameworks engage affirmatively with the resources found in the everyday of post-war scenarios.[47] Learning from the little success of previous top-down operations,

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[46] The institution-building approach adopted by UNMIK (UNSC 1999) has been reinterpreted by EULEX (2009), who seeks to manage society in a less intrusive and top-down form.

[47] See, for example, OECD (2008); UNDP (2012); World Bank (2014).

statebuilders are redefining their roles as mere assistants or facilitators of post-conflict societies in order to nurture context-sensitive processes of peace.

The chapter argues that resilience approaches are thus increasingly sharing the sensibilities of academic critics of the liberal peace. These approaches focus on the irreducible particularism of the locals and criticise top-down approaches. They propose a hybrid approach of 'relational sensibility' between internationals and locals,[48] which resembles, I argue, the sentiments of contemporary policy-makers. In this sense, I conclude that David Campbell's critique of liberalism and his proposal to rethink peace in Bosnia as a 'promise' that will permanently remain 'to come', impossible to be finalised, is useful to think of current processes of peace that continuously defer politics on the hope of finding better alternatives to appreciate difference (e.g. a more inclusive or plural peace).

Chapter 4 (*Hybrid Peace and Difference: Vorarephilia of Critique?*) unpacks the ethical assumptions of the critique of the liberal peace, which seeks to move beyond the limitations of top-down approaches in order to care for the local population in their everyday struggles. I use the work of William Connolly on pluralism to frame the sensibilities of these approaches. On the assumption that any formulation of ethics will be unfaithful to difference, Connolly affirms the ambiguous, elusive and contingent experiences of life through processes of individual and communal self-reflection.[49] Along these lines, the critics of liberal peacebuilding seek to engage with the cultural realities and stories of post-conflict areas to develop a hybrid project of peace, which eschews both overbearing peacebuilders and potentially unrepresentative or violent local actors.[50] However, it will be argued, the point that difference is not amenable to representation – which is their main weapon for critiquing practices of peacebuilding – is also their own guillotine. The critics of the critics have highlighted that hybridity still contains an essentialist whiff and reproduces a hierarchical dichotomy (international - local), which undermines the plurality of societies intervened upon. Therefore, the critics of hybridity (the critics of the critics) propose that developing a sense of self-reflexivity and obtaining an even deeper knowledge of the local is necessary to foster peace and embrace difference more genuinely.[51]

The conclusion of this chapter is straightforward: critique has devoured itself by highlighting that earlier attempts to build peace have been disrespectful of the particularism of post-conflict societies and constantly

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[48] Brigg (2013: 12); see also Belloni (2012); Richmond (2011); Richmond and Mac Ginty (2013).

[49] Connolly (1995; 2002; 2005).

[50] Richmond (2011: 198).

[51] Drichel (2008); Sabaratnam (2013).

pointing to the need to respect more authentically the needs and values of these societies. However, I contend that the prioritisation of hybridity and the relational sensibility proposed by post-liberal peace perspectives belittles the concerns of post-conflict societies, which might, for example, be willing to have security, sovereignty or self-government, three concepts which hybridity despises. As Friedman succinctly puts it, 'it may be hybrid-for-us but in the street or the village, things are very different'.[52] This concern moves the research to the last chapter.

Chapter 5 (*Limiting Ownership in Post-Conflict Situations: Protecting Unequal Humans?*) repacks the analyses of the previous chapters in order to usher the argument towards the conclusion of this research: assuming that post-conflict societies are not capable of undertaking the appropriate decisions on their own, an international interference has been prolonged indefinitely. The result of a commitment towards embracing difference has belittled the political autonomy of post-conflict societies and their equal right to self-government. While this is the overall conclusion of the research, in the last chapter, I will seek to illustrate it with an analysis of how the concept of 'national ownership' has been interpreted in the literature.

International policy-makers introduced a commitment to ownership precisely when there was a prevalent scepticism that post-conflict societies could govern themselves without international supervision. This contradiction – between willing to grant ownership and at the same time fearing complete ownership – has been dodged with a reinterpretation (or narrowing) of the meaning of ownership. For the three approaches analysed in this thesis, rather than a process that ends up by granting full responsibilities to the locals, ownership has come to be understood as apprenticeship in a project in which the aim is to improve the relation and understanding between multiple actors and where self-government is no longer a question. I seek to demonstrate how this process-based understanding of peacebuilding that wishes to be respectful of people in their everyday contexts is problematic because it fails to meaningfully address the political concerns of post-conflict societies.

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[52] Friedman (2002: 28).

Chapter 1.
Governance Failures and the Rise of Culture: From Peace-through-Democratisation to a Building Institutions Approach

Introduction

Today it is accepted that the heydays of international post-conflict peacebuilding are over.[1] The optimism of the early days with regard to the mutually reinforcing processes of democratisation, economic liberalisation and peace, contrasts with the 'hyper-critical' views that have become more common since the beginning of the 2000s.[2] Some of these critiques focus, for example, on the harmful empirical consequences that international supervision has had in post-conflict societies. Some other commentators question, especially after the War on terror, the imperialist or colonialist assumptions underpinning a global governance project. Other critical analysts reveal the problematic liberal assumptions of universalising progress that are imposed on non-liberal others.[3] Among international practitioners and policy-oriented work, there is also a willingness to shift away from the beliefs sustaining the initial peace missions and there is constant renewal of policy practices.[4] Even commentators that seek to

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[1] The Secretary General of the UN, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, initially articulated the term 'post-conflict peacebuilding' in 1992, in a context of optimism regarding the UN peace-keeping operations launched at the limit of the Cold War. Peacebuilding comprised the 'comprehensive efforts to identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence and well-being among people' (Boutros-Ghali 1992: 212).

[2] For an historical account and overview of the last twenty years of peacebuilding, see Sabaratnam (2011) and the introduction of the same volume written by Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam (2011).

[3] Recent edited volumes that encompass these different critical views include: Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam (2011); Newman, Paris and Richmond (2009); Paris and Sisk (2009); Richmond (2010c).

[4] Paffenholz (2014). For instance, see chapter 3 for an analyses of 'building resilience' in international policy discourses.

temper the pessimistic arguments of the critics also criticise the enthusiasm for international peacebuilding of the early 1990s.[5]

While the rest of the thesis examines some of the critical perspectives in the literature on peacebuilding, this initial chapter explores the origins of the crisis in post-conflict peacebuilding endeavours which will be interpreted as a crisis of universalism. The chapter identifies a shift in the early 1990s in the discourses of peacebuilding that marks the commencement of what Cooper calls the contemporary 'crisis of confidence and credibility with peacebuilding'. [6] To be sure, the literature has already extensively documented this shift: to summarise it here, from universalist rational understandings of peacebuilding – i.e. the peace–through–democratisation approach, dominant in the early years of 1990s, to frameworks that focused on building institutions, which have become more common since the second half of the decade.[7] In addition to these works, in this chapter I seek to investigate the hierarchical cultural divide between Western and non-Western post-conflict societies that reappeared after the difficulties encountered when international administrators sought to implement peace through democratic practices. I shall argue that this divide[8] posed a limit to universal peacebuilding processes – because it rationalized why some societies were not amenable to rapid democratic and peaceful change – and it was an important precondition for the shift towards the institutionalisation of post-war societies. As I read it, therefore, the alleged "crisis" of today is, in part, a crisis of confidence regarding the universal assumptions of peacebuilding approaches that I seek to trace back to the mid-1990, giving special attention to the problems affecting post-conflict Bosnia.

This chapter is structured as follows. First, I seek to introduce the tendency to criticise approaches to peacebuilding that make universal assumptions by looking at a neighbouring field: this is the new institutionalist economics with a particular focus on Douglass North. I argue that North is useful to understand the debates about peacebuilding occurring throughout the 1990s because he identified in the subjective models of some societies the explanation for the divergent economic growth

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[5] Paris, for example, wishes to occupy a middle ground between the 'irrational exuberance' of the peace-as-liberalism and the 'exaggerated backlash' of the critics of the field (2010: 339).

[6] Cooper (2007: 605).

[7] For example, Barnett (1997); Chandler (2000; 2010c); Duffield (2001); Paris (2004); Pupavac (2004).

[8] In the first chapter I introduce this divide through a reading of Douglass North theory of institutional change, as he influentially focused on 'subjective models' that shape institutions to explain the divergent path of different economies (1990: 138). In peace or development debates, this divide was clear in analyses that emphasised social lenses to account for the unequal paths of societies (Fukuyama 1995; Kaplan 1993; Krasner 2004; Harrison and Huntington 2000).

among societies. As a solution, he proposed to build efficient institutions in order to guide the decisions that people take. The second section deals with the premises of the UN-led initial peacebuilding operations that sought to bring peace through processes of democratisation and economic liberalisation. It is against this backdrop of euphoria regarding universalising assumptions that I introduce the case study of Bosnia. I will demonstrate that, after Bosnians elected nationalist leaders and different groups remained unwilling to cooperate among themselves, international administrators and academic commentators started questioning the possibilities to build peace through democratic developments. The third section examines the divide between the West and the non-West, which was contingent upon culturally derived beliefs and perceptions of societies, that emerged to account for the failure of international democratic processes. Once the problem of the peace process was located at the level of subjectivity – in Bosnia, for example, the main obstacle was considered to be the ethno-nationalist preferences of its citizens – I argue that peacebuilding was reinterpreted as a strategy to build institutions to transform practices and understandings.

Discovering institutions to rethink Neoclassical Economics

In the decades after World War II, dominant approaches to economic theory[9] felt no need to introduce additional explanatory variables of economic behaviour to neoclassical models: imagined rational profit-maximising agents with perfect information of potential outcomes were assumed to interact in market contexts without transactions costs.[10] Even the recognition of uncertainty and the fact that individuals or firms cannot always predict the outcomes of their actions, economists were confident they could continue to explain economic phenomena because, in the long run, only those who pursued rational strategies would succeed. As Alchian put it, 'the economic system selects survivors: those who realize positive profits are the survivors; those who suffer losses disappear'.[11] Social factors such as beliefs, ideas, values, shifting preferences or the processes that led individuals to take decisions were not relevant for an approach that centred on the behaviour of

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[9] Although it is unclear when the neoclassical economic paradigm ended (Colander 2000), in this chapter I distinguish between, on the one hand, dominant orthodox approaches that follow the assumptions of neoclassical economics and, on the other hand, the new institutionalism – mainly through the work of Douglass North – that represents a critical reappraisal of the orthodox perspective.

[10] Rationality refers here to individuals finding suitable means (calculating costs and benefits) to a given objective.

[11] Alchian (1950: 213); see also, Machina (1989).

given individuals. According to these orthodox economic models, institutions (and the determinants of institutions) did not matter as independent variables and were viewed through a functionalist lens: it was assumed that institutions would arise to achieve specific outcomes in the context of rational individuals. For this reason, more efficient institutions would replace deficient ones.

Since the late seventies, though, there has been a trend to critically review neoclassical assumptions of individual behaviour along the lines of the 'old' institutionalist school that emerged in the US during the interwar period.[12] The new institutionalist economics developed under the premises that transaction costs did exist, information was incomplete and contracts were imperfectly enforced.[13] Dissatisfied with the explanations of human behaviour given in a discipline dominated by neoclassical economic models, a group of scholars began to explore the autonomy of institutions.[14] Rediscovering institutions meant that the contextual constraints and social constructs that shaped the rationality of individuals were important[15] to understand patterns of economic and political action.[16] Granovetter writes:

> The utilitarian tradition, including classical and neoclassical economics, assumes rational, self-interested behaviour affected minimally by social relations, thus invoking an idealised state […] At the other extreme lies what I call the argument of "embeddedness": the argument that the behaviour and institutions to be analysed are so constrained by ongoing social relations that to construe them as independent is a grievous misunderstanding.[17]

Although my intention is not to make a contribution to the debate in institutional economic theory, in this initial section I analyse the 'new institutionalism' literature mainly through an examination of Douglass North's critical reappraisal of neoclassical economics, concentrating

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[12] For an overview of the 'old' institutionalist economic theory and its comparison with the 'new' approaches, see Hodgson (1989).

[13] Ménard and Shirley (2014: 6).

[14] Ménard and Shirley (2014: 2–11) distinguish two branches that mark the beginning and further development of new institutionalist economics: one that is represented by Oliver Williamson and the other by Douglass North.

[15] As Hodgson explains, neoclassical economists also admit that the preferences and wants of individuals are affected by social circumstances, but 'for the purpose of economic enquiry' they take them as given (1989: 251).

[16] For example, Granovetter (1985); March and Olsen (1984; 1989); North (1990); Hodgson (1989); Williamson (1979). The analysis of institutions as an independent variable needs to be contextualised within a wider tendency to broaden the scope of the discipline of economics while maintaining its rigor. For example, the focus on 'social interactions' or 'social capital' supersedes the conceptualisation of agents as rational decisionmakers interacting in idealised competitive markets (Manski 2000; Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales 2004).

[17] Granovetter (1985: 281–282).

predominantly on his discussion of societies' 'informal constraints'.[18] His work on humanly devised institutions[19] contributed to explaining economic change in the field of development and, I seek to argue, this is useful to understand the shift towards institution-building in peacebuilding frameworks of the 1990s. North certainly was not the first in studying institutions to critique neoclassical economic models.[20] However, his importance resides in that, by winning the Nobel Prize in 1993, he helped to revitalise the study of institutions among mainstream economists and practitioners to the extent that, at least in development studies, some have proclaimed that, 'we are all institutionalists now'.[21] Most importantly for this research, as I will argue, North occupies an ambivalent space between the optimism and universalism of neoclassical approaches to human development and more contemporary development frameworks that seek to affect economic change in a bottom-up process.

The most significant aspect in North's critical perspective is the challenge to the 'world' and the 'man' that neoclassical economists take for granted as universal constructs in their models of analysis of human behaviour. Institutions matter, he argues, precisely because we live in a world of incomplete information in which it is costly to transact and actors decipher the environment and make choices based on subjective perceptions that diverge among individuals.[22] For North, therefore, the theories that rest on a functionalist view of institutions – for example, rational choice theory considers institutions as bodies that merely satisfy the needs of rational individuals – misrecognise that complex and costly processes pervade in the real world and that this is inhabited by social beings with subjectively derived models. North's dual critique of the world (there are transactions costs, changes in the environment and uncertainty in a non-ergodic world)[23] and human behaviour (subjective perceptions shape the rationality of

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[18] North asks, 'what is it about informal constraints that gives them such a pervasive influence upon the long-run character of economies? (1991: 111). See also his chapter 5, titled 'Informal constraints' (1990: 36–45).

[19] I will mainly use his work written since the early 1990s (North 1990, 1991, 1994, 1999, 2005), because till then, as he has himself recognised, he had been close to orthodox neoclassical theory (1990: 7; also see Hodgson 1989: 252).

[20] See, for example, Banfield (1958: 8–9); Coase (1960); Hayek (1960: 24); Polanyi (2001); or the 'old' institutionalist school of scholars like Thorstein Veblen, John Commons or Wesley Mitchell (Hodgson 1989).

[21] Roland (2004: 110); Portes (2006: 234). In 2005, Cambridge launched the *Journal of Institutional Economics*. His editor-in-chief proclaimed that 'institutions have become a central topic of analysis for economists' (Hodgson 2005: 1).

[22] North (1990: 17–26).

[23] North argues that the world is 'non-ergodic' in the sense that there is no 'stable underlying structure, such that we can develop theory that can be applied time after time, consistently'. Non–ergodicity implies that humans are dealing with a changing environment in which new uncertainties might constantly emerge (1999: 2; 2005: 21).

individuals) leads North to construct a theory of institutions.[24] North thinks of institutions as 'the structure of human interaction', which constrains decision-makers in certain directions and shape economic performance.[25] The institutional structure 'direct us in the mundane activities that dominate our lives' and it is formed by a 'complex interaction' between 'formal rules' – i.e. rules, constitutions, laws – and 'informal constraints' – i.e. routines, customs, traditions, ideas, ideologies.[26]

The central idea is that the interface between formal institutions and their informal settings accounts for the way economies evolve through time. The analytical framework proposed by North starts with the 'subjective' or 'mental models' – informal constraints – that lead individuals to create formal institutions to interpret, order and give meaning to the world around them.[27] These subjective models are filtered by the collective experiences that people accumulate through time, transmitted through the 'culture' of a society.[28] As North puts it, informal constraints 'come from socially transmitted information and are a part of the heritage that we call culture.'[29] Following the research in primitive societies by anthropologists like Colson, North relies upon routines, costumes, traditions, believes, tastes and more, to justify that mental models govern societies through time.[30] 'Whether we call them customs, laws, usages, or normative rules seem of little importance. What is important is that communities such as the Tonga do not leave their members free to go their own way and explore every possible avenue of behavior. They operate with a set of rules or standards which define appropriate action under a variety of circumstances.'[31] Little matter how North and others call *it*,[32] what is important is that the new institutionalists

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[24] North (1990: 27).

[25] North (1990: 3; 1994: 359). For North, institutions structure and reduce the uncertainty of decision makers. The idea is that, in a context in which the choices are constrained by institutions, it is easier to get the results we want. For the same token, in a context of non-effective institutions, decisions are generally poorer (1999: 8–9). This point is crucial because, as I will be explained below, effective and non-effective institutions trace the difference between developed and underdeveloped countries.

[26] North (1990: 36–53, 83; 1994: 360). As a third variable, he adds the effectiveness of 'enforcement' mechanisms, but this is not the focus here. The distinction between formal and informal could also be framed as rules that are 'explicit or written down' versus rules that are 'implicit' (Kingston and Caballero 2009: 154).

[27] North (1990: 36).

[28] North (1994: 364). See Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales (2006) for an analysis that explains how 'culture' affects 'beliefs and preferences' and, therefore, it determines economic outcomes. Also, Tabellini (2010).

[29] North (1990: 37).

[30] North (1990). Chapter 5 on informal constraints and 10 on the limits to change.

[31] Colson quoted in North (1990: 38).

[32] This research is not interested in the name of 'it'. For North, for example, 'it' is the 'subjective models' that are 'culturally determined' (1990: 138). My interest resides in the role 'it' plays within the analytical frameworks of the authors analysed here. For

focus on the 'frame' of the process,[33] rather than the rational decisions taken by individuals, to account for the different record of societies through time. In a nutshell, by analysing how societies frame and structure human interaction through the creation of institutions, the new institutionalists critically reappraise neoclassical economics theory and 'further progress in the social sciences'.[34]

Let me introduce a caveat here to contextualise the thoughts of North. The new institutionalist critique of the models that portray rational individuals acting in a transparent world is not *new*. Karl Polanyi, for example, critiqued neoclassical economics for wanting to subordinate society to the logic of the market, when economies were and ought to be 'embedded' in social relations.[35] While Polanyi's influence has been rather marginal among economists, other disciplines such as sociology have been dealing with institutions and social processes along the twentieth century, as a way to contest the linear regularities that dominate orthodox economic thought.[36] As Portes writes, 'sociology seems to have a different, alternative vocation, defined by its sensitivity to the dialectic of things, unexpected turns of events, and the rise of alternative countervailing structures'.[37] More broadly, it can be argued that, since the early 19th century, the aim of interpretivist social scientists has been to explore the complexities of social life, which is free of the laws and regularities conceptualised by the natural sciences or positivist social sciences. The reaction against the belief in linear progress and the rational universal 'man' of the philosophes of the Enlightenment, Finkielkraut explains, led to the foundation of the anti-positivist social sciences. This was an 'epistemological revolution' that introduced the notion of 'unconscious thought, which worked from within' in order to explain differences among 'men'.[38]

North, for example, these models affect the unequal path of different economies. He writes: 'the cultural heritage provides the artifactual structure — beliefs, institutions, tools, instruments, technology — which not only plays an essential role in shaping the immediate choices of players in a society but also provides us with clues to the dynamic success or failure of societies through time' (2005: 36).

[33] Simon (1986: 210–212); March and Olsen (2005: 4).

[34] North (1990: 17).

[35] Block (2001: xxiii–xviii).

[36] For an overview of sociological perspectives dealing with institutions, see Portes (2000; 2006).

[37] Portes (2006: 2–3).

[38] Finkielkraut (1995: 25). The notion of 'unconscious thought' is relevant here. For Finkielkraut, Enlightenment philosophers (i.e. Rosseau, Sieyès or Voltaire) defined individuals by their universal humanity and nations, for example, were a contract that reflected the free will of individuals. On the contrary, the critics (i.e. Burke, de Maistre or Herder) thought that each people (*volksgeist*) were governed by unconscious thought, an intuitive spirit, the soul of the nation or their culture who got them together across generations (ibid. 5–47). See also, Malik (1996: 73–79).

Establishing a parallelism, for North, the mental models underlying institutions represent the 'unconscious thought' that shapes the different performance of economies through time, thus belying the analytical framework of neoclassical economics. This point should be carefully elucidated because it is extremely important for the initial framing of this thesis. Ethically committed, North was frustrated with the deceptive results produced by the application of abstract neoclassical models into polices to induce development.[39] For instance, if growth can be achieved through the increase in capital investment or labour input, as orthodox economists predict, why is the performance of many economies still in decay? The unequal path of societies was indeed the question investigated by Adam Smith when he founded the discipline with the *Wealth of Nations* in 1776. More than two hundred years later, the inconsistency between the pledges to progress and the economic stagnation of some societies led North to realise that institutions were important: these represented the conditions for effective or defective economic growth. [40] Rather than holding the constrictive global economic system responsible for the diverse record of some societies, North focused on the domestic institutions to rationalise inequality among human beings.[41] He writes:

> [I]f we are to account for the wide and still widening gap between rich and poor countries we must explore the different experiences of societies through time and the implications of these different experiences for the development of different belief systems that produced widely different abilities to confront the problems of the human environment.[42]

As examples of how different belief systems can explain inequality,[43] North cites domestic and historical factors which are said to explain differences in

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[39] North (1994: 359). At a fundamental level, North's theory of institutions develops out of 'a persistent tension in the social sciences between the theories we construct and the evidence we compile about human interaction in the world around us' (1990: 11).

[40] North argues that informal constraints have a fundamental role in economic performance by acknowledging that the same formal rules produce different outcomes when operating in different countries (1990: 36).

[41] Duffield argues that the debate to explain the causes of underdevelopment during the Cold War could be sketchily divided between, on the one side, the Socialist and Third World views that blamed the unequal economic system – i.e. global division of labour, the legacy of colonialism or the consequence of ideological of the Cold War – for the disparities among economies. On the other, the West attributed underdevelopment to the internal causes of every state (2001: 26–27). See also Pupavac (2004: 383). I contend that new institutionalist economists fit under the latter framing.

[42] North (2005: 47).

[43] This point is important for the argument of this chapter. Frustrated because neoclassical economic approaches could not achieve equal economic growth for every country, he understood inequality to be the product of the beliefs systems of different people. Comparably, as I will explain later, the failure to achieve peace in non-western post-conflict societies by the means of a supposedly universal approach led to the assumption that culture was important for peace.

economic growth between the UK and Spain, as well as the demise of the Soviet Union.[44]

If one can explain the persistence of inequality among human beings by examining the institutions of every society, the challenge for underdeveloped countries (together with international development agencies) resides in the capacity to adopt an adequate and efficient institutional framework that directs choices in the optimal direction. As North remarks: every market 'has to be structured so that the players compete via price and quality or the particular social dimensions by which we want them to compete'.[45] In this case, if deficient institutions obstruct development, the logical solution would seem to modify or replace them. But, in North's work, one can deduce a sense of unease at the (im)possibility to foster meaningful institutional change.[46] For him, the problem is that informal norms are difficult to correct or command because they might be deep-seated in the culture of a society.[47] He explains that, 'while formal institutions can be changed by fiat, informal institutions evolve in ways that are still far from being completely understood and therefore are not typically amenable to deliberate human manipulation'.[48]

Indeed, how to shape the subjective models of underdeveloped societies appears to be an anxiety that accompanies North's career.[49] It is not a coincidence that he has ended his two books on economic change by emphasising the importance of informal constraints in determining economic performance.[50] At both conclusions, he encourages economists to further investigate 'culturally derived norms of behavior and how they interact with formal rules' in order to renovate the discipline.[51] Using historical examples, North seeks to prove that a drastic alteration of the formal institutions that is inconsistent with informal ones produces a tense

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[44] North (2005: 127–154).

[45] North (1999: 11).

[46] To be clear, for North the disquieting aspect of institutions is not how institutional change occurs. He understands this as an incremental process of individual and collective learning that reflects the constraints that the past imposes on the present (1994: 361; 2005: 49; for a good overview of different approaches to institutional change in the literature, see Kingston and Caballero, 2009). Rather, what is puzzling for North is *how to affect* institutional change. This question situates North's approach within the context of, broadly speaking, international governance and, as I seek to demonstrate below, this is relevant for the framing of the liberal peace.

[47] Their perennial quality tends to be viewed as a problem because if informal institutions are deficient or inherently problematic they tend to reproduce economic or politic stagnation through time.

[48] North (2005: 50).

[49] For example, North (1990: 6, 91; 2005: 51).

[50] North (1990: 140; 2005: 169–170; also, 1991: 111).

[51] North (1990: 140).

political instability.[52] However, this is the crucial point, even if informal constraints evolve very cautiously and they are difficult to change from an external perspective, North believes they can be shaped through a modification of the formal rules. For example, as he affirms, 'fundamental changes in relative prices will gradually alter norms and ideologies, and the lower the costs of information, the more rapid the alterations'.[53] The difference between North and other more contemporary new institutionalists is that he maintains hope that a top-down approach (that is, formal rules directing informal ones) can overcome or modify the informal constraints that obstruct successful economic growth.[54] In short, his view acknowledges that culturally derived subjective models represent a hazardous constraint, but one that can be carefully manipulated from "above".

But North has always been cautious about it. Indeed, he is well conscious that, when facing the challenge of shaping problematic beliefs systems, he is close to the orthodox economic perspective. Both North and more traditional economic theorists argue that improving economic performance depends on altering the failing rules or formal institutions of the economies in the hope that informal constraints would gradually be transformed.[55] Although he is aware of the constrictive force of the mental models of some societies, he only tempers the neoclassical perspective, as he equally relies on the possibility to foster economic growth by restructuring societies with, for example, more effective enforcement mechanisms and property rights.[56]

This means that North holds an ambivalent position toward affecting institutional change. Unlike orthodox economic models, he is cognizant that culture matters. He holds, for example, that 'transferring the formal political and economic rules of successful market economies to third-world and Eastern European is not a sufficient condition for good economic performance'.[57] Also, contrasting the predictable idealised world of

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[52] Ibid.

[53] North (1990: 138).

[54] Other new institutionalists and development theorists contend that informal constraints cannot be changed from above, neither externally. For them, development consists in a bottom-up process that takes the subjective models of underdeveloped societies as positive resources to achieve the developmental goals. For example, Gérard Roland writes: 'While slow-moving [informal] institutions may hamper the proper functioning of implanted fast-moving [formal] institutions, local knowledge about a country's slow moving institutions is not part of the problem but part of the solution. Therefore, only dialogue can help formulate adequate development policies. [...] Policy dialogue entails not just a dialogue with governments but also with different components of civil society at large' (2004: 127). See also, Evans (2004); Haggard (2004); Nussbaum (2011); Sen (2000).

[55] North (1994: 365–366).

[56] North (1999: 11)

[57] North (1994: 366).

neoclassic economics, he underlines the importance of flexible institutions that adapt to future changes in a non-ergodic world.[58] However, similar to orthodox economic frameworks, he reads the subjective models of underdeveloped societies negatively: 'religious fundamentalism, ethnic hatreds, racist stereotypes, superstitions, all shape choices with monotonous persistence'.[59] For him, similar to orthodox views, these are problems that need to be overcome with a top-down approach. That is, North relies upon a solution to economic growth that consists in modifying formal institutions so that, in the long run, informal constraints could be smoothed over.[60]

In conclusion, North criticised the conceptualisation of an unbounded "man" interacting in a calculable "world" of orthodox economic frameworks by acknowledging that humanly devised institutions mattered decisively in a world with transaction costs that is inhabited by social beings. By analysing the importance of institutions and the subjective models affecting them, he sought to improve the possibility of understanding economic change. However, devoting himself to 'advising third world countries on development problems', he hit upon the difficulty to shape informal constraints in failed economies.[61] Even if sometimes the shift could take decades, he kept a hint of faith in the probability that, by introducing modifications in the formal rules, deep-sited cultural constraints could be overcome. Bearing North's framework in mind, the next two sections analyse the shift from a rational approach to peacebuilding through democratisation to an approach that seeks to fix formal institutions to correct the mental constructs of post-war societies. The references to North, however, do not mean that the new institutionalism and liberal peacebuilding frameworks are equivalent.

The analogy I am trying to draw out between North's reinterpretation of neoclassical economics and the reinterpretation of the liberal peacebuilding is the following: after witnessing the failure of orthodox economic policies to reduce international inequality, North criticised its universal assumptions by focusing on the informal constraints of developing societies. Similarly, after the limited success of liberal peacebuilding missions, the tendency was to revise allegedly universal assumptions by acknowledging that post-conflict societies had a different and traumatised culture – i.e. ethnic mind-sets, intolerant attitudes or nationalist inclinations – that made them unready for democracy. Both North and the revisionists of the liberal peace took the

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[58] North (1999: 12).

[59] North (2005: 156).

[60] His ambivalent approach is also palpable when, for example, he argues that, even if Western institutions cannot be copied or transplanted to other societies with other informal rules, successful institutions in these societies will resemble those already successful in the West (North 2005: 159).

[61] North (1999: 4).

subjective models of the people seriously and sought to manage them through institutions in order to build development and peace. The rest of the chapter, therefore, analyses, first, the liberal peace and its universal normative and methodological basis for peace that is based on implementing democratisation and liberalisation. Second, the last section focuses on how liberal peacebuilders changed the strategy toward a process of building institutions in order to overturn the informal constraints of post-war societies. A short account of post-war Bosnia will illustrate the shift.

Rethinking the Liberal Peace after its failures

The end of the Cold War provided renewed impetus for the diffusion of liberal democratic ideas that visualised a new world order. In the introductory piece of a Special Issue of the *Journal of Peace Research* dedicated to 'democracy and peace', the editor, Nils Gleditsch, celebrated the 'near-consensus' in the discipline on the notion that 'wars are non-existent (or very rare) among democracies'.[62] For most, from influential policy-makers such as Ronald Reagan or Bill Clinton to an extensive number of studies employing quantitative research methods or theoretical explanations, the dictum that democracies had a pacific interaction among themselves appeared to have universal validity.[63] A primary example was Michael Doyle who, reading Kant, argued that 'a separate peace existed among liberal states' because they had domestic structures that could impose constitutional restraints on predatory practices, they showed moral respect for other liberal states and they maintained cooperative and economic relations of interdependence.[64] In a similar vein, in order to oppose the realist and socialist theories that attributed the explosion of wars to competing international interests or inequitable economic structures, Jack Levy contended that the causes of war could be explained by looking at domestic political factors.[65] By 'domestic' he did not mean cultural or national attributes, but the structure of the government: whether this was a democracy or a predatory dictatorship.[66] In a much-quoted sentence that summarises the wisdom of the time, Levy

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[62] Gleditsch (1992: 369). It is important to note that all the contributors to the special issue – even a former author of the realist deterrence school of thought like Erich Weede – agreed that democracies do rarely go to war against each other.

[63] For a detailed overview of this literature, see Chan (1997).

[64] Doyle (1986: 1159–1162). For a quantitative analysis that uses these same justifications to prove that the more democratic a state, the less violence against its own population it commits, see Rummel (1995: 4, 25).

[65] Levy (1988: 653; 1989: 213–273).

[66] Russett (1993); Levy (1988: 654–658). A few decades earlier, Babst made this point clear: 'what is important is the form of government, not national character. Many nations, such as England and France, fought wars against each other before they acquired freely elected governments, but have not done so since' (1964: 14).

concluded by saying that 'the absence of war between democracies comes as close as anything we have to an empirical law in international relations'.[67]

The undergoing democratisation processes of Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe, as well as the consolidation of stable governments in south European countries, were seen as an historical opportunity for an impending international peace. [68] Institutions such as the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund were at the forefront of a global economic recovery and were accelerating structural adjustments – such as, for example, fiscal modifications, liberalisation, market–determined interest rates, reduction of public expenditures and privatisation – especially in the regions that were in decline such as sub-Saharan Africa.[69] The point is not to say that scholars and international institutions were particularly naïve, even if too cheerful claims of the historical triumph of liberal democracy could be interpreted as such.[70] The argument here is that democracy, economic growth and peace, and their mutually reinforcing matrices, were predominantly seen as universal frameworks that could flourish elsewhere, particularly after the support of external institutions.[71]

Within these frameworks, the major impediments were often the predatory, nationalist or corrupt leaders ruling these societies. Speculating about the future of international relations, Huntington, for example, observed that large parts of the globe would democratise in a 'snowballing effect' if authoritarian leaders were removed from government.[72] He wrote, 'democracy will spread to the extent that those who exercise power in the world and in individual countries want it to spread'.[73] Another assumption was that dictator leaders were provoking domestic unrest. In a study that investigated the causes of 'democide' – the killing of people by government –

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[67] Levy (1988: 622). To clarify, Levy – like Doyle (1986) – does not suggest that liberal democratic states are not involved in wars at all (this is the so-called monadic hypothesis), but that they do not fight each other (the dyadic hypothesis).

[68] Huntington (1991: 12–13) called this period the 'third wave' of democratisation. See also, Diamond (1996).

[69] For example, World Bank (1984). Although initially referring specifically to the context of Latin America, the policy reforms undertaken by international financial institutions during this period were coined as the 'Washington Consensus' and summarised as 'prudent macroeconomic policies, outward orientation, and free-market capitalism' (Williamson 1990). See also, Stiglitz (1998b).

[70] For example, Fukuyama (1989).

[71] For instance, referring to the democratisation process of Africa, McFerson explains that 'freedom of the media' is not only suitable to European states: 'to consider this a Eurocentric concept would be paternalistic (or worse) vis-a-vis Africans, who are as entitled to free expression and as capable sifting through competing information and ideas as any other people' (1992: 245).

[72] For the same token, he thought that if a democratic or democratising state shifted to an authoritarian regime there could be 'reverse snowballing'. For him, the spread of democracy depended on 'political leadership' (Huntington 1991: 16).

[73] Huntington (1991: 34).

Rummel discarded the variables of ethnicity, culture, religion, racial diversity, economics, demography or geography. His investigation tested the hypothesis that the singular general explanation of democide was 'the degree to which a regime is totalitarian along a democratic-totalitarian scale'.[74]

It is in the context of confidence in the universal validity of concepts such as democracy, economic liberalisation and the promise of international peace that the Secretary General of the UN, Boutros Boutros–Ghali, formulated the notion of 'peacebuilding' in a requested letter of recommendation to the Members of the United Nations in 1992. To the already existing notions of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping, Boutros–Ghali added the idea of 'post-conflict peacebuilding.' This new concept was meant to strengthen the UN capacity for achieving the objectives of international peace, security, justice, human rights and social and economic progress.[75] Originally, peacebuilding was reliant on the success of the process of democratisation in post-war situations. Boutros–Ghali wrote that 'there is an obvious connection between democratic practices – such as the rule of law and transparency in decision-making – and the achievement of true peace and security in any new and stable political order.'[76] The parameters set by Boutros–Ghali opened up an era of extensive international involvement in post-conflict societies.[77]

This 'liberal peace' governance framework, as it is most commonly known, was based on the assumption that holding elections and introducing market reforms to accomplish liberalisation could bring post-war societies on the road to a durable peace in a reasonably short time frame.[78] In the mid-1990s, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the course of the dissolution of Yugoslavia was in the media spotlight and it called the attention of international policy-makers.[79] The Dayton General Framework Agreement

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[74] Rummel (1995: 21–25). Also, Rummel (1985).

[75] Boutros-Ghali (1992: 201).

[76] Ibid., 213.

[77] Boutros–Ghali (1992, 1992/1993, 1996). UN (1994).

[78] In this thesis, I mean by liberal peace, following Duffield's analysis (2001: 11), the political project of global governance that seeks to transform war-torn states into stable, peaceful and tolerant liberal democracies (See also, Barnett 1997; Dillon and Reid 2000: 124–128). During the 1990s, this chapter argues, the liberal peace approach shifted the strategy, but it maintained the goal of building liberal democracies. That is, at the beginning of the decade the project was concerned with the democratisation and liberalisation of conflict-affected societies to achieve their stability, but since the second half of the decade, the approach shifted to include the building of institutions and the management of populations before democracy and liberalism could flourish (Paris 2004: 40–51, 179–211).

[79] It is important to recall that it is not my intention to address the conflict and the international diplomatic negotiations and military intervention that brought the war to an end in 1995. The purpose here is to briefly focus on the peace agreements in Bosnia

for Peace (GFA), witnessed by the EU, France, Germany, Russia, Great Britain and the US, was signed in Paris on December 14, 1995, by 'the parties' – the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic or Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia – to bring an end to the conflict and 'promote an enduring peace and stability'.[80] The underlying objective was to rapidly transform Bosnia into a liberal democracy because, as it was emphasised in the preamble of the Constitution, 'democratic governmental institutions and fair procedures best produce peaceful relations within a pluralist society'.[81] Hence, it was deemed necessary to hold general elections, overseen by a 'Provisional Electoral Commission' established by the OSCE, 'no later than nine months' after the peace settlement.[82] Additionally, the intention was 'to promote the general welfare and economic growth through the protection of private property and the promotion of market economy'. There was a determination to respect 'humanitarian law' and a strong commitment to 'human rights' compliance.[83]

The year after the GFA went into effect, international agencies vigorously focused on the creation of 'the necessary conditions for the conduct of free and fair elections', for example, by providing 'equitable access to the media for all political parties and candidates'.[84] These initial efforts were driven by the belief that a lasting peace would follow from the designation of representative candidates. However, the results in the first national elections in September 1996 favoured the nationalist parties who were more reluctant to implement the provisions of the Agreement and were at odds with the promotion of inter-ethnic cooperation.[85] From this moment – if not earlier, when it was clear that nationalist parties had seduced the majority of Bosnians[86] – international policy-makers started questioning the "peace-through-democratisation" (or peace-through-liberalisation) strategy reminiscent of Boutros-Ghali's original conception of peacebuilding.

The 'dilemma', as the American diplomat Special Envoy in the Balkans,

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and Herzegovina to reflect on the premises upon which the liberal peace was based in this mission in the Balkans and see how it shifted as soon as difficulties appeared.

[80] General Framework Agreement (1995). The literature has dealt extensively with the negotiations and the Dayton peace settlement. For example, Chandler (2000); Glenny (1996); Malcolm (1996: 234–272); Woodward (1995).

[81] GFA (1995: Annex 4, Preamble).

[82] GFA (1995: Annex 3, article 2).

[83] GFA (Annex 4, article 2).

[84] PIC (1996a).

[85] The assumption was that elections 'confirm[ed] the effective division of the country on ethnic lines' (ICG 1996b: 1).

[86] In the literature, calls for a more intrusive and extensive international presence were already made before the first elections were held. For example, see ICG (1996a). The ICG recommendation was to postpone the elections because the conditions were not favourable.

Richard Holbrooke, put it, is that 'racists, fascists and separatists' that oppose peace can be elected in 'free and fair elections'.[87] The election of nationalist leaders in Bosnia (similar to the experiences in other post-war scenarios) led to the observation that democratisation, rather than being the solution for peace, was part of the problem. As Zakaria famously concluded, democracy outside the West is often giving rise to 'illiberal democracy'.[88] A far cry from the universal thesis of the democratic peace of the early 1990s, the new accepted wisdom was that 'it is a mistake to blindly impose voting on countries that are unfit for voting'.[89] Since Bosnia seemed "unfit" for voting, international administrators began to rethink their peacebuilding strategy and prolong their mission in order to carefully construct the social conditions[90] and institutional mechanisms that would support a stable democracy.[91]

The shift in the approach to the crisis in Bosnia can be understood by looking at the UN's subtle and gradual reinterpretation of the goals of the mission, when it appeared that communities were unwilling to protect minority populations. While the Dayton Accords seemed to be originally framed in universal terms – 'dedicated to peace, justice, tolerance and reconciliation' – the aim of peacebuilding was increasingly recast in particularist terms, through the lens of "multi–ethnicity". Only 6 months after Dayton, the international administrators declared:

> The fundamental goal of the Peace Agreement is the reestablishment of a multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina through the creation and strengthening of institutions which respect the rights of all citizens, regardless of ethnicity.[92]

Even if the text emphasises 'citizens regardless of ethnicity' in an apparent universalist vocabulary, by setting the goal in multi-ethnic terms (the reestablishment of a multi-ethnic Bosnia), the UN started reframing the problem as one about "ethnicity" or ethnic rivalries.

To clarify, the point is not to say that after six months there was a radical shift in the international strategy to foster peace in Bosnia. The point is that, spurred by the election of nationalist representatives and the lack of compromise among parties, the process was increasingly differing from the universal approach of building peace-through-democratisation. Rather than

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[87] Quoted in Zakaria (1997: 22).

[88] Zakaria (1997: 22).

[89] Sartori (2001: 55). See also, Carothers (2002); Lipset (1994); Mansfield and Snyder (1995); Snyder (2000).

[90] For example, the creation of a tolerant and diverse civil society was one of the social conditions for the advance of democracy (Belloni 2001: 164; Chandler 2000: 135–153).

[91] For critiques of the democratisation process in Bosnia, see for example, ICG (1996a); Paris (2004: 99–107); Woodward (1999).

[92] PIC (1996b: IV).

locating the problem and solution for Bosnia in the political sphere – for example, as one in which authoritarian regimes had to be supplanted by representative governments elected in the polls – the emphasis was put on the psychosocial sphere,[93] on the problematic "ethnic" tensions and difficult reconciliation of the Bosnian population.[94] For the goal of a multi-ethnic tolerant society, a process of democratization seemed insufficient, if not counterproductive, and the international presence seemed mandatory.[95] As Woodward argues: 'the election of wartime parties and their leaders continues the war, albeit with peaceful means as long as NATO troops are present'.[96]

International administrators gradually adopted a more proactive strategy to curve the democratic process.[97] Paris analyses the shift in the international policy strategy:

> Peacebuilders apparently recognized that "free and fair" elections could impede, rather than facilitate, the consolidation of a lasting peace in Bosnia, and therefore undertook to intervene in the 1997 entity-level elections on the side of candidates who preached moderation but who lacked sufficient popular support to gain power through the democratic process alone.[98]

While the peace process was initially planned to transfer sovereignty to the Bosnian people short after the first supervised elections, the nationalist preferences of the citizens led international negotiators to successively amend their mandates in order to increase and prolong their external powers.[99] Indeed, during the first three years, every time Bosnians went to the polls, international officials thought that the results would quicken advances for peace and that the process could finally be handed over the people.[100] But there was no such a step. As Chandler observes, a decisive

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[93] In other words, what matters here, as well as in the new institutionalist literature analysed earlier, is the individuals' 'frame' of the process, rather than the rational process itself (See fn. 33 and 38).

[94] While war studies had for many years analysed the influence of social or psychological processes affecting conflict, these processes were seen traditionally less relevant for peace studies (Pupavac 2004: 381; Brigg 2010: 330–336). Since the late eighties, the focus on subjective perceptions influencing peace became more frequent. See, for example, Avruch and Black (1987); Avruch (1998). The point therefore is that, in Bosnia, the ethnic thinking of the participants came to be seen not only as a determinant factor of the war, but also a crucial element to take it into account in the process of peacebuilding.

[95] Belloni (2001: 164); Kaldor (1999: 31–68); Zakaria (1997).

[96] Woodward (1999: 7).

[97] Woodward explains that 'disqualification of elected officials and conditionality of economic aid' were two frequently adopted tools (1999: 8).

[98] Paris (2004: 105).

[99] PIC (1997a; 1997b). Also, see Chandler for an analysis of this shift (2000: 51–55).

[100] Woodward (1999: 5).

moment for the international supervision of Bosnia happened in one of the Peace Implementation Council meetings in Luxembourg, in June 1998, when external administrators acquired further 'regulative powers' and the new mandates were now 'indefinite': 'international withdrawal and the ceding of sovereignty and policy-making powers to Bosnian institutions was now to be dependent on a broad range of "benchmarks" to be determined by the international institutions themselves'.[101]

The introduction of benchmarks and the prolongation of international supervisory functions are indicatives of the belief that democracy cannot function for all peoples. The next section explores the divide between liberal democratic societies and those that are not yet ready for autonomously governing themselves. I will argue that, throughout the 1990s, this divide was framed through a cultural lens and it was a precondition for the reinterpretation of the liberal peace: rather than dedicating resources to the preparation of free and fair elections, the efforts were progressively put on building institutions to cultivate the social requisites – i.e. a civil society of diverse and respectful citizens – necessary to accomplish a stable liberal democracy.

Building institutions to overcome the cultural divide

The case in Bosnia reflects an upward trend of disenchantment with the liberal peace and democratization processes. It seemed that internationally driven peace missions, like the ones in Rwanda or Angola, not only failed to pacify the warring groups but also contributed to the propagation of tragic episodes of violence.[102] After these crises, the humanitarian euphoria of the early 1990s soon gave way to a pessimistic period of disillusionment and lack of confidence with universal political and historical projects.[103] It is within this context of despair about the universalism of the peace-through-

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[101] Chandler (2000: 55).

[102] For example, Snyder (2000); Aidoo (1993: 705). Also, Paris analyses eleven cases (Angola, Bosnia, Cambodia, Croatia, Guatemala, El Salvador, Liberia, Mozambique, Namibia and Nicaragua, Rwanda) to test whether democratisation and marketization have created the conditions for stable peace. With the exception of Croatia and Namibia which brought peaceful outcomes, his conclusion is pessimistic regarding the success of the liberalisation approach: 'the liberalisation 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' (2004: 78, 155).

[103] To clarify, the pessimism was related to universal assumptions or universal blueprints for peace that led to the gradual reinterpretation of peacebuilding. For an account of the 1990s shifting impulse of humanitarian advocacy, see Pupavac (2006: 257–258). Also, for a contextualisation of the 'crisis of confidence in social theory', see Joseph (2012: 86).

democratisation thesis that the notion of *difference* – a divide between peoples – came to the fore as a variable to explain the limits of universal discourses. [104] Kenan Malik argues that the concept of race appeared throughout the nineteenth century as a means to explain the emerging economic inequalities in societies that believed in the equality of the human species: 'the particular forms that capitalist society adopted ensured that Enlightenment universalism became degraded in practice. It was through this process that the discourse of race developed.' [105] Analogously, he explains that, at the end of the Cold War, the alleged universal discourse of liberal democracy encountered difficulties in being applied to Third World countries that suffered from intractable civil wars in an increasingly unequal world. [106] This time, since race had been morally discarded as a valid sociological category for its association with the racial discourse of Nazi Germany, difference came to be rationalised through the concept of *culture*.[107]

A caveat is important here. The point is that 'culture', broadly understood here as a framework that explains the divide between Western and non-Western societies, comes in *after* the disillusionment related with the failure of the international democratisation and economic liberalisation processes to achieve development and peace in many regions of the world. As seen in North's work, for example, he was disenchanted with the theoretical calculus of neoclassical economic frameworks of universalising development when he hit upon the informal constraints of societies to explain that, in practice, economies diverged. Similarly, the perception that liberalisation did not work for Bosnians, led to the assumption that they were culturally different: not ready for democracy and, therefore, dependent upon international supervision. To summarise, it has been the impossibility of achieving peace and equality through the implementation of universal discourses – such as the peace-through-democratisation approach – that has

[104] For instance, to recall the analysis of the first section, North's relied on the subjective constructs culturally framed of societies to account for the lack of success of universal models of orthodox economics.

[105] Malik (1996: 69). Moreover, Malik explains that the common-sense perspective is that the racial view of humanity has produced the marginalisation of some races. Against this view, he argues that 'it is not race that gives rise to inequality, but inequality that gives rise to race' (1996: 39).

[106] Increasing global inequality seemed to confirm the perception that people were different. In the last two decades of the 20th century, the income of Western Europe and North America rose substantially. In comparison, the Second World was in a transition period and most of the economies in the Third World, with the salient exception of China and India, were collapsing (Milanovic 2009: 7–13).

[107] Malik (1996: 209–216). The point is not to say that culture came in at the end of the twentieth century. It had replaced the social meaning of race, at least since the end of the Second World War. However, it adopted its hierarchical attributes more explicitly at the end of the Cold War, after the failure of several development and peace endeavours.

led to the acceptance of the notion of a divided world. Importantly, the conceptualisation of culture I have just drawn out here is different to the critical approaches of the liberal peace. As I will demonstrate in the next three chapters, critical scholars argue that the universalism of the liberal peace is responsible for downplaying the needs and interests of other societies. Malik emphasises this distinct conceptualisation of difference (race and culture): 'it is the degradation of universalism that has given rise to the discourse of race, while poststructuralist and postmodernist theories take universalism itself to be the source of racial outlook'.[108] I will come back to this point in the last chapter of the thesis.

The tension produced between a commitment to a universal aspiration and the persistence of inequality becomes apparent if one takes the example of Fukuyama's work. While he had been convinced of 'the universalization of Western liberal democracy' due to the 'unabashed victory of the economic and political liberalism' in 1989,[109] he soon identified the limits of this discourse in the 'primacy of culture'. In an article in 1995, after witnessing 'the recession of the third wave' of democratisation, he observed that 'civil society' and especially 'culture' were the most problematic spheres affecting the consolidation of democracy in the non-Western world: 'the real difficulties affecting the quality of life in democracies have to do with social and cultural pathologies that seem safely beyond the reach of institutional solutions'.[110]

The view that a hierarchical divide was natural among humans becomes even clearer when reading the deterministic accounts that sought to make sense of the brutality of the civil wars in the Third World.[111] The journalist Robert Kaplan, for example, experienced in his travels around the globe that 'in places where the Western Enlightenment has not penetrated and where there has always been mass poverty, people find liberation in violence'. He continues: 'there is less and less politics today in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, the Balkans, and the Caucasus, among other places'.[112] Comparably, many commentators identified in the wars in the Balkans a bloodthirsty, brutal, irrational, pathologised population, in a region of collective madness in which violence was endemic and a history of ancient

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[108] Malik (1996: 219).

[109] Fukuyama (1989: 3–4).

[110] Fukuyama (1995: 9). For the argument that culture is one of the key factors to determine economic prosperity, see Harrison and Huntington (2000).

[111] For example, Huntington (1993); Mearsheimer (1993; 2000); Mearsheimer and Van Evera (1995). The views of these authors were not very different to those of Fukuyama (1995, 1996). Indeed, as Fukuyama has recently recognised, they all concur that culture has a prominent role. The disagreement lies in the point that Fukuyama believes that cultural constraints can be overcome to the extent that universal values may be agreed (2013: 32).

[112] Kaplan (1994).

animosities seemed to be repeating.[113] In a study that sought to rank human rights performances by countries, Bova placed 'culturally' Western states on top of the list. These were followed by Western 'hybrid' cultures, such as Latin America or some countries of Eastern Europe, and at the bottom, he classified Asia and Africa. Although Bova argued that 'democracy' and 'economic prosperity' also influenced human rights performances, his conclusion was that 'the most compelling explanation for the difference is a cultural one'.[114] Studies like this, as well as many recent accounts of Balkan history, could persuasively be labelled as racist if one merely replaces 'culture' or 'ethnicity' by 'race', as they affirm the inferiority of groups of people by relying on historical or biological distinctions. Nevertheless, as Malik recalls, arguments about Western cultural and moral superiority to the Third World at the end of the Cold War 'have not only become common place, but they have also become acceptable'.[115]

Indeed, without a morally and culturally hierarchical understanding of different peoples, it is difficult to imagine how international administrators could legitimise the erosion of sovereignty to the extent that democracy or self-government could be supervised, if not denied.[116] The implications of interpreting non-Western others as having a different culture, which is comparably inferior to the democratic, peaceful and tolerant culture of Western democracies, was to think that these people were not capable of governing themselves. As I have argued in the previous section in relation to post-conflict Bosnia, after war-prone leaders achieved victory in the elections, the tendency was to problematise the assumption that peace and democracy went together. As Kaplan, rather alarmingly, put it: '[T]he democracy we are encouraging in many poor parts of the world is an integral part of a transformation toward new forms of authoritarianism'.[117] At the end of the 1990s, it became accepted that democracies or democratisation processes needed certain 'social requisites', such as supportive beliefs or traditions, to consolidate and remain stable.[118] As soon

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[113] For example, Djilas (1997); Kaplan (1993); Mearsheimer (1993).

[114] Bova (1997: 120–124).

[115] Malik (1996: 209).

[116] See Jackson for an argument that stresses the need to treat different people with different international norms: 'societal and cultural differences among nations and peoples are to be expected and should be recognised and reflected in specifically adapted rules and institutions. Thus, in a post-colonial but highly unequal world such as ours, there ought to be various international statuses ranging from outright independence to associate statehood to international trusteeship' (1990: 200). Also, Krasner (2004; 2005).

[117] Kaplan (1997: 56).

[118] Lipset (1994); Carothers (2002: 16). Analysing the democratic theorists of the time, Chandler observes that through the concept of 'consolidation', 'democratisation progressively involved deeper concerns that relate to the sustainability of democratic institutions rather than their establishment and operation' (2000: 8).

as scholars and practitioners reached a broad consensus on the importance of taking culture into account for undertaking successful peace and development processes,[119] the main challenge became one of 'how' deficient cultures could be transformed.[120]

At this moment it is important to recall how Douglass North explained divergent economic growth through his theory of institutions. As I have read it in the first section, he acknowledged that the subjective models – the informal constraints – that informed peoples' decisions were negatively affecting the growth of underdeveloped societies (i.e. reproducing deficient non-rational institutions). Therefore, North, like analysts dealing with questions of peacebuilding, emphasises that differences among peoples can be drawn at the sphere of beliefs and perceptions, filtered by what can be broadly labelled as culture. This means that underdevelopment, like war, takes place in the minds of the people that make wrong decisions. Committed to reduce international inequality, North strongly recommended studying the vicissitudes of societies' mental constraints. While he always evoked that it was a difficult venture to affect them, he concluded with the certainty that changes in the formal rules of societies could sooner or later fix poor informal constraints. This point is crucial because North's concluding remark echoes the tendency to focus on the institutionalisation of societies to affect the cultural deficit of post-war societies.

For example, when analysing why the liberalisation endeavours failed in the peacebuilding processes of the 1990s, Paris argues that these societies had 'ineffective political institutions' and lacked 'the existence of a tradition, or culture, of peaceful dispute resolution'.[121] In other words, they required more efficient formal institutions and more positive informal constraints. The framework Paris proposes to achieve a successful process is 'constructing the foundations of effective political and economic institutions *before* the introduction of electoral democracy and market-oriented adjustment policies'. For Paris, the aim is still to 'transform war-shattered states into liberal market democracies', what changes is the international policy-makers strategy, which he succinctly calls: 'institutionalisation before liberalisation'.[122] Paris framework is useful to understand the predisposition to focus on formal institutions by international institutions such as the World Bank. For example, from the 'fiscal crisis' or 'the collapse of economies' in the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe to 'the explosion in

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[119] For a genealogy of the inclusion of culture in peace studies, see Brigg (2010).

[120] Klitgaard (1994: 76). See also, Harrison (1992); Harrison and Huntington (2000).

[121] Paris (2004: 169–175).

[122] Paris (2004: 179) [Emphasis in the original]. This is important because Paris, like North, does not seek to find an alternative to the liberal peace (or to neoclassical economics), but to find better means to achieve the goal of building stable liberal democracies.

humanitarian emergencies in several parts of the world', the World Bank observed that the problem was 'the lawlessness syndrome'. As a solution the organisation recommended that 'an effective state is vital for the provision of the goods and services – and the rules and institutions – that allow markets to flourish and people to lead healthier happier lives'.[123] For the liberal peace framework, the focus on strengthening state institutions to build peace and stability has implied the conflation between peace and statebuilding from the late 1990s onwards.[124]

The shift to statebuilding is clearly apparent in the Balkans, especially since the initial focus on elections did not bring the expected cooperation among groups. Examining the case of Bosnia, Chandler notes that nearly all academic analysts and policy-makers highlight the problem of 'nationalism and ethnic rivalry' to explain the conflict and the tensions after the peace settlement. These conceptualisations of the Bosnian war help to confirm the 'divide' between the 'democratic culture' reflected in the civil society of the West and the 'backward', 'irrational' and 'ethnic culture' of Eastern Europe.[125] Chandler argues that once this 'division' at the level of culture is settled, an international regulatory framework is legitimated to fix 'societal values and attitudes rather than political processes'.[126] In a comparable analysis of international governance in Bosnia, Vanessa Pupavac argues that, 'by locating the source of conflict and injustice in the social psychology of the population', international peacebuilders legitimise a 'therapeutic peace' approach that supervises 'inter-ethnic' tensions and even 'emotional communication and interpersonal relations'.[127] Both Chandler and Pupavac concur that this international approach denies the self-government aspirations of conflict-affected populations and deprioritizes material development.[128]

This 'therapeutic governance' [129] approach to peacebuilding, which focuses on a deep institutionalisation and social regulation of societies to build a stable liberal peace, will be analysed in greater detail in the next

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[123] World Bank (1997: 1, 4)

[124] For example, see Carothers (2002: 17); Chesterman (2004); Ghani, Lockhart and Carnahan (2005); Paris and Sisk (2009).

[125] Chandler (2000: 22–28). In the next chapter I will discuss how this divide was reinforced through the conceptualisation of the so-called 'new wars'.

[126] Chandler (2000: 28). Similarly, in the field of development, Duffield argued that the meaning of development had shifted from 'promoting economic growth in the hope that development will follow' to 'a series of projects and strategies to change indigenous values and modes of organisation and replace them with liberal ones' (2001: 42).

[127] Pupavac (2004: 391).

[128] Chandler (2000: 195–196). Pupavac (2004: 391–394; 2001: 369).

[129] Pupavac (2001: 358) coins 'therapeutic governance' the form of international governance based on a 'psycho-social intervention' and 'social risk management' (2001: 358).

chapter in relation to post-conflict Kosovo. I will argue that, by focusing on the "ethnic" proclivities of the Kosovars, the conflict has become irresolvable on the eyes of international administrators and, in consequence, further international engagement to fix the social sphere has been considered indispensable. For now, in this first chapter, suffice is to say that a framework that seeks to build institutions to manage the subjective models of the population in an indefinite supervision process is different from the initial intentions to grant self-government to the Bosnian people after the first democratic elections. As I have demonstrated, a precondition for this shift has been the perception among academics and policy-makers of divergent world societies that has been rationalised by looking at institutions and, more fundamentally, scrutinising the subjective models affecting these institutions. As a conclusion, therefore, I contend that the failures of the early democratisation processes have been interpreted through the lens of culture, which divides different peoples and societies. After the crises of democratisation, external interference has been considered increasingly essential to build institutions and transform fragile and intolerant societies that are not yet ready to face the conflictive nature of democracy and economic competitiveness.

Before I turn to analyse the statebuilding process in Kosovo, it is important to make a last remark on the conception of culture within peacebuilding frameworks. The increasing recognition that post-conflict societies were *culturally different* contained an ambivalent meaning: on the one hand, difference was cast in negative terms, it explained and legitimised why some societies were poor or war-prone and it presented them as having a pre-modern or barbarous condition. For policy-makers and scholars dealing with post-war populations, other cultures were (and ought to be) subordinated to the ideal of liberal democracy.[130] The challenge was, so to speak, to overcome the informal constraints in order that democracy, peace and economic growth could flourish. However, on the other hand, the recognition that culture mattered was accompanied by a predisposition to question the validity and imposition of universal constructs. Indeed, as I have explained, the fact that North and Paris argued that institutions were important for the success of processes of development or peace, for example, represented a critical reading of the universal applicability of forms of liberalism. By so doing, they opened up the possibility of appreciating other ways of living.

While this 'openness' to difference had an important value in constructivist and poststructuralist frameworks,[131] it could also be seen as positive within policymaking discourses. Already in 1989, the World Bank

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[130] This point will be further developed in chapter 3.

[131] For example, see discussion about Campbell (1998; 1999) in chapter 3 and Connolly (1995; 2002; 2005) in chapter 4.

argued that Africa's countries should pursue their development in their own ways:

> Africa will need to search for the models that best fit its culture. Thus moving from words to action requires a favourable institutional context. It must emerge from, and at the same time support, political consensus. Each country will have to wrestle with this problem in its own way. The most that external agencies can do is to support the search for that consensus (1989: 193).

The credence that Africans could find models that best fit their culture means that difference can also be framed in much more affirmative terms. As Chesterman succinctly puts it, 'any foreign involvement must therefore be sensitive to the particularities of that population both at the level of form and of substance'.[132] This contentious line (to repeat, the fact that culture may be used, on the one hand, to legitimise inequality, and, on the other hand, to protect and celebrate human difference)[133] is at the core of contemporary discourses of peacebuilding. While I have made clear that liberal peace frameworks still maintained a very negative understanding of the culture of other societies, in the following chapters I will argue that the ethical sensitivity underpinning the rise of culture has motivated the critical reassessments of the liberal peace: most clearly within post-liberal peace and resilience approaches. It is this ambivalent meaning of culture in relation to peacebuilding strategies that ushers this research.

Conclusion

This initial chapter has explored the shift from a peace-through-democratisation approach prevalent during the beginning of the 1990s to an increasing concern with the fixing of institutions in post-conflict societies more dominant from the second half of the decade onwards. At the beginning, I have contextualised and introduced this shift by interpreting Douglass North's work on development economics. The Nobel Laureate's views are important for this chapter because, wanting to improve the insufficient results that orthodox development policies produced on Third World countries, he insisted on analysing the role of institutions. For him,

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[132] Chesterman (2007: 3).

[133] For Furedi, this is the ambivalence that has characterised the discourse of race and culture: 'Relativism could be read as a plea for the protection of the noble savage. It could also be interpreted to mean that the native was not ready for modern life' (1998: 100). For instance, the discourse of apartheid was possible and it lasted for decades because it made this ambiguity its strength: racial division could be seen as an unequal system for discriminating some groups or a project of freedom in which every group could protect their culture (Norval 1996: 73).

institutions – from norms and rules to beliefs and perceptions – formed the structure that guides people's decisions and he noticed that impoverished developing countries lacked efficient institutions. North argued that the key obstacle for achieving economic growth was the culturally informed subjective perceptions and beliefs that affected institutions and were difficult to correct. Ultimately, his recommendation for developing Third World countries was to fix formal institutions in the hope that, in the long run, constrictive subjective models could also be modified.

The tendency to focus on building institutions in the theory and practice of peacebuilding has similarly been motivated by the failure to achieve societal stability and democratic consolidation in the peace-through-democratisation processes of the mid-1990s. As Carothers conclusively put it, 'the transition paradigm was a product of a certain time – the heady early days of the third wave – and that time has now passed. It is necessary for democracy activists to move on to new frameworks, new debates, and perhaps eventually a new paradigm of political change'.[134] The new paradigm of 'institutionalisation before liberalisation,' to use Paris words, has been illustrated in this chapter through the case of post-conflict Bosnia. I have argued that, while the initial efforts focused on organising elections, the election of nationalist leaders who blocked the implementation of peace agreements led international administrators to rethink their strategy. They opted to prolong their mandate and gradually focused on the social requisites necessary to consolidate democracy and peace.

While this shift (to clarify, from peace–through–democratisation to building institutions) has been extensively analysed in the literature, I have sought to theorise one of the preconditions that made it possible. This was the recognition among academics and policy-makers that conflict-affected people were different: dysfunctional, lacking a liberal democratic culture and incapable of coping with sovereign acts. The notion of a human hierarchical divide appeared most explicitly after the failures to apply universalised frameworks such as democracy or economic liberalisation to post-conflict non-Western societies. The demise of universalism gave rise to the focus on subjective perceptions to explain differences among societies. As Hughes and Pupavac argue, '[post-conflict] societies are viewed as formed of violated and violating individuals, whose actions spring in hopeless cycle of conflict from psychological process rather than from political beliefs or economic needs'.[135] My conclusion is that culture – subjectively derived differences among societies – came to explain why some people could not rule themselves and it was an important prerequisite for the reinterpretation of peacebuilding. At the end of the 1990s, international

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[134] Carothers (2002: 20).

[135] Hughes and Pupavac (2005: 874).

policy-makers were developing an institution-building framework that sought to carefully manage the erratic subjective processes of post-war populations. It is this new framework that I intend to analyse in the next chapter in relation to the statebuilding project in Kosovo.

Chapter 2.
Reframing Post-Conflict Kosovo:
The "Ethnic Dilemma" and the Indefinite
International Supervision

Preface

Lëvizja Vetëvendosje (self-determination) is in the limelight of Kosovo's politics. Having its origins in the student movements of the 1990s, it was founded as a social movement in 2005 to reclaim Kosovo's self-determination through innovative non-violent protests and acts of resistance against the international supervision of the country.[1] In 2010, Vetëvendosje was constituted as a political party for the national elections in which it became the third force in the Assembly. The rise of the movement reached a high point last December, when Vetëvendosje's candidate Shpend Ahmeti won the municipal elections in the capital Pristina and was sworn in as the new Mayor.[2] The party's political views are based on defending the citizens of Kosovo whose will, they argue, should be consulted through direct forms of democracy. By the same token, the party is opposed to the current international administration because it is considered unaccountable and undemocratic.[3]

While Vetëvendosje is gaining popularity among the people and it is influencing public opinion,[4] its policies are viewed with suspicion by international organizations, the media and scholars alike. Since its inception Vetëvendosje has been labelled as a 'radical' organization and a 'cause for concern' for the UN Mission in Kosovo[5] and it is usually linked to 'civil unrest' and 'violence'.[6] Some delegitimize Vetëvendosje's proposals by focusing on the 'shameful vandalism and extreme unjustifiable intolerance on the other'.[7] Others go as far as to accuse Vetëvendosje of being a 'terrorist'

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[1] Schwandner-Sievers (2013: 98–99)

[2] Vetëvendosje (2013).

[3] Schwandner-Sievers (2013: 97).

[4] IndexKosova (2013).

[5] UNSC (2007a: 3).

[6] OSAC (2013).

[7] Hoxha (2013).

group.[8] Even if only few remain as categorical, most analysts argue that it is a 'genuine threat' to the other parties and international organizations for its 'hard-line nationalist stance'.[9] This stance is evident, for example, in its rejection of programs of decentralization to benefit minorities and the party's proposal to consult Kosovars on whether to join Albania.[10]

Despite these criticisms and severe accusations, as a social scientist, I still was motivated with the possibility of understanding the demands of self-governance openly voiced by Vetëvendosje[11] and defended by an increasing number of people in Kosovo.[12] It is important to say that, by trying to 'understand' their arguments, I am not legitimizing or giving support to a political cause.[13] Indeed, my concern is not directly the rise of Vetëvendosje neither examining Kosovo's domestic matters. Rather than judging their specific claims, I am more interested in placing them in relation to dominant discourses of peacebuilding. In the previous chapter, I have analysed the shift in the discourse of peacebuilding from a process of democratisation towards a focus on building institutions that is intended to fix the deficient mental constructs of post-war societies before the actual process of democracy can be enacted. It is this institutionalisation approach to peacebuilding,[14] and how it has evolved into a perpetual deferral of democracy or self-government for the Kosovars, that is at the centre of this chapter.

Introduction

This chapter seeks to understand why international policy-makers and many scholars seem reluctant to respond to Kosovars' demands for a sovereign state. In particular, it investigates why fifteen years after the peace settlement that ended the war in Kosovo international organizations are still indecisive regarding the status of the territory and have maintained administrative structures while deferring self-government.[15] Although in 2008 the Kosovo Assembly declared the independence of Kosovo from Serbia, the European Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) continues with the monitoring of its institutions without admitting the sovereignty of the territory.[16]

In the literature, most scholars have explained that it has been difficult to find a solution over the status because this is the most delicate and conflictive issue of all: within the international community and within Kosovar public opinion there are two diametrically opposed positions regarding the independence or non-independence of Kosovo from Serbia.[17] While the interpretation of a meticulous and dangerous negotiation of the process is somewhat accurate, it is incomplete.[18] For instance, it tells little about why international state-builders have sought to resolve the status disputes by deferring self-government and adopting an increasingly technical and managerial approach to transform the social behaviours of the population. For example, UNMIK and the rule-of-law mission, EULEX, have developed civil society, human resources capacity-building, minorities' decentralization, the training of civilian administrators and promoted reconciliation among ethnic groups. The point here is not to tell that these technical mechanisms are not important or necessary, but to problematise why 'political' issues[19] like the sovereign status and the possibility of self-government have been addressed through a managerial process to improve the standards of Kosovo's society.

This chapter focuses on dominant international framings of post-conflict Kosovo to address this question. It is argued that both international policy-

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[15] Although it centres on the debates about the "status" of Kosovo, this chapter does not address the literature on recognition theory or discussions on international law (i.e. Ker-Lindsay 2011). Instead, it focuses on "status" as indicative of (non)granting self-government to the local population. For a similar framing of the question on self-government in post-conflict societies, see Hughes and Pupavac (2005).

[16] Council EU (2010); EULEX (2009). It is important to remark that the UN initial intention of transferring its 'interim administrative responsibilities' to the 'local institutions' and 'facilitating a political process designed to determine Kosovo's future status' (UNSC 1999b: 3–4) is, at least, in tension with today's continuing international presence in Kosovo.

[17] For example, for this argument see Knudsen (2006: 160); Weller (2008: 80–94).

[18] I am not seeking to contradict the interpretation that international state-builders had international and domestic pressures in the status negotiations, but to complete it with an understanding of the international framing of post-conflict Kosovo.

[19] The UN recognised that these were political issues (UNSC 1999a; 1999c).

makers and the critics of statebuilding[20] have problematised Kosovo in a similar way. For them, the problem of transferring self-government is that either Kosovo-Serbs or Kosovo-Albanians could bring to fruition their "ethnic" desires to dominate the other group. This is what I will call here the "ethnic dilemma": the fear of what would happen if democracy allows Kosovars to actualise their "ethnic" aspirations?[21] As a solution, international administrators and their critics are increasingly sharing a commitment to reduce the salience of ethnicity in order to achieve a more inclusive peace. The conclusion of the chapter is that the framing of Kosovo as an ethnic dispute legitimises both a permanent ambiguity regarding the status issue and additional administrative and technical efforts of institution building.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first section explores the negotiations for the status of Kosovo that had to decide between two opposed principles: self-determination or state territorial unity. It then identifies the widespread assumption in the literature that the status of Kosovo has not been resolved due to strong international and domestic constraints. While I do not intend to contradict these views, my aim is to investigate the question of Kosovo's self-government away from geopolitical or legal explanations. In order to do so, the second section analyses the critique of the statebuilding process. The critics signal that international administrators have failed to build intercommunal peace because they have institutionalised ethnicity, the most divisive category during the war. In particular, they focus on the UN decentralization policy that seeks to remedy the problems associated with nationalism and the intolerance to non-majority communities. Their suggested alternatives indicate that efforts should be directed to diminish the salience of ethnicity. However, the third section demonstrates that international administrators are gradually seeking to de-emphasise ethnicity through a technical institution building endeavour that echoes the viewpoint of the academic critics. Finally, the last section acknowledges that policy-makers and their critics have very similar conclusions – a need to move away from the locals' "ethnic" objectives. This chapter ends with an attempt to demystify the ethnic dilemma, which in

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[20] There are many critics of the international administration in Kosovo. However, this chapter focuses on international scholars wanting to critically reappraise the current state-building theory and practice (i.e. Devic 2006; Franks and Richmond 2008; Hehir 2006, 2007; Lehti 2014; Simonsen 2005; Popolo 2011; Richmond 2009b).

[21] For the purpose of this chapter, I use 'dilemma' to denote the difficult choice between pursuing two objectives that seem mutually exclusive (Narten 2009: 255). In short, this is the dilemma faced by the international administrators: on the one hand, more responsibilities to the locals cannot be granted unless there is an improvement of inter-ethnic relations. On the other hand, episodes of violence against minorities have occurred precisely because questions of sovereignty have not been resolved (Hehir 2007: 254).

having no possible terminus facilitates international interference and jeopardises the preferences of the Kosovars.

Independence if there is tolerance towards the minorities

The negotiations about the sovereign status of Kosovo were initially adjourned conveniently to prevent the destabilization of the Balkans and to avoid discussing the most traumatic discrepancy of the two participants in the war.[22] Belgrade and Pristina defended two fundamentally opposed positions: territorial sovereignty vs. self-determination.[23] In March 2004, frustrated by the international immobility over the status resolution, extremist Kosovo-Albanians led an anti-Serb and anti-UN rioting that left 19 dead, nearly 900 injured and destroyed homes, churches and monasteries.[24] In order to avoid another outburst of violence, one of the most influential think tanks in the Balkans, the International Crisis Group (ICG), advised internationals and local politicians to combat 'extremist and intolerant pathologies' and to 'renovate the politically, economically and psychologically damaged Albanian society'.[25] Additionally, it explicitly suggested as a policy recommendation that 'it would be wrong to reward the violence of March 17-18 by moving straight into negotiations on final status'.[26] For the ICG, the solution resided in working on an inter-ethnic dialogue 'on the means of coexistence, taking the Council of Europe decentralization plan as a starting point'.[27]

International institutions drew similar conclusions from these tragic events. For UNMIK, the EU and the Government of Serbia decentralization and the accommodation of the Serb community in Kosovo became the foremost priority and almost a non-negotiable option.[28] From Kai Eide and Martti Ahtisaari to the present EULEX approach, the framework proposed for the internal accommodation of Kosovo was the establishment of a model of decentralization to support the non-majority communities.[29] Even if the conversations on the status initiated in October 2005, the strategy to navigate between two unbridgeable aspirations (Kosovo: province of Serbia or independent state), as Weller observes, was to discuss the internal

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[22] Weller (2008: 17).

[23] ICG (2004); UNSC (2005).

[24] ICG (2004).

[25] ICG (2004: 32).

[26] ICG (2004: 42).

[27] ICG (2004: iii).

[28] Kallaba (2010: 17).

[29] Kallaba (2010: 21); ICG (2007, 2009).

decentralization of Kosovo rather than its final status.[30] That is, Kosovo-Albanians had to give concessions relating to minority rights and power sharing, on the hope that the status issue would be determined in their favour. The protection of minorities and the assurance of their participation became the condition for the gradual transference of assets to the Kosovars.[31]

In 2007, after two years of negotiations in which the parties 'reaffirmed their categorical, fundamentally opposed positions' and taking into account Kosovo's 'recent history' and 'realities of today', the UN Special Envoy for future status process, Martti Ahtisaari, recommended that 'the only viable option for Kosovo is independence, to be supervised by an initial period by the international community'.[32] Together with this option, his Comprehensive proposal for the Status Settlement was committed to a defense of Kosovo's 'multi-ethnic society' and 'the promotion and protection of the rights and contributions of all its Communities and their members'.[33] In fact, the first seven articles referred in some way or another to the protection of non-majority communities, thus emphasizing 'community rights', 'reconciliation', 'decentralization' and the protection of 'religious and cultural heritage' and the 'internally displaced persons'.[34] In an effort to ensure the participation of all the inhabitants in Kosovo, the plan was to devolve territorial autonomy to Serb-dominated municipalities and allow them to get connected with Serbia without interference from the central state unit.[35]

When the Assembly of Kosovo declared the independence of Kosovo from Serbia on February 17, 2008, it adopted a Constitution with strong protection for communities and their members following the recommendations of the UN Special Envoy.[36] While the declaration of independence could be seen as the definitive step in the process, the EU launched the EULEX mission to extend the international presence and dominion over Kosovo's statebuilding process.[37] In 2011, Kosovo and Serbia began further EU-facilitated negotiations – 'without prejudice to positions on status' – in order to normalise relations and prepare the possibility of access to the EU.[38] In short, what this brief analysis tells is that the violence and tensions between Kosovars were interpreted by international state-builders

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[30] Weller (2008: 34–38).

[31] UNSC (2007c).

[32] UNSC (2007c: 2).

[33] UNSC (2007c: 2).

[34] UNSC (2007c: 2–5).

[35] UNSC (2007b: Art. 6 and 10).

[36] UNSC (2007b: Art. 57).

[37] Weller (2008: 74).

[38] ICG (2013: 2).

as motives for extending international interference, rather than as signs to resolve the status (which was the cause of the tensions).

The existing literature usually emphasises both domestic obstacles – mainly the polarised starting points of Pristina and Belgrade – as well as a divided international community to explain the slow progress in regard to the decision on Kosovo's sovereignty. For example, focusing specifically on the failure to decide on the status before 2008, Weller concludes that Kosovo was the most 'difficult and dangerous aspect of the Yugoslav crisis' because neither Belgrade nor Pristina were willing to adjust their initial opinions. He also attributes the lack of success in the conversations to the international disagreement on the question: within the Contact Group and the five permanent members of the Security Council – the UK, the US and France favouring independence and Russia and China supporting Serbia's territorial unity – and within Europe – with 5 members having not recognised Kosovo yet.[39] These diplomatic divisions can also give account to the fact that since 2008 EULEX operates under a status neutral framework with limited capabilities and an ambiguous mandate.[40] After the declaration of independence, the situation has not become clearer. Since international law stands in a permanent contradiction – while some scholars express doubts about Kosovo's right to self-determination,[41] the International Court of Justice Tribunal declared that its independence did not violate the principles of general international law[42] – power politics seem to reign over any procedure.[43] One commentator has explained Kosovo's failure to achieve wider recognition by looking at Russia's hard-liner position, justified by its confrontational attitude versus NATO, its Slavic solidarity and the willingness to avoid setting a precedent.[44] Another analyst has argued that, to this day, official discrepancies even among states that initially recognised Kosovo as an independent state continue to block its sovereignty.[45]

While the "geopolitical" and "diplomatic" explanations of the process are somewhat accurate, these are very often incomplete. In order to contribute to this debate I will focus the attention to the taken-for-granted assumptions embedded in the framings of post-conflict Kosovo. This reading starts by re-engaging with the interpretation of the riots of March 2004. What it is intriguing is that the international mission, as well as the ICG, interpreted the episodes of violence as a psychological or social malaise that had to be

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[39] Weller (2008: 80–94).

[40] Papadimitriou and Petrov (2012: 758); Greiçevci (2012: 292–295).

[41] Wilson (2009).

[42] ICJ (2010).

[43] Ker-Lindsay (2011).

[44] Ker-Lindsay (2010: 175–176).

[45] Radeljić (2014).

treated therapeutically,[46] rather than as the consequence of a disallowed political desire, such as the request to become independent from Serbia.[47] Rather than taking a decision over the status or let the people in Kosovo decide over their sovereignty, for example, the efforts were placed into 'capacity-building' and the organization of communities in separated municipalities.[48] That is, while the literature partially responds to the hesitancy to define Kosovo's final status, it does not focus on why this political question has been addressed through a technical and managerial statebuilding process that seeks to build a tolerant multi-ethnic society in which the status resolution is no longer relevant.[49] The rest of the chapter thus addresses this question, which has been overlooked in the literature, by focusing on the persistence of an "ethnic dilemma" within international framings of post-conflict Kosovo. The next section commences with an analysis of the critics of statebuilding, who have identified the failure of building intercommunal peace in the policies that favoured ethnic identifications.

The international critique of Kosovo's statebuilding[50]

From all the policies, strategies or plans for international statebuilding in Kosovo, the one that has generated the biggest controversy in the literature is the decentralization policy brought in by the UN Special Envoy, Marthi Ahtisaari.[51] The criticisms focus mostly on two problematic and interrelated aspects: *territory* and *ethnicity*. Firstly, the critics sustain that the *territorial* mapping of the Ahtisaari Plan fails to deliver on its promise of promoting a diverse society. For Kallaba, 'the Comprehensive Proposal for Status Settlement presents the irony of being in contradiction with its own goals of

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[46] ICG (2004: 32–36).

[47] Hughes and Pupavac (2005: 874).

[48] Hehir (2007: 249).

[49] EULEX (2009); UNSC (2007c). When analysing the shifting discourses of state-building, David Chandler placed a similar question: 'What is it that leads Western states and international institutions to reinterpret economic, social and political problems in other parts of the world as questions which are largely amenable to technical administrative solutions? How can it be that today it seems that the answer to every problem from security threats to human rights to development is now that of global governance and the export of external advisors and capacity builders?' (2006: 7).

[50] While there is a huge body of domestic (and regional) critiques of Ahtisaari's policies, this chapter mainly focuses on the international critics within the discipline of international relations. See fn. 20.

[51] A form of local decentralisation was already in place at least since 2002 (CoEDM 2003). But the point to make here is that it adopted a stronger determinism after Ahtisaari's recommendations.

building a multi-ethnic democratic cohesive state in Kosovo' because 'this model of decentralization may deepen further internal territorial divisions' and 'lead to an uncontrolled partition'.[52] That is, in the name of multi-ethnicity, the solution projected by Ahtisaari resembles the "partition" option proposed by those who think of reconciliation as impossible and who would even do land-swaps or transfers of population to solve the crisis in Kosovo.[53] While it is only a 'de facto partition' – avoiding the creation of two states – Ahtisaari's Plan seems to perpetuate the conflict because it 'has ensured the electoral success of nationalist parties and policies […] creating a climate of extreme insecurity for ethnic minorities residing in the 'wrong' territory'.[54] Even if the counter-argument provided by UNMIK and its supporters is that they only provided rights to an already segregated society[55] or that decentralization is the pragmatic option of last-resort,[56] the map of Kosovo split into ethnic municipalities also dissatisfies the local population. For the Kosovo-Albanian majority, this policy has fomented ethnic-division, curtailed the minorities' integration and it has usurped the sovereignty of the territory because Belgrade controls the Serb municipalities.[57] For the non-majority Kosovo-Serbs, decentralization is the price to pay for losing Serbia.[58]

Secondly, the international critics concur that the territorial mechanisms of the Ahtisaari plan is in the end a problem of reinforcing *ethnicity*, the most contentious identification of the war. Of course nobody ignores the fact that Kosovo was already divided before UNMIK was launched. Yet the critics suggest that UNMIK's institutionalization of ethnicity as the only valid political category has made intercommunal peace impossible. This is mainly because, by relying upon ethnic homogeneous groups (namely 'groupism'),[59] internationals administrators have strengthened the ethnic division and undermined communal projects or hybrid forms of identification.[60] As Devic observes, ethno-multiculturalism 'neglects the local realities that preceded the violence and alternative practices of inter-ethnic relations'.[61]

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[52] Kallaba (2010: 6–7).

[53] Kaufmann (1996); Economides, Ker-Lindsay and Papadimitriou (2010: 112); Mearsheimer (2000).

[54] Jenne (2009: 285).

[55] Jolyon Naegele, Head of Political Affairs UNMIK, interview with the author in Pristina, November 6, 2013.

[56] ICG (2007)

[57] McKinna (2012b: 14); Vetëvendosje (2012).

[58] Ivanji (2007).

[59] Brubaker (2004: 35).

[60] Constantinou (2007); Hehir (2006: 205–207).

[61] Devic (2006: 268).

Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, the essentialism of aligning ethnicity and territory has strengthened the probability of 'apartheid politics' and fuelled the 'nationalist imaginary'.[62] That is, the critics argue that Ahtisaari's framework is perilous not only because it favours the nationalist agenda to create homogenous territories visible during the war,[63] but because some nationalist local elites or ethnic-entrepreneurs have utilised the decentralization process and other "ethnic" institutions for their own strategic and exclusivist purposes:

> 'Liberal peace-building, for all of its claims of top-down governance and institutionalization, can be co-opted by those it is being applied to who may utilise even the very limited agency they may have for objectives that may fit uncomfortably with the pluralism that is at the center of the international community's desire for a liberal peace'.[64]

For the critics, there is a contradiction between the multi-ethnic goal and the means to realise it, as the strategy of designing an ethnic map and promoting ethnic institutions has been 'play[ed]' by the locals to achieve their 'ethnicised objectives'.[65] In this regard, Franks and Richmond go as far as to blame democracy for the crisis in Kosovo: 'in acting to develop democratic principles and accountability, UNMIK effectively has reinforced the claim of the Kosovo Albanians for a separate state within which to locate democratic institutions'. This is because, again, in a 'highly politicised environment', institutions are used or 'monopolised' to serve the goal of an ethnic-Albanian dominated state.[66] In similar lines Devic argues that the success of ethnic entrepreneurs in Kosovo has depended on the international tendency to support democracy.[67] Although in most of the critiques this is developed implicitly, it is the fear of democracy – that is, the risk that in post-war elections or representative institutions the population would continue to choose violent or nationalist options – that is considered to be the fundamental difficulty to be corrected.[68]

True, not all the commentators have this open "aversion" to democracy. Hehir, for example, seems to argue the opposite since he initially criticises UNMIK's rule over the population and its willingness to 're-educate the people of Kosovo in western democratic ways' in a system where the international administration is unaccountable and the status disagreement

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[62] For this point made in the context of post-conflict Bosnia, see Campbell (1999, 405).

[63] IICK (2000: 33–67).

[64] Franks and Richmond (2008: 82).

[65] Franks and Richmond (2008: 90).

[66] Franks and Richmond (2008: 91–94).

[67] Devic (2006: 269).

[68] For instance, in the previous chapter, we have already seen this aversion toward democracy (Brancati and Snyder 2013; Donais 2009a: 13; Paris 2004, 235).

cannot be disentangled.[69] However, there is a difficult question that Hehir astutely evades: what if Kosovars democratically still choose the so-called 'ethnicised objectives'? Hehir identifies the problem in Kosovo in the 'ethnic polarization', which is the product of 'the insecurity situation', the politicians who 'exploit ethnicity and foment fear of 'the other'' and UNMIK's adoption of the 'existing ethnic categorizations as legitimate political cleavages'.[70] So, it is the preferences of the local actors – even if these are influenced by nationalist leaders or fatally aggravated by UNMIK's policies – which become the problem in need of a solution. Similar to Franks and Richmond, Hehir is suspicious of the demands or interests of the Kosovars after ethnicity has been cemented in the political system and general public in Kosovo. The underlying assumption is that "ethnic" thinking betrays democratic values or that democracy leads to menacing scenarios if participants adamantly think in ethnic categories.[71]

What is the alternative to statebuilding in Kosovo? The critics understand ethnicity and any other form of identification to be fluid and heterogeneous, unsuitable for organizing it within enclaves. Influentially, Roger Brubaker recommends 'shifting attention from groups to groupness, and treating groupness as variable and contingent rather than fixed and given',[72] as a way of undermining the divisive and potentially violent categories of two clear-cut ethnic groups. Following similar views on ethnicity,[73] most critics argue that peace and reconciliation reside in de-emphasizing ethnicity and reducing its salience as the only meaningful feature of Kosovar society.[74] This would mean to pursue an opposite strategy to UNMIK's over-ethnicised approach and therefore to contest the nationalistic and reductionist views that clashed during the war. As Simonsen holds:

> Ethnic divisions must be addressed, but attempts should be made to reduce their salience. This may be achieved through the creation of institutions that, while providing for proportional ethnic representation in the immediate post-conflict setting, do not fixate the accentuation on ethnicity in politics or counteract achievements towards a de-ethnicization in other sectors of society. Moreover, each institution should ideally contribute towards a long-term de-ethnicization of politics, by encouraging contacts and trust-building across ethnic boundaries.[75]

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[69] Hehir (2006: 203).

[70] Hehir (2006: 209–210).

[71] Lehning (1998: 8–10).

[72] Brubaker (2004: 38).

[73] While most of the critics have a 'constructivist' notion of ethnicity, they accuse international state-builders of having a 'primordialist' view (Campbell 1998: 88–92).

[74] Hehir (2006: 207); Simonsen (2005: 306).

[75] Simonsen (2005: 298).

Most of the alternatives call for overcoming the ethnic divide by destabilizing ethnicity or the notion of two opposed groups. The proposals vary, but they maintain a similar rationale. For example, some recommend the building of 'trans-ethnic' or 'cross-decentralised' institutions[76] or 'policies of reintegration' to reverse the ethnic cleansing that occurred during the conflict and its aftermath.[77] Others strive for a more bottom-up-oriented approach, 'dealing with the issues of everyday life', in order to challenge the mono-ethnic versions of peace[78] or to open-up 'venues for alternative or oppositional political mobilization'.[79] Popolo uses a complex epistemic perspective to confront both the narratives of the war and international policy frameworks and ends up defending new ways of thinking, more intuitive, speculative and contingent, in order to reinvent Kosovo.[80]

In sum, any emancipatory alternative, as put forward in academic circles, resides in the pluralization – rather than institutionalization – of the identities of the Kosovars. In other words, the resolution resides in challenging UNMIK's 'apartheid cartography' and 'remapping' Kosovo – acknowledging that any other map would also have to be problematised – by 'foster[ing] the pluralization of the possibilities of being on the same territory'.[81] After reading the critics and their proposals to imagine a 'new' Kosovo, it is time to rethink the international administrators' approach, which is evolving along the same lines. The next section argues that policy-makers, most notoriously since 2008, are progressively adopting a strategy of pluralizing the ethnic divide.

International statebuilders and their critics: Two sides of the same coin

In 2008 Sherrill Stroschein wrote an article to criticise territorially divided and hierarchically administered states for their incapacity to deal with complex post-conflict situations and divided societies. After discarding consociationalist alternatives, she proposed a 'dispersed control model' based on 'non-territorial autonomy and functional governance' to transcend the shortcomings of traditional Weberian state models.[82] Curiously, her case study to defend her 'creative design for states that move beyond territory and hierarchy' was Kosovo and, in particular, the Ahtisaari

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[76] Monteux (2006: 180).

[77] Jenne (2009: 286).

[78] Franks and Richmond (2008: 98)

[79] Devic (2006: 270).

[80] Popolo (2011).

[81] Campbell (1999: 430).

[82] Stroschein (2008: 660–661).

recommendations adopted in the Constitution. [83] Exalting Ahtisaari, Stroschein defends the ambivalent formula of providing representation to minorities in the Parliament with reserved quotas and yet, at the same time, impeding them to have veto on majority decisions. Likewise, with regard to decentralization she celebrates that, on the one hand, there are delegated competences to municipalities and even the option of cross-border cooperation to help minorities; and, on the other hand, there is an explicit denial of territorial autonomy to avoid division and potential secession.[84]

In short, it is the 'dispersed', 'complex' and 'non-territorial' institutional setting of Ahtisaari's plan that is adequate for the governance of a 'complex society' like Kosovo.[85] I have not chosen to examine Stroschein's article because she defends UNMIK ambiguous approach, nor because she admits that there have been some productive results, as opposed to the other critics discussed earlier. She is relevant for this chapter because her analysis questions the notion that the international administrative mission in Kosovo has a deterministically thin and reductionist framework that aligns territory and ethnicity and that reproduces ethnic differences. The study of Stroschein thus signposts a possible communion between the critics who propose a non-territorial arrangement to avoid reinforcing the ethnic divide and the innovative institutional setting proposed by Ahtisaari. In other words, if Stroschein analysis of the ambivalent formula presented by UNMIK is somewhat accurate, then the demands for de-emphasizing ethnicity made by the critics are very similar to the intentions of international policy-makers. In order to explore further this initial observation, it is convenient to look more carefully at the most contemporary developments of statebuilding in Kosovo.

EULEX, the EU's largest crisis management operation, replaced UNMIK and initiated its full capabilities on December 9, 2008. The aim of the mission was the following:

> Assist Kosovo institutions, judicial authorities and law enforcement agencies in their progress towards sustainability and accountability and in further developing and strengthening an independent multi-ethnic justice system and multi-ethnic police and customs service, ensuring that these institutions are free from political interference and adhering to internationally recognised standards and European best practices.[86]

From its initial statement, EULEX has expunged 'multi-ethnicity' from the goals of the mission. Perhaps more precisely, EULEX focuses on the

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[83] Stroschein (2008: 655).

[84] Stroschein (2008: 662). Wolff also classifies the institutional design of Kosovo as different from the clearly demarcated territories that exist in Bosnia, Sudan or Iraq (2009: 33).

[85] Stroschein (2008: 665).

[86] Council of the EU (2008: Article 2).

promotion of multi-ethnicity at the Rule of Law institutions, but it refuses to explicitly settle goals about multi-ethnicity at the societal level.[87] Of course that EULEX ambitions are in accordance with multi-ethnic promises – it maintains the framework of the UN Resolution 1244 which explicitly aims for building a plural society – but its strategy reveals a shift in its means to achieve them.[88]

For example, in all the EULEX annual reports, 'multi-ethnicity' simply appears in relation to the police, the judiciary or the customs system, as a desirable standard to be accomplished only at the level of these institutions.[89] For instance, the purpose of reaching 'ethnical balance among the judges' in the divided city of Mitrovica[90] or creating a 'multi-ethnic crowd and riot control unit'[91] is to deal with 'ethnically motivated crimes'.[92] At the core of this strategy is the desire to build institutions 'freed from political interference'.[93] Hence, EULEX develops technical measures in order to prevent or censure cases of ethnic violence. As if they had learnt from the critics' plea,[94] international administrators explicitly aim at separating ethnicity from politics through a careful restructuring of Kosovo's institutions. In order to avoid the risk that ethnicity becomes the only meaningful category in the political system, the EULEX reports have relocated ethnicity and, for example, today setting up a multi-ethnic judiciary is as important as abiding it with the principles of gender equality.[95] It seems that ethnicity has run out of steam with the intention to foster a diverse society. It has even ceased to be the priority: 'corruption and organised crime appears as more urgent than dealing with war-related crimes or interethnic reconciliation'.[96]

The key to understand the EULEX framework is to see that it focuses primarily on institutions and administrative adjustments in order to improve local ownership and accountability.[97] Simultaneously, it avoids the conundrum of addressing political – possibly divisive and conflictive –

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[87] EULEX (2009: 133).

[88] The shift could be expressed in these terms: from governing a multi-ethnic society (UNMIK), in which there is decentralisation, to the multi-ethnic administration of society (EULEX) with the aim of blurring the divisive lines of society rather than reinforcing them. I would like to thank Jessica Schmidt for her valuable help in discussing this point.

[89] EULEX (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012).

[90] EULEX (2010: 32).

[91] EULEX (2012: 23).

[92] EULEX (2009: 26).

[93] EULEX (2009: 7).

[94] Devic (2006); Hehir (2007); Monteux (2006).

[95] EULEX (2012: 32).

[96] EULEX (2009: 18).

[97] Greiçevci (2012: 298).

affairs and has adopted 'a commitment to cultural sensitivity in order to avoid UNMIK's previous mistakes of alienating considerable parts of the local population'.[98] So, instead of letting people choose democratically and potentially fulfil their nationalistic demands, EULEX works through a careful and sensitive 'institutionalization' of Kosovo, as critics have forcefully recommended.[99] Arguably, Kosovo's statebuilding project can be read in these terms at least since the implementation of 'standards before status' policy.[100] Under UNMIK rule, this measure aimed at making progress in the social sphere – the functioning of institutions, rule of law, minority rights, freedom of movement, economy, property rights, relations with Belgrade and improving the Kosovo Protection Corps – and was a sine qua non condition to the negotiation of status.

It appears to be that EULEX has pushed the 'institutionalization' strategy and avoided decisive steps toward granting self-government to the Kosovars beyond UNMIK's earlier intentions. Indeed, even if it was the UN Envoy Ahtisaari who proposed substituting the UN mandate for a EU Mission, EULEX does not recognise the Constitution of Kosovo – designed in accordance with Ahtisaari's recommendations. Instead, it has diminished all the progress made during the negotiations for status and has given a step back.[101] Now it operates under the status-neutral framework settled by the UN in 1999.[102] Of course, I am not contesting the fact that the status issue contained a delicate geopolitical impasse for the EU because some member states have not accepted the independence of Kosovo and there were specific pressures from Russia and Serbia.[103]

Nonetheless EULEX also justifies that it is 'status-neutral' because it is 'technical in nature'.[104] According to some supporters, it is the status-neutral and non-political character of the mission that allows EULEX to mediate between the opposed views of Serbs and Albanians. For example, Cadier focuses on EULEX 'constructive ambiguity' to explain the success in building sustainable institutions.[105] Vrbetic, who also tells that 'ambiguity' can be positive to solve differences among groups, goes a step further to argue that

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[98] Schwandner-Sievers (2013: 108).

[99] Paris (2004). At this point of the argument, a caveat is important. The 'critics' of Kosovo's state-building I am referring to are those analysed in the previous section. These contest the 'ethnicization of Kosovo' and a 'top-down' and 'reductionist' approach allegedly conducted by international administrators. From another perspective there are other critics who, for example, assert that EULEX has failed for not being interventionist enough (i.e. Radin 2014: 190–191).

[100] UNSC (2004).

[101] Greiçevci (2012: 294).

[102] Grevi (2009: 359).

[103] Greiçevci (2012: 293); Grevi (2009: 358-359); Papadimitriou and Petrov (2012).

[104] Balkaninsight (2008).

[105] Cadier (2011: 7).

the problem has been the unilateral declaration of independence of 2008, rather than the international reluctance to decide on status.[106] EULEX avoids any final decision on sovereignty and therefore it is able to effectively advise and monitor Kosovo's institutions. The solution for the crisis is that Kosovo will never be Kosovo or Serbia. This was already decided in 2005 when the International Commission on the Balkans foresaw that the last stage of Kosovo's transition to independence would be 'the absorption of Kosovo into the EU and its adoption of shared sovereignty'.[107] So, like the rest of the states in the Balkans, Kosovo might have a European future where, as Hehir puts it, 'the desire for outright independence will evaporate'.[108]

Certainly, the international institutions eager to 'evaporate the desires' of the Kosovars resembles the critics' call for pluralizing the identities of the people in Kosovo.[109] The horizon of the EU represents a future in which nationalist discourses about ethnicity would be transcended. Rather than reproducing the apartheid discourse of nationalists, aligning territory and ethnicity,[110] the EU aims at making questions about territory, status or citizenship irrelevant. In fact, EULEX has already started to deconstruct territorial arrangements and dichotomous ethnic identifications. For example, in none of its annual reports, EULEX mentions 'ethnic-Albanians' or 'ethnic-Serbs' and it refers to 'border' or 'boundaries' of Kosovo indistinctively.[111]

In conclusion, what this section presents is that international state-builders have increasingly adopted managerial strategies and maintained an ambiguous opinion over the status to de-emphasise ethnicity and overcome polarised political positions and thus be more respectful with the aim of pluralism. However, despite the signs that indicate that state-builders share similar sensitivities with their critics,[112] one might be tempted to ask: why do scholars still manage to criticise and point to the failures of building intercommunal peace in Kosovo? The answer to this question ushers us to address what I call here the "ethnic dilemma". I will argue that precisely because Kosovars are adamant to pursue "ethnic" agendas, any international program or policy seems to reinforce ethnicity. Even if there is some progress of coexistence or tolerance among groups in Kosovo, every episode of violence signals that there are still enormous challenges lying ahead.[113]

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[106] Vrbetic (2013: 309-310).

[107] International Commission on the Balkans (2005: 23).

[108] Hehir (2007: 252).

[109] Devic (2006); Franks and Richmond (2008); Popolo (2011).

[110] Campbell (1999).

[111] EULEX (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012).

[112] Chandler (2010c: 23).

[113] Clark (2014: 543).

Regardless of whether peace is pursued by the ethos of pluralization,[114] exploring the everyday alternatives of the locals[115] or deconstructing the Kosovars nationalist demands within the EU framework, as EULEX proposes, any effort to build peace appears to be incomplete. The aim of de-emphasising ethnicity to appreciate diversity has an undefined end.

Rethinking the ethnic dilemma

After investigating the possible communion between the international administrators and their (non)critics, it is time to address again the status question and understand why it has been addressed by the means of a technical approach. In this regard, Hehir disentangles a crucial quandary at the core of the statebuilding process:

> There can be no increase in political independence for the local institutions unless there is a demonstrable reduction in inter-ethnic tension yet while the Kosovo Albanians lack real power they become increasingly frustrated and periodically lash out at both the international presence and the Serb minority thereby making the granting of further competencies less likely. This quandary has complicated all international efforts to resolve the status issue.[116]

From the international perspective, the locals are not free to make decisions until there is an improvement in the tolerance of minorities. In opposition, from the local perspective, the status settlement is non-negotiable and violence has been periodically applied against the minorities due to the frustration with the non-resolution of Kosovo's status. However, perhaps because internationals hold sway over the process, the difficulty that Hehir presents has been addressed according to the international framing: the transfer of institutions to the locals has been deferred as a means to prevent further ethnic confrontations. That is, as I have demonstrated in the previous sections, rather than understanding the violence in Kosovo as the consequence of a political impasse in need of some sort of compromise (this would be the local framing), it has been interpreted as a sign of psychological and social malaise to be cured with further external intervention and technical adjustments.[117] The suspension of democracy and the ambivalence over the status therefore is justified by an ever-present implicit dilemma: what if Kosovars democratically choose the so-called "ethnic" objectives? In other words, what if an independent Kosovo becomes

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[114] For example, see Connolly (1995); Campbell and Schoolman (2008).

[115] For instance, Devic (2006); Franks and Richmond (2008).

[116] Hehir (2007: 254).

[117] ICG (2004).

an Albanian state in which some groups are expelled or even killed? This question prevents the locals from taking the lead and legitimises the continuous international involvement in the politics of Kosovo.

It is at this point of the argument when it is necessary to recall the demands of self-determination introduced at the beginning of the chapter that are defended by the majority of the Kosovars and recently promoted by Vetëvendosje. Not wishing to advocate the pro-independence agenda, I use the claims for self-governance here to reflect upon the international dominant framings about peace in Kosovo. In this regard, in an interview I conducted, Albin Kurti, leader of Vetëvendosje, opposed the accusations of 'ethnic-politics' very often identified in representations of Kosovo:

> Under Tito's rule, we were nations or nationalities. We became ethnic especially after episodes of violence, after the ethnic cleansing of the 1990s. Now, every political desire or position is framed by internationals as ethnic, as if we could not think independently from our ethnicity.[118]

Kurti highlights that ethnicity is the lens through which international administrators recognise the politics of Kosovo.[119] Indeed, as analysed earlier, both international policy-makers and the critics of statebuilding understand that Kosovars have a problem across their ethnic lines and the solution therefore happens to be to reduce their salience. Possibly, when Kurti speaks the reader raises an eyebrow.[120] However, for the purpose of analytical discussion, let's introduce a caveat in the narration and take the assertions of self-determination in Kosovo seriously. It is possible thenceforth to think of Kosovars as *people,* the majority of who wish self-government and sovereignty over their future, rather than *ethnic* beings with ethnic aspirations. The point, of course, is not to deny that ethnic identities are 'experienced' or 'real' in Kosovo, but to highlight that international framings might have 'exaggerate[d] the durability of such identities' in relation to the contemporary political preferences of the Kosovars.[121] Or to notice that, as anthropologists suggest also in the case of Kosovo, culture is not a causal explanation of nationalist factors.[122] In other words, this is to recognise that perhaps ethnicity is an internationally led framing of the

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[118] Author's interview with Albin Kurti, Pristina. November 8, 2013.

[119] Kurti (2011: 91).

[120] Perhaps, more scientifically, one could also relate Kurti's claim with interpretations of ethnicity as an historical production or creation (Campbell 1998, 92; Comaroff 1991, 667), even if he uses this take on ethnicity to justify his political preferences for statehood.

[121] See Comaroff (1991: 669).

[122] Schwandner-Sievers (2013: 109).

problem, rather than an existing framing hold by the Kosovars.[123] In this sense, the disagreements between Kosovo-Serbs and Kosovo-Albanians could be reinterpreted as two competing political visions of statehood (potentially universal), rather than a 'pathological' ethnic dispute (irremediably particularistic).[124]

Nevertheless, even if one frames Kosovo as demos, rather than *ethnos*,[125] how would one distinguish between legitimate national causes from dangerous ones? Alain Finkielkraut, while defending the self-determination of Croatia in 1992, replied to the question:

> Democracy is precisely the criterion. Nationalism's destructive force should not make us lose sight of the fact that a nation is also the framework in which the experience of democracy has been able to thrive. Since the mode of the city state no longer holds and that of empire is undemocratic, the nation — until this can be disproved — and only the nation allows for full participation in political life. Don't fear the nations![126]

Finkielkraut does not say here that any national cause, and Kosovo in particular, faces the challenge of dealing with divergences from non-majority groups and the appearance of anti-democratic nationalisms. This is an anxiety that is present in any other democratic state as well – and this needs to be constantly interrogated, as Clark, for example, does in the context of Kosovo.[127] However, what is important to see is that Finkielkraut's defence of 'the people' and 'the democratic nation' is anathema to the contemporary framings of Kosovo as an ethnic conflict. Indeed, it is possible that by looking at Kosovo's statebuilding through Finkielkraut's lens, one could undo the "ethnic dilemma". That is, the dilemma of "what if they choose ethnicised preferences or what if they choose to create an ethnic exclusivist state" is very likely to be the result of not framing Kosovo within a national-democratic framework: as people who discuss and disagree and whose majority today want to be independent from Serbia.

The purpose of introducing this caveat, though, is not to make any empirical statement about the resolution of Kosovo's status, for example.

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[123] This point is important at least to make the observation that while the literature justifies the position of Russia, the EU or the US regarding the status of Kosovo in geopolitical terms, it explains Kosovo as an ethnic dispute.

[124] For instance, the Bosnian author Miljenko Jergovic explains the 'pathologization of the Balkan wars in his account of a hero who is declared insane even though, as the narrator comments, his behavior is no different from anybody else's in the world' (Hughes and Pupavac, 2010: 886).

[125] The majority of scholars consider Kosovo as an 'ethnos' (i.e. Clark, 2014: 539). However, in order to rethink 'our' assumptions about Kosovo, let us think of Kosovo as a 'demos'. Arguably, this is not only an abstract exercise, but it is explicit in the Kosovars claims of self-determination (Kurti, 2011).

[126] Finkielkraut (1992: 23).

[127] Clark (2014).

This caveat is significant to understand that both internationals and their (non)critics are trapped within a specific (ethnic) framing of the people of Kosovo that legitimises permanent international interference.[128] In lieu of a conclusion, therefore, it is the fear of the autonomy of the Kosovars, the suspicion that democracy can go wrong (as they will always choose "ethnic" options), that has provoked an unwillingness to transfer responsibilities or take – or let people take – final decisions over the status of Kosovo. It is not my intention to imply that autonomy or sovereignty cannot be problematic.[129] Instead, the conclusion is to draw out that instead of resolving a political question *politically*, international state-builders have formulated the problem as an "ethnic" one. The search for a solution has led to a technical and programmatic long-term process for avoiding, de-emphasizing and even deconstructing the Kosovars' statehood preferences. As Chandler observes, today statebuilding 'is understood as a mechanism of ongoing relationship management which is capable of ameliorating the problems of autonomy, or of government, through the extension of internationalised mechanisms of governance'.[130] In order to understand further this conclusion, it might be necessary to look at EULEX approach one last time.

Currently, EULEX defines itself as having a 'systematic approach, much like the work of a conductor of a large orchestra', and continues, 'EULEX would have to translate the broad musical theme into a coherent symphony'.[131] With purely technical means, as a conductor of an orchestra, EULEX pretends to remove politics from any rule of law institution and to dissolve the preferences of the Kosovars within an EU future.[132] The current EU-led dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade is not about status any more, but about technical and practical arrangements.[133] The fear of people's decision-making has led EULEX to undertake a minimal process of permanent procedural management in which divisive political questions remain unresolved. There seems to be no end to this process and the underlying risk is that EULEX might be undermining the interests and preferences of the Kosovars.

Furthermore, the international (non)critics perspective does not contribute to reverse the situation and, perhaps unwittingly, it supports the international administrators' vigilant management of Kosovo's institutions

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[128] I am not trying to say that international interference has not been important to tame violence in Kosovo, but I argue that this has been legitimised and considered indispensible through the framing of Kosovo as *ethnos*.

[129] Jones (2011: 236); Weller (2005: 27).

[130] Chandler (2010: 2).

[131] EULEX (2009: 8). See also Radin (2014: 188).

[132] EULEX (2009: 7).

[133] ICG (2013).

and society. This is because the critics contend that holding elections or a referendum on divisive questions might renew the fight among participants in the war.[134] For Richmond, for example, 'in Kosovo, ethnic violence is a regular occurrence and ethnic difference looks set to be the basis for the state that will emerge from the recent declaration of independence'.[135] Precisely because 'sovereignty may reproduce a state dominated by one ethnic group',[136] he is afraid of conceding autonomy to the locals. Like international policy-makers, Richmond refuses to frame Kosovars in any other terms than people that think ethnically and, as a result, he legitimises further external supervision. Violence is not framed as a political expression or as an alternative act to achieve what it was not possible to bring into fruition democratically.[137] In its place, every episode of violence or every "ethnic" or 'nationalist' demand is interpreted as a warning sign of the need to intensify institution building – from education to the promotion of civil society – and the protection of minorities. With the aim of 'search[ing] for the roots of the Balkan peace' the (non)critics dig dip into the locals' secretive possibilities,[138] but they are unable to respond to the existing concerns with statehood. The status of the province seems not a question to be decided upon. Even if they firmly criticise the EULEX ambition to Europeanise Kosovo, the intention of 'remapping' or 'de-balkanising the Balkans' to find an alternative indigenous Balkan peace might also be an approach that belittles the political preferences of the participants.[139]

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the existence of an "ethnic dilemma" in the international framing of Kosovo has legitimised further supervision and the maintenance of its status in limbo. Today, the EULEX mission pursues stability through a technical approach that de-emphasises ethnicity and frees institutions from political interference. This perspective, as it has been demonstrated, is increasingly adopting the sensibilities of critical

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[134] Brancati and Snyder (2013); Devic (2006).

[135] Richmond (2009b: 62).

[136] Richmond (2009b: 72).

[137] For example, Scwandner-Sievers (2013, 109) observes that international administrators have misunderstood Albanian nationalism: 'while, in the Western international view, nationalism has been seen as the root of all evil in the Balkans and has therefore been rejected outright, to an internal Albanian understanding, based on living memory, it has means modernization and emancipation, civil solidarity beyond the family, a promise of salvation and liberation.

[138] Lehti (2014: 101).

[139] Campbell (1999); Lehti (2014: 125–127).

understandings of statebuilding. It is important to note that this analysis has not contested the geopolitical interpretations of the status negotiations that highlight the ever-existing international and domestic constraints. But it has directed the attention to a perpetual anxiety regarding the autonomy of the Kosovars. The fear that democracy might reinforce 'ethnicised objectives' is a valid concern regarding the recent history of Kosovo, but it is also the product of accusing the Kosovars to think *ethnically*.

In the last section, using the current demands of self-government, I have tried to frame Kosovo differently. For example, instead of thinking of it as a problem with an ethnic dispute, one could understand the options of self-determination or territorial unity with Serbia as two contending aspirations that could be addressed politically. The intuition is that by putting the ethnic framing aside, more questions would emerge that have been so far taken for granted. For instance, is the international administrators' programmatic approach adequate to solve a political disagreement? Or even, is it necessary the continuation of an external mission that supervises Kosovo? Furthermore, there is the risk that the ethnic framing of Kosovo is undermining the international capacity to comprehend and respond to the demands and preferences placed by the Kosovars – regardless of their ethnic identification. For international administrators and academic scholars, the remaining challenge would be to take their claims seriously[140] and avoid treating their discourses as ethnic by-products or pathological demands in need of technical monitoring.

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[140] Furedi (2011).

Chapter 3.
Realising the 'Postmodern' Dream:
Building Resilient Communities and the
Promise of Peace

Introduction

In 2008, the World Bank warned of new forms of violence thwarting the growth and development of peoples that were different from the large-scale civil wars that prevailed until the late 1990s. In order to reverse the spread of this 'common violence' the World Bank recommended a new 'conceptual framework', which consisted of 'strengthening the resilience of societies to violence'.[1] In recent years, other international institutions have similarly used the framework of 'building resilience'[2] to overcome the limitations of earlier peace endeavours and successfully manage today's more complex, unpredictable and globally interlinked conflicts.[3] Although resilience has been theorised from a variety of disciplinary perspectives over the last few decades,[4] the focus here is the framework of resilience as interpreted in peacebuilding policy documents.

In academic debates, the contemporary burgeoning concern with resilience is usually related to the proliferation of neoliberal governance.[5] Joseph explains that 'resilience fits with a social ontology that urges us to turn from a concern with the outside world to a concern with our own

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[1] World Bank (2008: 1–3).

[2] Although definitions and usages of resilience vary among institutions, see for example the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) definition of resilience in relation to conflict-affected environments: 'Resilient states, in contrast [to states that suffer from fragility], are capable of absorbing shocks and transforming and channelling radical change or challenges while maintaining political stability and preventing violence' OECD (2008: 78). It is important to add that, it is not only 'states' that move along the continuum of fragility/resilience in the documents analyzed here, but also people, communities, individuals or cities.

[3] For example, see EC (2012); UNDP (2012); World Bank (2011: 51–68); (2014).

[4] Borbeau (2013: 4–10).

[5] See, for example, Dillon (2007: 14); Joseph (2013); Haldrup and Rosén (2013). Chandler, on the other hand, interprets resilience as marking a departure from neoliberal governance approaches (2013a).

subjectivity, our adaptability, our reflexive understanding' and this is 'consistent with neoliberal practices of governance'.[6] This chapter seeks to contribute to this understanding by drawing attention to an ethico-political sensibility at the core of resilience approaches, which has been underexplored in the literature.[7] This is a sensibility to care for the needs and values of the local population through a long-term process of peacebuilding that consists on enhancing reflective processes of mutual learning and iterative actions between internationals and locals. The identification of this sensibility serves to indicate that international organisations are willing to leave behind the domineering attitudes and top-down frameworks of previous approaches to peacebuilding whose successes, for example in the cases of Bosnia or Kosovo, are widely understood as questionable. In so doing, I argue that building resilience frameworks are increasingly sharing the sensitivities of critical perspectives of the liberal peace.

It is important to observe these series of similarities between contemporary policy texts and academic critics of the liberal peace for two reasons. First, it is essential to understand more accurately the hidden assumptions of contemporary policy-making in the context of peacebuilding missions, which have sought, along the lines of academic critical frameworks, to move away from the errors of previous top-down interventions. Second, these similarities imply the possibility that critique is unwittingly reproducing the policy strategies it opposes. This second point will be the focus of the next chapter (4): I will investigate further the nature of "critique" in peace studies, which is increasingly becoming sterile in its failure to issue a radical challenge to the flaws of current policies.

Here, then, I focus more specifically on tracing the similarities between contemporary policy frameworks developed by international institutions and academic critics of the liberal peace. Still, this chapter is analytically the most ambitious of all, as it presents and compares the three approaches drawn out throughout this research: the liberal peace, critical understandings of the liberal peace (post-liberal or hybrid peace) and building resilience approaches. A case might be made that the terminology used to designate the three approaches ("liberal", "post-liberal" and "resilience") is somewhat tenuous. Indeed, all these frameworks can be

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[6] Joseph (2013: 40).

[7] The OECD (2008: 11) argues that building state resilience has the goal of 'development', 'human security' and 'international order'. While the literature on resilience mostly centres on the later goal specified by the OECD ('international order') and concludes that resilience is a neoliberal governance tool, this article focuses on resilience as a strategy ethically devoted to developing other societies and securing humans – in the context of 'peacebuilding' operations.

considered to be variations or expansions within liberalism.[8] However, the aim here is to emphasize the evolution of policy frameworks and, in this sense, there is good reason to use a name that points to the "new" (as is the case with the term 'resilience', which, for instance, did not appear in policy reports in the context of peace studies during the 1990s).

The shift I am drawing out can be summarized as follows: from a top-down and universal understanding of peace (liberal), prevalent throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, towards more bottom-up, context-sensitive and reflective understandings of peacebuilding (resilience), established since the second half of the 2000s. These contemporary policy frameworks, in an echo of the sensibilities of academic critiques of the liberal peace (post-liberal or hybrid), constitute an attempt by policy-makers to "catch up" with the alleged emancipatory promises of hybrid peace proposals. In order to illustrate this policy shift from the liberal peace to building resilience, I will focus on how these frameworks have distinctly conceptualized "culture", which appears to have become the lens through which human differences are conceptualised.[9] It will be argued that, while the particularisms of post-conflict societies were considered obstacles for a lasting peace throughout the 1990s, they came to be understood as positive resources to be embraced by the end of the 2000s.

These three approaches are examined in turn in this chapter. The first section analyses the liberal peace approach in relation to the civil wars of the 1990s. It argues that, at a time when dominant worldviews were increasingly convinced that "culture" was a useful and normatively valuable category to understand war and promote peace, civil wars fought along ethnic lines posed a difficult dilemma: should diversity be safeguarded if (international) peace is at stake? In the frameworks of the liberal peace, as I will demonstrate, the defence of difference had to be subordinated to the cultivation of an ideal. The second section deals with the critique of the liberal peace. In particular, it focuses on David Campbell's work in Bosnia,[10] which presciently criticised the reductionist interpretations made by international policy-makers and academics of his time by highlighting the complex conditions of Bosnian life. As my analysis will suggest, the reinterpretation of culture within such critique has served both to identify

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[8] Heathershaw (2008); Paris (2010). The term 'liberal peace' is frequently used by the scholars to designate the top-down projects of global governance in the context of post-war scenarios (Dillon and Reid 2000; Duffield 2001: 10–11; Paris 2004; Richmond 2006: 291–314). While resilience approaches are part of the same projects of global governance, I contend that the rationalities of governance are changing.

[9] Rather than defining culture, I am interested, similar to Brigg and Muller, in understanding 'how we use culture to know human differences' in relation to conflict resolution and peacebuilding endeavours (2009: 124). See also Chandler (2010b: 373–377); Malik (1996: 128–209).

[10] Campbell (1998).

the limits of any hegemonic discourse and, at the same time, to open-up new possibilities for peace devoted to the affirmation of diversity. The third section rethinks the framework of resilience as a contemporary policy discourse that overcomes the limits of the liberal peace by professing a commitment to local ownership and fostering an inclusive peace. I argue that resilience approaches, building on critical frameworks of the liberal peace, have reinterpreted peacebuilding as a 'promise' to which there will always remain work to be done.

The liberal peace and the dilemma of promoting peace in a diverse world

The end of the Cold War emboldened Western states and international organisations to lead a new humanitarian order by pursuing economic, political and military interventions in developing countries.[11] International and multilateral peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions were deployed to stabilise and bring peace to conflict-ridden societies. In the early 1990s, these approaches had a clear transnational applicability. The eruption of wars and other crises in the Global South could be addressed with the promotion of democratisation, the rule of law, human rights and economic market reforms in an effort to transplant successful models of rules and institutions.[12] The successful democratisation processes in Latin America or Southern and Eastern Europe provided democratic peace scholars and practitioners with self-confidence and hubris. This was the heyday of what has been later called the 'liberal peace'.[13]

However, the universal applicability of the liberal peace started to be questioned both conceptually and empirically after scholars and practitioners had engaged with the violent civil wars of the 1990s. Conceptually, the wars in the former Yugoslavia, in the South Caucasus and in Africa – particularly Somalia, Rwanda and Congo – seemed to have a 'new' or 'uncivil' rationale, with less clear ideological motivations than the earlier wars fought in Europe throughout the twentieth century.[14] Mary

[11] See, for example, the 'moral' statements pronounced by Ronald Reagan, Tony Blair and Bill Clinton during the 1990s (Hammond 2000: 30–33).

[12] Boutros-Ghali (1992: 201; 1992/1993; 1996); Diamond (1995); Russett (1993). For an overview and critique of the core assumptions of this paradigm, see Carothers (2002: 6–9).

[13] Gleditsch (1992); Huntington (1991); Paris (2004: 40–54); Rummel (1995).

[14] The assumption of a hierarchical distinction between the first and the third world was prevalent during the Cold War too, although it was not publicly articulated (Furedi 1998). However, in the early 1990s, an implicitly assumed supremacy of the West and the inferiority of the rest, when measured in cultural terms, became habitual both in academic circles (Buzan 1991: 451) and in the foreign offices of the Western capitals (Malik 1996: 210–212). Furthermore, the West/non-West discursive divide was fuelled

Kaldor expressed succinctly what appeared to be a revolution in the patterns of warfare: 'The politics of ideas is about forward-looking projects. […] In contrast, identity politics tend to be fragmentative, backward looking and exclusive. [These] tend to be movements of nostalgia, based on the reconstruction of an heroic past, the memory of injustices, real or imagined, and of famous battles, won or lost'.[15] Furthermore, journalistic accounts of the wars emphasised barbaric episodes, civilian victims, looting, ethnicity, religion, clans, displacements, paramilitaries, greediness, legends or ghosts and helped to confirm that the nature of violence had changed.[16] At the empirical level, when international organisations engaged with these cases, the confidence in the liberal peace withered. The difficulties in building stable societies and strong political systems after the wars prompted academic commentators to dismiss confidence with democratisation processes and universal assumptions.[17] Since policy-makers also realised that elite-bargaining processes, state-level negotiations or economic-led approaches of stabilisation were not sufficient to grasp the core of the problem, there was a push for new types of experiments in building institutions better able to deal with the informal constraints of different societies.[18]

It was in the midst of the debates assessing the failure to build peace in the aftermath of the civil wars in the global south that the concept of *culture* came to the fore as an explanatory variable for these failures.[19] Rather than defining culture in a broader sense, though, this chapter seeks to understand how culture has been used in relation to the enterprise of building peace.[20] In studies of peace, many scholars and practitioners recognised, reflecting upon these wars, that culture – in terms of the views and perceptions of a local

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by the advent of the 'new wars' and their difficult statebuilding processes (Kaldor 1999; Snow 1996).

[15] Kaldor (1999: 77–78).

[16] Kaplan (1994: 44–76). However, a caveat is important here. Some analysts of the new wars debate have denied that there was a clear-cut distinction between the old and the new forms of conflict. Instead, they argue, what substantially varied was that international observers, from academics and policy makers to the media, had a fixation with the social reality of the new wars due to the lack of political categories and classificatory devices in the aftermath of the Cold War (Kalyvas 2001: 117; Newman 2004: 179). As Pupavac argues: 'Without the Cold War framework, policy-makers have been more disposed to regard the so-called new wars as irrational conflicts whose origins lie internally in the dysfunctional culture and personality of their societies rather than in external causes' (2004: 380).

[17] Cooper (2007: 613).

[18] Carothers (2002); North (1990); Paris (2004).

[19] The focus on culture in peace studies correlates with a broader trend in the social sciences at the time towards the investigation of how culture affected social relations – 'the cultural turn' (i.e. Geertz 1973; Lapid and Kratochwil 1997; North 1990; Steinmetz 1999; Portes 2000).

[20] See fn. 9.

population, their 'complex psychological attributes'[21]– was constitutive of conflict and, even more importantly, that it could not be ignored in the processes of peace.[22] Billings, for example, compared two Guinean societies with different cultures and concluded that they required diametrically opposed solutions to their conflicts.[23] However, it is in the context of accepting the value of culture as a powerful analytical category, which also holds a strong normative commitment to honour diverse forms of being, that a dilemma surfaced in the theory and practice of peace. When Western analysts and practitioners were valorising the multiplicity of cultures at home,[24] and increasingly abroad, and thus both celebrating difference and seeking to empower underprivileged groups, non-western peoples were fighting across the axis of identity and difference: nationalist leaders were 'using' culture rhetorically (ethnicity)[25] as a legitimate and strategic resource to fight against another group.[26] In short, for the proponents of a global peace, nationalism and barbarism reintroduced an old liberal dilemma: should diversity be safeguarded if (international) peace is at stake?[27]

The difficult choice between wanting to respect culture but only to a certain extent (that is, insofar as it does not violate international peace) is explicitly identified in the work of Kevin Avruch. An anthropologist interested in conflict analysis, Avruch criticised the peacebuilding strategies undertaken throughout the Cold War. 'Undervaluing culture', he suggested, was the 'first type of error' in the practice of conflict resolution, identifying this as the main problem in early approaches that only focused on the

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[21] Avruch and Black (1991: 32)

[22] Avruch (1998); Avruch and Black (1987); Eriksen (1991); Lederach (1995: 3–23); Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse (1999).

[23] Billings (1991: 250).

[24] For a reflection on the increasing appreciation of multiculturalism, see Glazer (1997).

[25] The concept of ethnicity can be read as the instrumentalisation of culture for a specific struggle (Eller 1999: 42), and as such became a decisive element in the academic and policy explanations of the civil wars of the 1990s. The literature on ethnicity and ethnic conflict can be loosely divided between 'essentialist' accounts in which ethnicity is a fact or phenomena (Connor 2004) and 'instrumental' or 'constructivist' accounts in which ethnicity is socially constructed (Eller 1999).

[26] Eller (1999: 47–48), for example, differentiates between defending culture or cultural rights legitimately and 'using' culture as a 'weapon' to achieve particular interests. This second perspective refers to the civil wars in which culture evolved into ethnicity in order to create clear-cut opposing groups. Eller's distinction, therefore, illuminates the challenge facing policy-makers and academic commentators of the time: how is one to pursue peace, if culture is a necessary and productive analytical lens to overcome war and yet, at the same time, it has become the most divisive element for participants in the conflict? I contend that the way this question is answered marks a fundamental division between liberal peace, on the one hand, and the post-liberal and building resilience approaches, on the other.

[27] Benedict (1989).

negotiation between the representatives of disputing parties.[28] But an obverse 'second type of error' became apparent in the process of trying to overcome the first error. In deeply rooted ethnic conflicts, in which participants used culture to pursue their goals strategically against another group, there was the risk of 'overvaluing culture'. That is, by putting too much emphasis in the contentious lines of ethnicity, religion or race, practices of peace would 'reify culture', 'homogenise groups' and 'essentialise cultural and racial differences'.[29] This second 'error' represented a challenge to the approaches that were inclined to include the views of the participants. That is, if culture - as ethnicity - was the problematic category, it could not be reinforced or romanticised. The solution had to be found elsewhere.

Remarkably, Avruch demands that, in the most difficult cases, third parties should take a more scientific 'experience-distant' conception of culture, different from the exclusivist 'experience-near' version around which violence is deployed on the ground.[30] Avruch cleverly navigates between the problem of not considering culture, characteristic of earlier approaches to peace, and the problem that its overemphasis has come to be seen as potentially risky in the light of the 'cultural turn'. Avruch's point is interesting because his approach is sensitive to the symbolic worlds of others and yet aware of the possibility of reinforcing difference in delicate environments. In the hardest cases – the conflicts in which groups are divided along identity/difference lines – he admits that focusing on culture is a constraint to peace and supports a more technical framing of the conflict resolution processes. It is at this point of the argument that Avruch epitomises the liberal sensitivity in conflict-affected scenarios: initially defending the uniqueness of the participants, but subordinating their difference to universal values.[31] In short, Avruch places emphasis on the need to understand how the social construction of wars differs among societies, but his final appeal to a scientific judgment of the conflict indicates that he still perceives culture to be a barrier to peace.[32]

This ambivalent position of privileging local cultures while still acknowledging the drawbacks of doing so, characterised the internationally led peace processes of the former Yugoslavia. These wars had developed as

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[28] Avruch (2003: 362–364).

[29] Avruch (2003: 367).

[30] Avruch (2003: 355); see also Eriksen (1991: 276).

[31] For a discussion of this liberal sensitivity, see Shannon (1995: 674). See also UNESCO (1995). For a critique of UNESCO's reports that highlights the ambivalence between an essentialist notion of culture and the longing for global ethics, see Eriksen (2001).

[32] To borrow Furedi's words, one could say that within the framework of the liberal peace tolerance was valorised up to a certain point; this point was that one could not tolerate the intolerants (2011).

conspicuous cases in which participants used culture rhetorically to divide, expel and even kill other people.[33] International administrators respected the sovereign borders of the country and were committed to democratisation and multi-ethnicity, but opposed the (nationalist) preferences of Bosnian citizens and adopted invasive institutional measures to curb the electoral processes. In other words, the international negotiators were committed to multi-ethnicity under the same state and created two separated territorial entities in which different ethnic groups could develop their autonomy, but they rejected the more extremist demands of some participants. [34] The inclination to respect diversity, on the one hand, and the demonization of those who allegedly undermine it, on the other, was also clear in the context of the international intervention to stop the war in Kosovo.[35] In Resolution 1244, the international representatives revealed an explicit respect for pluralism. [36] However, the divisive questions of statehood or territorial disputes were continually deferred and were subordinated to the achievement of international standards and the ideal of building a multi-ethnic and plural society. [37] For the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), transferring sovereignty to the people could only be undertaken if Kosovars demonstrated that they could achieve European standards of cultural coexistence.[38]

These policy debates of power sharing in Bosnia and Kosovo mimic the dilemmas at the core of liberal multiculturalism. For example, Kymlicka, who firmly supports multiculturalism in the Western states, suggests that in order to deal with 'illiberal' minorities in non-Western states, it is necessary firstly to adopt democratic standards and foster tolerance at both state and substate levels and only secondly to grant autonomy to the minorities.[39] Otherwise, unless accompanied by a cultivation of personal respect and democratic values, decentralization or deterritorialisation of power to illiberal groups can only perpetuate the problem, as they will treat their minorities violently.[40]

Even the academic critics in the 1990s maintained an interpretation of culture as a constrictive category in relation to a global covenant. Mary

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[33] Hayden analyses how extreme nationalism in the Balkans has used 'culture as ideology' – as opposed to the 'culture as lived' that exists on the ground – to produce the 'myth' of essentialist communities and make 'real' heterogeneous communities no longer appear feasible (1996: 783–801).

[34] GFA (1995: Annex 2).

[35] Blair (1999).

[36] UNSC (1999a; 1999b; 1999c).

[37] Weller (2008). See further chapter 2.

[38] UNSC (2007c).

[39] Kymlicka (2001: 355).

[40] Varady (2001: 143).

Kaldor identified a threat to peace and cooperation in the politics of particularistic identities, ubiquitous in the 'new wars'. For Kaldor, the problem in Bosnia was that, on the one hand, nationalist leaders used culture for strategic reasons – identity politics – and fought for power against the civilian population and, on the other hand, international negotiators legitimised the nationalist views with the strategy of partitioning the territory along ethnic lines.[41] As a supposed alternative, which is in essence not dissimilar to the willingness of peace practitioners to build a stable liberal society through the design of efficient institutions, Kaldor developed a cosmopolitan approach.[42] This consisted on removing the nationalist leaders and liberating the cosmopolitan ethics intrinsic in the multicultural society of Bosnia. Kaldor believed in the universality of the human subject – trusting in international organisations, networks, transnational NGOs and social movements – and the possibility of finding commonalities among different peoples of the world.[43]

In conclusion, Kaldor, just like the peacebuilders of her times, recommended to cultivate universal values to solve what was considered the endemic problem of the Balkans: the violent use of culture to achieve specific goals to the detriment of another group. Like other liberal scholars, Kaldor had an ambivalent sensitivity of defending culture, but only if this was in agreement with some international ethical standards. However, as the next section points out, the belief in worldwide solutions or advantage viewpoints – democratisation and liberalisation, scientific detachment of ones' values, European standards of ethnic tolerance or cosmopolitanism, advocated by the authors above – did not survive the persistent crises of peacebuilding projects. Every failure in the stabilisation of post-conflict societies has been interpreted as a shortcoming of universal blueprints. Subsequently, the tendency has been to carefully delve into the human relationships and social practices of the everyday life to search for key answers in the context of a particular society.[44] As the anxiety of the dispute across ethnic lines could not be resolved by appealing to universal moral judgements, the next two sections demonstrate how the search for solutions has turned instead towards the radical celebration of difference.

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[41] Kaldor (1999: 58).

[42] Kaldor (1999: 112–137).

[43] Kaldor (2003: 78–80).

[44] Lederach (1997); Paffenholz (2014: 11–27).

The critique: 'Writing against culture' to save culture(s) and peace(s)

Culture became popular in most disciplines precisely when it lost its momentum in anthropology. During the eighties the rise of non-Western anthropological studies was accompanied by a normative predisposition to criticise the reductionism of earlier Western attempts to interpret other forms of life.[45] However, the alternative to a Western-led anthropology – which had designed a hierarchical division of the globe – could not be another linear model of interpreting culture as a stable system, even if this was to celebrate what others had previously discredited. [46] The ensuing development of an anthropology more attuned to the particularism of other cultures adopted the radical approach of 'writing against culture' or 'disturb[ing] the concept of culture' as such, as a strategy to defy 'homogeneity, coherence and timelessness'.[47] Because cultures were not closed systems of symbols amenable to generalisations, conceptual comparisons or governmental rationality, anthropologists were increasingly adopting narratives of the particular that reconceptualised culture as 'a practice, resistance or tool-kit'.[48] In essence, these approaches assumed that it was impossible to reduce or understand cultures completely in order to embrace cultures more genuinely. This notion of culture – as a sphere of contingency and emergence that resists any attempt of being described or interpreted, but that, at the same time, it can be explored and used as a resource for opening up new possibilities – and the idea of developing 'ethnographies of the particular' to approach other cultures more sensitively[49] have permeated into critical understandings of the liberal peace that have gained prevalence in recent years.

The initial insight into the transformation of the concept of culture in anthropology helps to introduce the critique of the liberal interventionist frameworks. This section argues that the view of culture as a 'tool-kit' facilitates a critique of the liberal understandings of conflict and peace, thereby cultivating an alternative that reinterprets peacebuilding into a context-informed and process-based approach. For this it is useful to focus initially on David Campbell's work in Bosnia, which presciently criticised the 'problematisations' of the war made by local nationalist leaders,

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[45] Sewell (1999: 37–38).

[46] Abu-Lughod contends that the alternative to orientalist studies cannot be 'reverse orientalism' (1991: 145, 157). For a similar point, see Bhabha (1990: 4); Bhabha (1994: 35).

[47] Abu-Lughod (1991: 152).

[48] Sewell (1999: 44); see also, Bhabha (1994: 2); Swidler (1986: 273–286).

[49] Abu-Lughod demands to explore 'ethnographies of the particular', as instruments to foster what she calls 'tactical humanism' (1991: 138).

international policy-makers and academics of the time.[50] According to Campbell, these discourses and their simplistic representations of a clash between clear-cut ethnic groups contributed to the 'ethnicisation of the political field' that reduced Bosnia into an intractable tragedy.[51] The Dayton Agreements, for example, divided the sovereign state in two ethnically separated enclaves because, as Campbell reads, 'culture is regarded as a naturalized property such that differences are inherently conflictual or threatening and apartheid is legitimized as an antiracist solution'.[52] In other words, after culture is taken as a fixed and immutable category, the only solution for peace seems to be to align identity groups in different territories.[53] For Campbell, the problem of the peace accords is that they dangerously reproduce the nationalist imaginary of communities dwelling in homogeneous territories – thus legitimising, for example, population transfers – and curtail the myriad possibilities of being that exist and might exist in the future.[54] Campbell relies on his face-to-face encounters with the Bosnian population to question this international policy approach and strives for a non-nationalist option that could be found in 'the complex and contested nature of Bosnian life'.[55]

At this point of Campbell's argument, one might expect that his critical take on the international approach as reductionist would be followed by a cosmopolitan solution, such as that provided by Kaldor.[56] Instead, however, Campbell argues that cosmopolitanism or any other liberalism are forms of dominance and power because they seek to order the totality of life and oversimplify complexity. For him, these discourses must be equally confronted because by having a transcendental objective they fail to be respectful towards difference.[57] The lesson to be drawn from Campbell is that any attempt to capture, manage or be faithful to diversity is in itself unavoidably reductionist and denies the plurality of life and of new forms of existence. Following the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, Campbell argues that the ultimate problem – and these are the philosophical roots of the

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[50] Following Foucault, Campbell means by problematisation the thinking of something in terms of problem and solution. One of the aims of his book is to problematise the problematisations that reduce Bosnia into an ethnic problem-solution (1998: x).

[51] Campbell (1998: xi). For a critique of the views that framed the Balkans as an unavoidable tragedy, see Booth (2001: 5).

[52] Campbell (1998: 161–162); see also, Campbell (1999: 400). For a similar analysis in the case of South Africa, see Norval (1996).

[53] Norval (1996: 80).

[54] For a similar critique, see Vaughan-Williams (2006: 513–526).

[55] Campbell (1998: 114).

[56] Kaldor (1999: 44–45).

[57] Campbell (1998: 205). See also Connolly's work on pluralism and in particular what he calls 'the paradox of ethicality'. This is the point that while we need standards of ethics, no standards can truly embrace difference (2002: 12).

critique of the liberal peace – resides in one of 'ontological totalitarianism'.[58] In other words, it is the 'totalities' of contemporary discourses that Campbell wishes to resist and therefore prophetically proposes the invention of 'better political responses attuned to the relationship to the other'.[59]

In defence of the other, Campbell identifies and rejects the spectre of totalitarianism haunting both the international community's narrow conceptualisation of peace and other alternatives that 'efface, erase, or suppress alterity'.[60] Unlike proposals of the liberal peace analysed in the previous section, Campbell resists seeing difference as problematic. That is, according to this viewpoint, culture and peace have reversed their relation: the constraint is not culture, but a hubristic project of peace, which fails to be faithful to the elusive dimension of culture. The alternative therefore cannot be another peace settlement for Bosnia based on universal values. Instead, Campbell aspires to 'ethical communities' that remain open-ended, as a strategy to refute the totalitarianism of final representations and identity formations and ensure responsibility for the other.[61] As he puts it,

> Justice, democracy and emancipation are not conditions to be achieved but ambitions to be strived for; they are promises the impossibility of which ensures their possibility; they are ideals that to remain practical must always be still *to come*.[62]

As a critique of the violence implicated in the myth of coherent borders, truth representations or hegemonic identity claims, Campbell proposes that peace in Bosnia might be rethought as a 'promise' - in the Derridean sense - which remains yet still 'to come'; something which can never be 'institutionalized', but which symbolizes the 'ad infinitum of nomadic movements'.[63] This iterative approach without ultimate end seeks to avoid the violence implicit in a linear plan with a final settlement. In so doing, it opens up the possibility of developing peace initiatives as never-ending processes of contestation dedicated to affirm difference – or 'différance'.[64]

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[58] Campbell (1998: 172).

[59] Campbell (1998: xi).

[60] Campbell (1998: 206).

[61] Campbell (1998: 208).

[62] Campbell (1998: 207 [emphasis in original]]).

[63] Campbell (1998: 202). Notice that Campbell (1998) does not use "peace initiative" or "peacebuilding" in his ethos of affirmation because he wishes to avoid the 'totalitarian' risk entailed in the design of any plan for peace. Rather, he uses 'justice' as an aspiration that is infinite, unrepresentable.

[64] Derrida's notion of 'différance' is relevant to understand the philosophical underpinnings of the inclination to subvert any hegemonic discourse in the process of exploring difference. Derrida draws attention to the action of 'differing' and 'deferring' – différance – that is prior to difference and which cannot be appropriated, construed or named (1982: 26).

Today, Campbell's ethico-political sensibility – that is, a responsibility to embrace difference which calls for the problematisation of the totalities of existing discourses[65] – pervades critical understandings of the liberal peace (or post-liberal peace).[66] These approaches discard the universalistic, statist and domineering nature of the liberal peace by pointing at the limitations of governing post-war societies from an external (Western) perspective.[67] On this assumption, these scholars have critically interpreted what they see as top-down and intrusive approaches of statebuilding in the former Yugoslavia and the Middle East.[68] For them, unlike Avruch, Kymlicka or Kaldor, as analysed in the previous section, there is no superior, scientific or neutral viewpoint that can take Solomonic judgments in practices of war resolution or peacebuilding initiatives. For example, Brigg and Muller highlight the weakness of Avruch's tendency to appeal to universal standards to make judgements regarding conflicts in which culture has been mobilised for strategic and violent purposes: 'Avruch is correct to note that the use of culture is (sometimes) strategic, but by doing so he risks delegitimising the arguments and culture of the 'players' while prioritising the frameworks and (social science) approaches of the (Western) conflict resolution academic and analyst'.[69] For Brigg and Muller, there is no position from which to privilege one way of interpreting a dispute over another. The risks of doing so, they argue, is to impose a perilous hierarchical relation between the West and other cultures, as well as to ignore alternative frameworks for making peace.[70]

The crucial point to make is that post-liberal perspectives focus on the irreducible particularism of the local to indicate the shortcomings of the liberal peace. However, this does not imply a romantic defence of all the norms or values that emanate from the local.[71] As Richmond recommends, 'culture should not be re-essentialised nor necessarily perceived as a benign site of agency'.[72] When analysing peace initiatives in the Balkans, for example, these critical approaches do not give an automatic support to local

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[65] Campbell (1998: 4); see also Campbell and Schoolman (2008).

[66] Richmond (2011).

[67] For instance, the journal *Peacebuilding* has been launched with the ambition to contribute to peacebuilding beyond 'the Western modernisation and state framework'. Richmond and MacGinty (2013: 1).

[68] These approaches will be carefully analysed in the following chapter. For now, see the critical essays in the following volumes: Newman, Paris and Richmond (2009); Richmond (2010c); Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam (2011).

[69] Brigg and Muller (2009: 129).

[70] Brigg and Muller (2009: 131).

[71] Mac Ginty (2008: 149). For a discussion about the necessity to go beyond universalism and particularism in post-conflict situations, see Campbell (1998: 196–207).

[72] Richmond (2011: 184).

nationalist agendas,[73] despite the accusation of some counter-critics.[74] For them, since peace can neither be designed from a solid Archimedean point nor from the locals in an unreflective manner, the way forward is to open situations up to difference in a never-ending 'iterative' and process-oriented endeavour, which disarticulates static and thereby hierarchical positions.[75] As Drichel explains, 'iterability – as the temporal logic upon which hybridity relies – has an immediate ethical appeal' because 'it offers the possibility to reintroduce, quite literally, the sense of alterity that has been disavowed in the stereotype as a fixed form of otherness'.[76] It is the anti-essentialist process, the repetitive practice or as Duffield puts it, 'the unscripted conservation' of internationals and locals what matters here.[77] Hybrid formulations, as the dynamic interaction between local and international actors, are thus seen as strategies to pursue an emancipatory version of peace that is more respectful of difference. [78] In these readings, it is counterproductive to plan peace in advance or out of context. This is because practices and experiences of the everyday become an unlimited resource to be explored repetitively, rather than a problem to be overcome externally, as in frameworks of the liberal peace.[79] Abu-Nimer, in a study of inter-religious conflictive scenarios paradigmatic of a reinterpretation of the use of culture, observes that, 'religion can also bring social, moral, and spiritual resources to the peacebuilding process'.[80] For these approaches, cultural and societal elements of the everyday become toolkits to develop long-term processes of peace.

To sum-up this section, critical understandings of the liberal peace contest hegemonic discourses emanating from the international and the local spheres on the basis that no representation can exhaust the rich diversity of human life. Following anthropological insights, they reinterpret culture as a sphere that resists external interpretation or governance and, at the same time, opens up new possibilities for peace. For these approaches, culture

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[73] Franks and Richmond (2008: 81–103); Devic (2006: 257–273).

[74] For instance, David Chandler accuses these approaches of falling into the trap of either defending 'universal values' or 'cultural relativism' (2014a: 2).

[75] Brigg and Muller (2009: 137). Following Derrida, Campbell also puts emphasis on using the strategy of 'iteration' because, as he argues, 'the repetition of iterability is always linked to alterity' (1998: 200).

[76] Drichel (2008: 601–602). As a note of clarification, by stereotypes Drichel means the form in which 'the other' has been constructed and fixed by the colonial gaze.

[77] Duffield (2007: 234).

[78] For example, see Mac Ginty (2010: 392); Peterson (2012: 9–22); Richmond (2009a: 565; 2010a: 685–686).

[79] It is crucial to note the difference between iterative processes (fn. 64) and externalised strategies pursued by practitioners and policy-makers. For a critical analysis of these strategies see Richmond (2011: 27–30).

[80] Abu-Nimer (2001: 686).

becomes a resource or tool-kit to be drawn upon, rather than a problem that needs to be governed or solved from an outside intervention, as within liberal peace frameworks. However, culture is a resource to be both embraced and contested, both celebrated and pluralised. This is the radical promise of peace: a joint endeavour to care for the other (difference) that is, at the same time, alert to the violence implicated in any advance to defend this other.[81] In this regard, this is a 'promise' to do justice to the other that can never be fulfilled; a 'promise' to which every attempt to reach it, or even name it, becomes a betrayal to it.[82] This is a form of 'writing against culture' – of affirming difference without representing it – and it has become a deliberate move to save culture(s) and peace(s).

Although it might seem difficult to translate these abstract reflections into concrete strategies for peace, policy-makers are recently undertaking a comparable transformation of the practice of peacebuilding. In this sense, whereas Campbell criticized the limits of liberal forms of intervention in the 1990s, international institutions – EU, OECD, UNDP and World Bank – have lately incorporated some of his sensibilities in the practice of peace undertaken in the Balkans and other conflict-affected scenarios, as analysed in the next section. It will be argued that the approach of 'building resilience' rejects the hegemony of previous liberal endeavours in search of a process-oriented and hybrid form of peacebuilding attuned to the particularism of every people. It is central to recognise this shift because it compromises critical understandings of the liberal peace which are still fixated on critiquing the liberal peace top-down models executed in earlier interventions.[83]

The coming community: Building resilience and the promise of peace

According to international institutions, in the 21st century, while inter- and intra-state wars are in decline, multiple forms of contemporary violence – gang related violence, organized crime or local conflicts – thwart the most

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[81] Campbell makes this point when he explains his two main contributions: 'the ethos of deconstruction thought can appreciate the contradictions, paradoxes and silences of political problems in a complex world', [but at the same time] 'calls for an ongoing political process of critique and invention that is never satisfied that a lasting solution can or has been reached' (1998: 242).

[82] In these critical understandings, having no end is increasingly viewed as positive. As Connolly asserts, our 'sickness' resides in a 'quest to reach the end of a trial which has no terminus'. Connolly *(*1993: 138).

[83] See further Chandler (2010a: 138).

fragile and conflict-affected environments.[84] These contemporary conflicts have become more diffuse, complex and are increasingly linked to natural disasters or climate change.[85] As the World Bank observes, violence is unpredictable and globally interlinked: 'many religious and ideological grievances in one part of the world are grafted onto a local conflict in some faraway place'.[86] What is important is that the logic of conflict is perceived to have shifted from the 'politically motivated' civil wars that prevailed in the 1990s to the 'less visible, but widespread forms of common violence and occasional outbursts of collective violence' of the new millennia.[87] It is in response to contemporary forms of violence that the World Bank contemplates the need of 'making societies more resilient'.[88] More broadly, the commitment to build resilience corresponds to the observation that there exist strong multi-dimensional links between violent conflicts, security anxieties, extreme natural events and multifaceted crises.[89] In this sense, Michael Dillon, analysing the security discourses in the war on terror, presciently signalled the term 'resilience' as indicative of the global liberal biopolitics project in an era of complexity.[90]

While academic discussions very often read the efforts of building resilience as a strategy of neoliberal governance,[91] this last section proposes to interpret resilience approaches as peacebuilding attempts to embrace the particularisms of other cultures (that is, difference) and discard the possibility of imposing external designs. While this reading does not contradict the point that resilience fits well with practices of neoliberal governance, it reads resilience frameworks as processes that seek to overcome the problem of 'difference' identified in earlier approaches of the liberal peace. In so doing, I argue, practitioners of peace are increasingly sharing the ethico-political sensibilities of post-liberal perspectives. This is because, for international institutions, the best way of building peace and care for others in their specific contexts seems to be the cultivation of hybrid and iterative processes of continual learning that include the local's socio-

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[84] At least since 2008 the World Bank places emphasis on the rise of new forms of violence (2008; 2011: 51–68).

[85] While establishing this link, Evans recommended that action should take the form of 'adaptation' (2008). Also, see Department for International Development (2011: 4).

[86] World Bank (2011: 67).

[87] World Bank (2008: 2).

[88] World Bank (2008: 1).

[89] This observation is accompanied by the rise of network and complexity theories Schmidt (2013a: 174–192) – although this is not the focus of the chapter.

[90] Dillon 2007: 14). For another analysis that considers resilience as the politics of complexity, see Chandler (2014b).

[91] See fn. 5. The point is that by putting too much emphasis on the fact that resilience is another neoliberal "tool", scholars underappreciate the differences between contemporary policy approaches (resilience) and previous approaches (liberal peace).

cultural practices and experiences as resources for ensuring a lasting peace. Below, I unravel the framework of resilience and its reinterpretation of difference, which builds on critical understandings of the liberal peace. Finally, I seek to contest counter arguments made by critics who still identify elements of Eurocentrism in approaches that embrace the other. The conclusion is that one needs to recognise the promise of resilience perspectives to understand more accurately current practices of peacebuilding.

The rise of resilience approaches in peace debates is linked to the fact that international institutions have learnt from the limited success of previous peace processes and consequently reoriented their strategies on the assumption that no single model is internationally valid.[92] As the World Bank admitted, its own report in 2011 could no longer be read as 'a cookbook that prescribes recipes' because 'every country's history and political context differ, and there are no one-size-fits-all solutions'. [93] Similarly, for the UNDP, 'there is no single template', and therefore, 'a unifying principle is that in every setting, approaches must be shaped by context'.[94] Today, it has become a truism that context is important and that the history, politics and culture of societies has to be understood and studied carefully for the success of external interventions.[95] For example, it is believed that the failure of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq was, in part, due to 'the inadequate understanding of both Iraqi culture and the complicated internal political relationships that existed among and within various Iraqi groups'.[96] It is for this reason that organizations such as Armed Violence Monitoring Systems, Conciliation Resources, International Alert or Peace Direct are increasingly incorporating detailed conflict analysis and also understandings of local actors in their programme planning of building resilience.[97]

As analysed in the initial section, the idea that people are different and that this difference – broadly framed in terms of culture – is decisive for developing more accurate analyses of peace was also prominent during the debates of the 1990s.[98] However, in conflict-affected environments, culture was usually deemed problematic – particularly in cases in which ethnicity came to the fore – and the liberal peace tended to appeal to external or out-of-context solutions to design peace. By contrast, contemporary international

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[92] For an account of the advent of resilience as a retreat from universalistic solutions, see Haldrup and Rosén (2014: 130–145).

[93] World Bank (2011: 247).

[94] UNDP (2012: 41).

[95] See (IPI 2009).

[96] World Bank (2011: 196).

[97] Ganson and Wennmann (2012: 7).

[98] For an early recognition of the importance of context, see World Bank (1989).

institutions, rather than copying programmes that have been successful elsewhere, intend to build resilience as a strategy that 'needs to be firmly embedded in national policies and planning'.[99] Resilient frameworks see local context and the participants in the conflict much more positively and indeed their role is key for the accomplishment of the operation:

> National ownership of the development and governance agenda is a bedrock principle of UNDP and many of its partners. Notwithstanding the crucial role of external donors and agencies, UNDP recognizes that the transition from fragility to durable peace and stability is primarily an internal process.[100]

For these approaches, local ownership has become not only the end goal of the process, but also the means.[101] Indeed, at odds with earlier frameworks of the liberal peace, the propensity is to adopt a self-critical position and admit that next time local ownership should be even more 'real'.[102] Partly, this is fuelled by the perception that communities learn by themselves, use local networks of knowledge, offer protection from dangerous threats and adapt to unpredictable violence.[103] But, perhaps more importantly, the emphasis of resilience perspectives on local ownership is sustained by the assumption that there exist limits to controlling, affecting or even understanding the particularism of the everyday from an external position.[104] As the OECD recognises: 'Statebuilding is first and foremost an endogenous process; there are therefore limits as to what the international community can and should do'.[105] Although the critics do not recognise the shift towards an endogenous practice,[106] international institutions are increasingly assuming the constraints of orthodox policy responses and experimenting with innovative and non-formal approaches to take cognizance of every context and evaluate peace.[107] The crucial point to note

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[99] EC (2012: 2). The assumption is that 'fragility' and 'resilience' are 'country-specific and 'conflict-specific' (see Chade 2012: 4).

[100] UNDP (2012: 101); see also UNDP (2010: xiii).

[101] All international institutions analysed here – EU, OECD, UN, the World Bank and other international agencies – implicitly or explicitly propose to ensure 'local or national ownership'. See further chapter 5.

[102] The OECD (2011a), for example, recognises that international institutions can do better to achieve country-led processes of change (Ganson and Wennman 2012: 6).

[103] For Campbell, to establish a comparison, 'Bosnia's différance was lived and negotiated on a daily basis' (1998: 212).

[104] Kaufmann (2013: 67). Notice that the critics of the liberal peace also put emphasis on the insufficiency of traditional frameworks to know other cultures and, therefore, they experiment with relational and iterative approaches. See, for example, Brigg (2010: 336–342); Brigg and Muller (2009: 137); Richmond (2009a: 566).

[105] OECD (2011b: 11).

[106] See Mac Ginty (2013).

is that for resilience frameworks 'difference' exceeds the possibility of governing from an outside perspective[108] and peace- and statebuilding are transformed into much more meticulous and repetitive endeavours that operate from within.[109]

This is demonstrated if one pays attention to the shifting responsibility of international donors. Within a framework that prioritises locally owned procedures, external organisations have limited their role to acts of 'support', 'facilitation', 'nurturing', 'indirect intervention' or 'work in the background'.[110] These organisations thus step back from a leading position and remain attentive to support the resources for peace that already exist in the cultural milieus of conflict-affected societies. As the UNDP explains,

> [D]espite escalating violence amongst pastoral communities in north-eastern Kenya, the UNDP observed the pressures applied by mothers on their sons to assume greater roles in cattle raiding. After a comprehensive assessment, UNDP worked with local groups to re-engineer prevailing attitudes by urging mothers to assume roles as 'ambassadors for peace'.[111]

Elsewhere, the UN has also asserted that 'women and girls are the [in]visible force for resilience'.[112] In the cases of Bosnia and Kosovo, the international organisation SaferWorld also explains that its initiatives 'help communities to build on the resources and skills *they already have* to address their security concerns'.[113] In these situations, international actors barely help life to follow its course.[114] Indeed, the shifting position of external actors is encapsulated in the motivation of 'do[ing] no harm' – in the sense of not making things

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[107] Kraus (2013); Kaufman (2013). For example, the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development challenged the use of simple analytical classifications and policy responses in order to pay attention to 'developing innovative techniques for collecting and generating data', 'in-depth knowledge and disaggregated information' for studying and tackling different forms of violence in several contexts (2013).

[108] For a philosophical take on the notion that difference and the world exceed conceptual reach, see Connolly (2002).

[109] For the OECD, for example, 'When Technical Assistance personnel are *outside* of government structures, engagement and ownership by the partner country tend to be low and accountability diffused. Agreeing with national counterparts on the parameters for the delivery of assistance may take time. Until then, small, *iterative* activities are best to give the development partner time to better understand the context and agree with the partner country on where outside assistance can be most useful' (2011b: 86, emphasis added). See also fn. 64, 75.

[110] OECD (2011b: 47).

[111] UNDP (2012: 91).

[112] UNISDR (2012).

[113] SaferWorld (2013).

[114] For a radical reinterpretation of the role of planners in self-organising societies, see Van Assche and Verschraegen (2008: 279).

worse – and the policy-recommendation of being aware of both the 'intended and unintended consequences of their interventions'.[115]

However, it is important to acknowledge that while resilient approaches embrace locals' attitudes and viewpoints as an attempt to overcome the shortcomings of the liberal peace, they do not fall into the trap of cultural relativism. [116] To be sure, building resilience does not imply that peacebuilders are giving support to the local potentially 'illiberal' practices (e.g. racist acts) or potentially exclusivist discourses (e.g. nationalist demands). As I argued at the beginning of the previous section, the alternative to a Western-led anthropology was not an approach to essentialise other cultures, but an effort to 'write against culture', to defy homogeneity and coherence and project an image of culture as a 'toolkit'.[117] Along these lines, efforts at building resilience can be interpreted as strategies that take a constructivist view of culture as a resource to foster peace, like the examples of the UNDP in Kenya or SaferWorld in the Balkans put forward (see above). A quick glance at UNESCO's reports can be useful to provide insight into the relation between a constructivist notion of culture and the possibility of strengthening the resilience of local communities. The reinterpretation of culture as a 'complex web of meanings', 'acquired through the process of cultivation' and 'evolving dynamic force', for example, introduces new avenues for development.[118] For the organisation, 'culture builds resiliency by reinforcing the abilities of people to be innovative and creative especially in the adversity of disasters and conflicts'.[119]

In peacebuilding practices, the efforts to build resilience are translated into a fruitful 'joint endeavour' between donors, agencies, community leaders and diverse members of civil society.[120] For the UNDP, partnerships are flexible and open, diverse, overlapping, heterogeneous and transnational. [121] They are involved in a sensible process of 'deep appreciation without pre-conceived or fixed ideas',[122] in which participants

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[115] OECD (2010: 3); see also de Carvalho et al. (2014: 2).

[116] Chandler (2014: 14–17).

[117] Swidler reinterprets culture 'as a tool kit of symbols, stories, rituals, and world-views, which people may use in varying configurations to solve different kinds of problems' (1986: 273).

[118] UNESCO (2010: 2). Also, see how UNESCO is committed to diversity, but not the perpetuation of a particular and static form of diversity (UNESCO 2009: 2). It is useful to contrast UNESCO's constructivist notion of culture in recent reports with the earlier attempts to appreciate cultures as closed entities (UNESCO 1995).

[119] UNESCO (2010: 7).

[120] UNDP (2008).

[121] UNDP (2012: 98–111).

[122] OECD (2011b: 36).

learn and adapt and reflect upon their positions and roles.[123] These policy practices share many assumptions with the emancipatory agenda of 'hybridity', which is both a description of actual processes and a normative imperative.[124] As Chandler argues, for these approaches, 'intervention is essentially a mechanism of inter-subjective enlargement of reflexivity, enabling an emancipation of both intervener and those intervened upon, through creating possibilities for both to free themselves from the socio-cultural constraints of their own societies and to share a pluralised ethos of peace'.[125] Nationals and internationals increasingly accept hybrid peace processes because these are more inclusive, flexible and participatory and they project a 'pluralised ethos of peace' that eschews violent dichotomies.[126] For example, building resilience as a hybrid formulation allows peace processes to move beyond top-down domineering approaches (i.e. liberal peace) and potential locally exclusivist projects (i.e. aggressive politics against minorities).

However, the open, heterogeneous and empathetic partnerships between multiple actors that resilient frameworks propose – along the lines of critical understandings of liberalism – is still regarded with scepticism in the academic literature.[127] Sabaratnam, for example, argues critically that narratives of liberal and post-liberal peace carry elements of Eurocentrism and exclusion of other societies since they reproduce 'the division between the liberal, rational, modern West and a culturally distinct space of the "local"'.[128] In order to reverse this tendency and decolonise peace research, she suggests having, on the one hand, 'an extended appreciation of the historical political presence of societies targeted by interventions'. On the other hand, inspired by the dictum of 'writing against cultural difference', she proposes a strategy that avoids 'alienation' and focuses on 'the ways in which different people politicize various aspects of their experiences, narrate the terms of their situations and critically interpret the world around them'.[129] In other words, what she recommends is having a deeper understanding of context and the historico-political processes of other 'cultures' in order to challenge the belief that the world can be organised in cultural boxes.

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[123] For example, AusAID's newly created 'Making a Difference' training programme helps advisers and counterparts to improve their working relationships by reflecting on their behaviour and attitudes (Capacity.Org 2010).

[124] Ganson and Wennman (2012: 17; OECD 2011: 25).

[125] Chandler (2013c: 24).

[126] Nadarajah and Rampton (2014: 7).

[127] Brigg (2013: 13–18); Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013: 775).

[128] Sabaratnam (2013: 267).

[129] Sabaratnam (2013: 271–272).

The critique of current peace processes in the Balkans follows a similar logic. Even if the hybrid projects suggested by the EU and local counterparts have recently aimed at building a unique and complex political system committed to diversity and inclusiveness (i.e. beyond ethnic enclaves),[130] at least this is their intention, the critics in the literature request to deconstruct further the prevailing narratives and identities of existing groups.[131] For them, there is always the possibility to appeal for a deeper understanding of context or to argue that every decision taken by whatever actor(s) is unavoidably misrepresenting the full diversity of human life.[132] In short, today, critical readings accuse previous peacebuilding initiatives (and the critique of these initiatives) of reinforcing perilous dichotomies because they fail to appreciate and engage with the fugitive nature of difference.[133] It would appear that, at least since the inclusion of culture in studies of peace, the tendency is to criticise others for not engaging sensitively with the needs and particularities of those intervened upon.[134] Yet, it seems that this critical narrative is failing to recognise the 'promise' of resilience approaches.[135]

The point is not to argue that, for example, the allegations of Eurocentrism in contemporary peacebuilding practices are not important. Or to suggest that resilience approaches have successfully embraced the locals' worldviews in post-conflict societies. The point is that, along similar lines to critical understandings of the liberal peace, resilience approaches carry the promise of fostering hybrid, inclusive and iterative processes of peacebuilding that aim at embracing the particularism of every society. For example, heuristically, resilience approaches – although stripped from a radical idiom – can be read as attempts to 'write against culture' as such, as processes that deconstruct identity formations and pluralise political positions.[136]

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[130] EULEX (2009: 6–7); see also Stroschein (2008: 665).

[131] Popolo (2011).

[132] As seen in the previous section, this is the argument put forward by Campbell in relation to the peace process in Bosnia. While Campbell's view was crucial to highlight the limits of the liberal peace in the 1990s, contemporary critics follow a similar line of argument to criticise current peace processes. In so doing, I argue, these critical readings are underappreciating the ethico-political sensitivities of resilience approaches. For example, see Lehti (2014: 101).

[133] Drichel (2008).

[134] So, while critical approaches question resilience and previous attempts to build peace for not engaging sufficiently with difference, the liberal peace similarly included 'culture' in the analyses of peace as a way of overcoming the limits of previous approaches, as explained in the initial section.

[135] Even if Boege et al. critique peace interventions, their emancipatory proposal resembles the strategy pursued by policy-makers. This reads: 'to think in terms of hybrid political orders, drawing on the resilience embedded in the communal life of societies' (2009: 599). Also, see Richmond and Mac Ginty (2013: 779–780).

[136] The UNDP, for example, creates 'unique safe spaces for interaction of youth across

This ethico-political sensibility is, as I have demonstrated, different from the one defended by the liberal peace.[137] Although most critics argue that resilience is failing to deliver on its promise,[138] international institutions also admit that their approach has its limitations and are ready to embark upon a longer project of deeper sensibility.[139] For the UN, building peace 'is intended to be an iterative process, which can be initiated rapidly and successively expanded and detailed over time, with greater national involvement and ownership'.[140] The World Bank asks for 'time and patience' for the support of institutional transformation.[141] This follows that the approaches of building resilience are practiced without a fixed end and without predicting what would resilience mean at the end of the process. As the OECD suggests, 'external actors need to acknowledge that the ideal end-"state" they aim for is but a distant prospect in many circumstances'.[142] But an unclear end is not problematic. Since the critics advance that reaching an 'end-state' would imply a failure to the promise of peace, far from resisting resilience, the critics secure the perpetuation of it. It would appear that both international policy-makers and their critics share the same sensitivity: the more 'we' fail in peace endeavours, the more there is the need to explore the hidden specificities of the fragile communities.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the increasing concern towards building resilient communities as a policy-strategy to promote peace in conflict-affected scenarios. It has interpreted resilience as an approach that seeks to overcome the shortcomings of the liberal peace processes of the 1990s. In short, while liberal peace privileged universal values and therefore seemed to suppress the different views and norms of conflict-affected societies, building resilience frameworks consider the socio-cultural elements of these societies

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identity-based cleavages' (2012: 71). The OECD wishes also to 'appeal across factional divides' (2008: 81).

[137] See, Cretney and Bond (2014: 18–31), for an example of an interpretation of resilience as a strategy useful to contest everyday capitalism

[138] Campbell already told us, following Derrida, that every 'decision' is necessarily 'unjust' to difference, as it is a 'finite moment' that 'cuts' the infinite realm of the 'undecidable' (1998: 186).

[139] One of the concerns for the OECD, for example, is to improve how international institutions implement their rhetoric better. As they suggest, the need is for 'more focused efforts to walk the talk' OECD (2011a: 45).

[140] UNSC (2009: 14).

[141] World Bank (2011: 193).

[142] OECD (2011b: 22).

as positive resources to take into account. The idea is that previously ignored groups such as women, children, minority communities or even local photographers can play a decisive role in building a stable and durable peace.[143] The challenge today seems to be, 'how can external actors provide such a society with the space it needs to allow its *own* resilience to emerge and for the country to achieve sustainable peace?'[144] In this context, international institutions such as the OECD, the UNDP or the World Bank have limited the scope for external interventions and have adopted a subtler role, as 'it is crucial for development partners to step back, work in the background and, as appropriate, dilute their own relative role to domestic actors'.[145]

This study has sought to argue that this contemporary manifestation of peacebuilding and the academic critics of the liberal peace share a similar predisposition to embrace difference. Heuristically, therefore, I have presented three perspectives: liberal peace, critics of the liberal peace and resilience approaches. The conclusion is that, along the lines of theoretical critics, building peace as resilience relies on a context-sensitive, iterative and hybrid process of mutual learning among diverse actors, which is significantly different to the top-down and domineering liberal peace. That is, as it is read here, while Campbell's critique of the state-building in Bosnia was prescient to signal the limits of the liberal peace, in the last years international organisations have caught up with the critique and have also recognised the constraints of an externally driven peace. Even if policy-makers do not use a post-modern idiom, their commitment toward the particularism of other societies is visible, for example, in their attempts to support local actors to build peace by using the resources they already have. Although the critics of liberal peace indicate that deeper context-sensitive analysis is needed and suggest that every attempt to build peace will necessarily be unfaithful to difference, [146] international institutions comparably admit that resilience will continuously remain 'to come'.[147] I contend that it is important to acknowledge the shift in policymaking to reinvigorate the existing (un)critical analyses of contemporary peacebuilding. This feeble critique is precisely the focus of the next chapter.

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[143] See Alliance for Peacebuilding (2014)

[144] Carvalho (2014: 2).

[145] OECD (2011: 47); Carvalho (2014: 4).

[146] Campbell (1998: 186); Drichel (2008: 608–609); Sabaratnam (2013: 270–273).

[147] World Bank (2011: 193); OECD (2011b: 22).

Chapter 4.
Hybrid Peace and Difference:
Vorarephilia of Critique?

Introduction

Alongside the policy difficulties in building a stable and durable peace in the former Yugoslavia, Sierra Leone, Cambodia, Afghanistan and Iraq, to name only a few cases, scholars have come to the fore to announce the crisis of the liberal peace.[1] From an ethical reading of peacebuilding endeavours, these critical views underline the problem that international policy-makers have ignored the political, societal and cultural heterogeneity of post-conflict societies and have excluded the interests of the majority of the population. A deeper engagement with these societies has both exposed the weaknesses of current peacebuilding processes and has animated an alternative way of thinking about peace. As Richmond argues, 'the limitations of the liberal peace project have sparked new forms of peace in reaction, response, or as resistance, by a repoliticization of post-conflict subjects. This represents the inadvertent rediscovery or rebirth of post-liberal politics in infrapolitical terms'.[2] For the critics, a post-liberal peace emerges in a hybrid process that is carefully and dynamically negotiated between local actors and international partners.[3] The aim of this hybrid process is to achieve an 'inclusive' (post-liberal) peace that embraces 'difference'.[4]

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[1] The critics of the liberal peace by no means comprise a homogeneous group. However, the texts analysed below (Belloni 2012; Boege et al. 2009; Brigg, 2010; Brigg and Müller 2009; Richmond 2009a, 2010a, 2011, 2012; Mac Ginty 2008, 2010; Roberts 2011, 2012) share a commitment to a locally engrained peace and argue that hybrid formulations are more respectful of local alterity than existing liberal practices. In this research I exclude other critical theorists of the liberal peace who focus on economic or power relations (for example, see Jabri, 2007; Pugh, 2005; Duffield, 2007) because they shift the debate away from the discussions about the role of 'difference' in peacebuilding settings.

[2] Richmond (2012: 126).

[3] The distinction between liberal and critical understandings (post-liberal or hybrid peace) is very often blurred, as I am trying to examine in this thesis. For example, in the previous chapter (3) I have argued how both the policy approach of building resilience and critical scholars similarly use elements of the everyday to build peace. However, it is important to maintain the categories liberal and post-liberal because this is the framing used by the critical approaches that I analyse in the present chapter. For example, as Richmond (2011: 2) explains, the argument is between 'dogmatic liberal and statist positions toward peace [liberal peace] and a critical and reflective position

'Hybridity' has largely been discussed in post-colonial studies as a concept that problematises the boundaries of identity and difference.[5] Since an analysis of hybridity in toto is beyond the scope of this research, I explore how hybridity has been recently incorporated in peace debates. This is important for the present research, as hybrid peace seeks to solve the problem of engaging sensitively with difference that haunts the frameworks of the liberal peace.[6] In this chapter, I shed light on the critique of the liberal peace in order to unpack its ethical assumptions and understand how *critique* functions. I do so from *within*, by analysing this critical framework in its own terms. This means that I will not apply or disprove their claims in relation to the cases of the former Yugoslavia – even if these sooner or later will appear in form of 'projections'.[7] It is argued that critique has continuously invoked the particularism of post-war societies in order to signal the limitation of previous approaches and open up new possibilities for peace. The result is a persistent critique in which the solution appears to be a constant demand for a deeper exploration of other societies.

The chapter proceeds through four sections. Firstly, it analyses Connolly's work on pluralism, as it is useful to frame the ethical disposition of the critics of the liberal peace. Secondly, it focuses on the critical evaluation of existing practices of peacebuilding. As I will illustrate, the critics have emphasised that international policy-makers have failed to achieve sustainable peace because they have governed conflict-affected societies from an outside perspective that has overlooked valuable resources from the everyday. Thirdly, the chapter explores the critics' alternative proposition. This is expressed as hybrid peace, which encompasses an agonistic negotiation between multiple actors in order to produce a locally engrained peace. However, as it is seen in the fourth section, hybrid peace has also been critically reviewed. Post-colonialist authors have identified the Eurocentric assumptions in the critique of the liberal peace which undermine the

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centred on social and public concerns in their everyday political, social, economic, and cultural contexts and related to the same list of prerequisites for peace [post-liberal or hybrid peace].

[4] Richmond follows Connolly to criticise the liberal peace, which excludes or undermines difference. Instead, he proposes the 'ethical' alternative of a post-liberal peace that rests on 'an ontological agreement and hybridity' that is 'open to difference' (2009a: 565). This point is important for this chapter, since I use Connolly's ethics to unpack the critique of the liberal peace.

[5] For example, Bhabha (1994); Hall (1987); Pieterse (2001).

[6] For two overviews of hybridity in peace studies, see Peterson (2012) and Nadarajah and Rampton (2014).

[7] As Connolly argues, 'A projection is offered because thinking cannot proceed here without invoking, implicitly or explicitly, consciously or unconsciously, a social ontology in the very language selected by it.' (2002: 66). In the next chapter, I will rethink the liberal and post-liberal peace by referring to the political claims of the citizens in Kosovo.

societies intervened upon. The conclusion is that the critique of the critique resembles a vorarephilia of critique, in which difference will always exceed any conceptual scope, but the autonomy of post-conflict societies seem to remain in limbo.

Before I start with the analysis of the literature, it is important to place this chapter in the context of this thesis. I carefully focus here on hybrid peace (post-liberal) approaches already introduced in the previous chapter. I do so in order to evaluate a perspective, which promises to build peace in tune with the particularism of every society. Hybrid peace scholars promise to do so beyond the failures of international policymaking – from liberal peace to resilience approaches (chapter 1-3). However, the conclusion of the chapter – the observation that critique has continually indicated that earlier attempts to build peace have been unfaithful to locals interests[8] – is useful to raise a question, which anticipates the direction of the argument: are the critics of liberal peacebuilding on their way to embrace difference consistently? In asking this question, it is my suspicion that these scholars hinder the political processes of conflict-affected societies, rather than envisaging a way forward for peace. In chapter 5, I will address the debate on ownership to conclude that critical approaches of liberal peace have been unable to respond to post-war societies satisfactorily.

Connolly's pluralism: taming violence and the fragility of ethics

Early in his career, William Connolly was in the vanguard of left-wing critics who argued that the pluralist ideal – as it was codified in modern societies like the US – was 'biased' in favour of certain groups who could enact rules or laws and against others who were subordinated or excluded from the public.[9] Since the ideal imagined by Tocqueville did not fit the new circumstances affecting modern societies, Connolly sought to extend 'the limits of politics' and point to new areas where diverse views could also be included.[10] The affirmation of a new pluralist ideal, which has been coined as the 'new pluralism,'[11] was developed in three different books: *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox* (2002 [1991]), *The Ethos of Pluralization* (1995) and *Pluralism* (2005). These books will be

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[8] "By 'local', critical scholars mean, 'the range of locally based agencies present within a conflict and post-conflict environment, some of which are aimed at identifying and creating the necessary processes for peace, perhaps with or without international help, and framed in a way in which legitimacy in local and international terms converges' (Richmond and Mac Ginty 2013: 769).

[9] Connolly (1969).

[10] Connolly (1969: 26).

[11] Campbell and Schoolman (2008: 9).

considered below, with special attention on the earliest, where Connolly develops his ethics by presenting two paradoxes. One way to pose the first paradox is this: every identity necessitates differences in order to be, but differences are considered problematic when there is an attempt to pursue security in identity.[12] The second can be formulated like this: having some ethical standards is indispensable for social life, but finding an ultimate ethical command that could work for ever and for all is a fantasy.[13] By negotiating these two paradoxes, Connolly aims to subdue the politics of generalised resentment against difference that emerges in response to the condition of uncertainty, deterritorialisation and the globalisation of contingency of what he calls 'the late-modern time'.[14] Below I intend to analyse these paradoxes and in the following section, Connolly's work on pluralism will be placed in relation to the contemporary critique of the liberal peace.

'The first paradox' resides in the tense relation between identity and difference. For Connolly, identity is a mixture of cultural and biological features that is fundamentally relational.[15] Identity and difference, essential for human beings, are mutually constitutive and the question whether it is possible to live with difference outside the space of identity is answered negatively. [16] However, they exist in a complex political relation. Contemporary experiences of contingency, fragility and disruption in the self encourage some people to deprecate differences that are at odds with the identities they live. This is because, in a context of existential despair, individuals and collectives wish to protect the certainty and coherence of their identities, but, in so doing, they tend to subjugate the (indispensable) differences that pose a challenge to the self.[17] That is, the temptation to pursue an unambiguous identity independent from difference automatically implies being disrespectful towards difference:

> [T]he multiple drives to stamp truth upon those identities function to convert differences into otherness and otherness into scapegoats created and maintained to secure the appearance of a true identity. To possess a true identity is to be false to difference, while to be true to difference is to sacrifice the promise of a true identity.[18]

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[12] Connolly (2002: xiv); He also calls the relation of identity difference 'the site of two problems of evil' (x-xi).

[13] Connolly (2002: 9–12; 93–94).

[14] Connolly (2002: 15; 1995: 22).

[15] Connolly (2002: xvii).

[16] Connolly (2002: 158).

[17] This paradox can also be understood by looking at the ambiguities of 'borders'. As Connolly argues, 'boundaries form indispensable protections against violation and violence; but the divisions they sustain also carry cruelty and violence' (1995: 163).

[18] Connolly (2002: 67).

For Connolly, therefore, it is the aspiration to achieve a true or total identity that is problematic, for it converts difference into otherness in a process that is essentially violent. The stronger is the willingness to secure the identities of the normal individual, the society or the nation-state, the more otherness are produced that can be potentially assimilated, marginalised, opposed or condemned.[19]

For example, the pursuit of a territorially coherent nation-state may generate 'persecution, refugees, boat people, terrorism, ethnic cleansing' and 'evil'.[20] All societies privilege some identities in the process of defining norms and building institutions. Irremediably, at the same time, they treat differences as threats or deviations from the normal standards that need to be corrected, modified or even liquidated. [21] These struggles against difference do not reflect a 'political engagement' with the paradox, as Connolly advises us to practice, but an attempt to 'suppress it'.[22] So, the question remains; how is one to combat the longing for the completion of identities that cause the exclusion or elimination of their differences? This is to ask, is there a way to overcome the risks implicated in the politics of identity/difference? With this challenge in mind, Connolly introduces 'the second paradox'.

For Connolly, resolving the problems that emerge from the willingness to protect identity from difference requires an ethical sensibility.[23] Yet the paradox of ethics lies between the need for frameworks that seek to contain violence against others and the cruelties and injustices installed in any attempt to do so. As he argues, 'without a set of standards of identity and responsibility there is no possibility of ethical discrimination, but the application of any such set of historical constructions also does violence to those to whom it is applied'.[24] Connolly uses this paradox to criticize forms of liberalism – as well as Marxism, secularism or other perspectives with universal aspirations or with presuppositions of the self.[25] Because all forms of liberalism, he argues, organise societies by bestowing privilege to certain identities, norms and ideals, but fail to 'identify the constellation of normal/abnormal dualities already inscribed in the culture they idealize'.[26]

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[19] Connolly (1995: xxi, 89–90).

[20] Connolly (2005: 29). See also Connolly's discussion about territorial democracy (2002: 198–222).

[21] (Connolly, 1995: 88–89).

[22] Connolly (1995: xxi).

[23] Connolly (2002: 9–12).

[24] Connolly (2002: 12).

[25] It is important to note, before explaining his position, that he does not reject liberalism. It revises it by cultivating an ethics that affirm the ambiguities and contingencies of life (Connolly 2002: 83; Schoolman 2008: 19). For a critique of Connolly's unwillingness to reject liberalism, see Shinko (2008).

[26] Connolly (2002: 74).

By presupposing a model for all, these theories lack self-reflexivity and care for the differences they deprecate, imprison, or punish as abnormalities.[27] In brief, they do not acknowledge that no particular form of the common life can be responsible for the fullness of diversity.

By contrast, Connolly's ethics do not stem from a transcendental command nor are deduced from any authority, reason or divine force. He is not willing to respond '*why* be ethical? Or '*what* is the epistemic ground of ethics'. He pursues '*ways* to cultivate care for identity and difference in a world already permeated by ethical proclivities and predispositions to identity'.[28] His ethics, therefore, are motivated from the care for the abundance and rich diversity of life that is constantly foreclosed by drives to secure identities and ethical commands.[29] In other words, his sensibilities are governed by the readiness to appreciate the energies and fugitive experiences that exceed any form of identity or model for human organisation.[30]

In order to surmount the relation of violence toward difference, Connolly's highest aspiration that cannot be fulfilled by any fundamental framework, he negotiates (rather than suppresses or ignores) both paradoxes at once. He proposes to 'cultivate the experience of contingency in identity' and 'interrogate exclusions build into [people's] own entrenched identities' with the intention of developing 'a politics alert to a tragic gap between the imperatives of organization in the order it idealizes and admirable possibilities of life that exceed those imperatives'.[31] His ethics operate at two levels: the individual and the community level. At the individual level, there is the need to cultivate the tactics of self-modification in order to negotiate the first paradox. This of course means to abandon the hope for a true identity or a life without difference. Connolly affirms contingency and the ambiguities that exist within the relation between identity and difference. This is a means to resist the resentment against the other that emanates from the failure to achieve the fullness of identity.[32] At the same time, the affirmation of contingency also opens up alternative possibilities for relating to the differences that could otherwise be censured, condemned.[33] This leads to an engagement with the second paradox.

Here, Connolly's ethics take place at the community level and enact a

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[27] Connolly (2002: 70–94).

[28] Connolly (2002: 10 [Emphasis in the original]).

[29] Connolly (1995: 27, 93).

[30] Connolly (2002: 82). In a recent book, this appreciation has become radicalised: he embraces the emerging opportunities that open up by appreciating a world of becoming (Connolly 2011).

[31] Connolly (2002: 14).

[32] Connolly (1995: 63).

[33] Connolly (2002: 180).

democratic ethos, guided by the principle of contestability.[34] His pluralist democratic position can be explained in terms of 'a bicameral orientation to political life': this means the adoption of a creed or the defense of an ideology or philosophy in the world, while assuming that it is contestable by alternative faiths. [35] This orientation demands, firstly, an element of humbleness in the faith one preaches because others might not share it and wish to question it. Secondly, it shows 'agonistic respect and critical responsiveness between diverse constituencies'.[36] For Connolly, the pluralist is alert to contest the dogmatisation of hegemonic identities and fundamentalisms, disturb conventional judgements, suspect about frozen consensus, resist against naturalisations or practices that cement contingency and pluralise thought. [37] Far from reducing public life into paralytic place in which no meaning or consensus can be advanced, a pluralist engagement with diversity creates new possibilities for a peaceful identification. As he puts it, critically rethinking dogmatic identities 'forms an essential prelude to the effort to devise creative ways through which a wider variety of identities can negotiate less violent terms of coexistence'.[38]

What is important for the present research is that Connolly' ethics respond to what he calls the 'late-modern time,' in which struggles against difference abound, as seen, for example, in religious crusades, terrorism, cultural wars or projects of international hegemony or justice.[39] Connolly's thoughts thus can be situated vis-à-vis the explosion of the civil wars of the 1990s and the ensuing external interventions to bring peace that this thesis problematises. Even if Connolly never addresses any particular cases,[40] his ambition to end violence perpetrated against difference and overcome the limitations of hegemonic theories resonates explicitly or implicitly with critical understandings of liberal peace interventions. This is not to say that Connolly's views have necessarily influenced critical approaches or to say

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[34] See Schoolman (2008) for the relation between contestation, genealogy and deconstruction in Connolly's work (2008: 41). Although it is not the focus of this research, it is important to situate his democratic position in relation to other political thinkers who have similarly advanced agonistic democracy as a practice that opens-up the care for diversity and the contestation of hegemonic points of view. For example, see Mouffe (1999) and Honig (2007).

[35] Connolly (2005: 4).

[36] Connolly (1995: xx).

[37] Conolly (1995: xxiii, 85–93). For example, pluralise 'the modern territorial imagination,' as territories contain exclusive boundaries.

[38] Connolly (1995: 90).

[39] Connolly (1995: 193). For Connolly, it is this same contemporary era of speed and global contingency, which 'forms a condition of possibility for emergence of a more generous pluralism' (1995: 99).

[40] For instance, Connolly briefly discusses Bosnia as an example opposed to his sensibilities. Because in Bosnia 'some identities insist upon universalizing themselves by conquering, assimilating, or liquidating their opponents' (1995: 27).

that his sensibilities have been assumed in peace debates.[41] I contend that Connolly's ethical disposition to rethink both nationalist narratives (by engaging with the first paradox) and universal discourses (by engaging with the second) is useful to frame the ethical direction developed by the critics of the liberal peace.

Negotiating Connolly's paradoxes: the critique of liberal peace

The analysis of Connolly's new pluralism is more than a prelude: it is useful to frame the critique of the liberal peace. This is because, in short, Connolly's ethical proclivity to affirm difference aims at both curbing global resentment and contesting liberal problematisations of difference. Post-liberal peace frameworks[42] emerge as ethical interpretations of the liberal peace that highlight its conceptual shortcomings and intend to be more respectful of the needs and interests of war-affected societies.[43] 'Ethically', as Richmond argues, 'moving beyond these limitations would amount to an ontological commitment to care for others in their everyday contexts, based upon empathy, respect and the recognition of difference'.[44] The rest of the present chapter analyses the post-liberal peace. Firstly, it focuses on the critique of the main assumptions of the liberal peace. Secondly, it examines the proposed alternative of a hybrid project that builds peace via the everyday. However, it is argued in the last section, hybrid peace has also been criticised by post-colonial critics who demand a more anti-essentialist view of hybridity and a deeper decolonisation of peacebuilding.

The critics of the liberal peace flag up the problem that international policy-makers have failed to recognize the importance of the diverse 'infra-political areas' of the conflict-affected societies intervened upon.[45] Two main (fairly interrelated) reasons explain this inattention. The first is that peacebuilding proposes neoliberal strategies, security-based policies and human rights principles in a subtle colonial form which privileges a West-

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[41] There are recurrent references to Connolly's work in the critique of the liberal peace (i.e. Richmond 2011: 109; MacGinty and Richmond 2013: 764), but this is not to imply that Connolly guides the critics' normative positioning.

[42] Fn. 1.

[43] It is important not to see this approach in opposition to the liberal peace, but rather as a critical reappraisal. Indeed, Connolly's framework is, as recognised by himself, a reconstituted liberalism (2002: 93).

[44] Richmond (2009a: 566).

[45] Richmond means by 'infrapolitical areas' the 'hidden transcripts of peacebuilding'. These are the 'social, historical, cultural, political, and economic realities, in their everyday contexts', which are ignored by liberal peace approaches (2011: 198). Heuristically, I have interpreted this concept as 'difference', which always exceeds external governance and which can be used as a resource to foster peace.

dominated world order to the detriment of the local population of non-Western countries.[46] As Mac Ginty and Richmond succinctly put it,

> peace building and state building strategy appears to confirm a longstanding colonial narrative that places the global North in a dominant, selfish and also vulnerable position. The West exercises structural and governmental power against the local, simultaneously preaching democracy, human rights and accountability and assuming the subaltern has little agency.[47]

The second reason, the focus of this research, concerns the notion that 'difference' cannot be comprehended, represented or governed from an externally driven perspective.[48] Beatrice Pouligny, for example, after her extensive experience as practitioner in Central and South America, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Balkans, has documented how the classical approach to peace overlooks the 'stories written at the community level'.[49] Her studies represent, already from a reflexive methodology, a step further toward the comprehension of local subjectivities. Knowledgeable of local languages (or working closely with linguistic and anthropologist colleagues and local experts), she pursues formal interviews as well as informal contacts with diverse people in the street, in markets or in buses and pays a careful attention to daily life to get as close as possible to local actors' views.[50] With analyses from 'below',[51] from the complexity of everyday practices that resist organisational structures,[52] Pouligny and other critics signal the limits of the liberal peace approach because this focuses on state-centric and elite-bargaining processes, formal institutions, applies one-size-fits-all prescriptions and uses homogenous categories to frame conflict-affected societies.[53]

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[46] This critique follows the point stated by other power-oriented critics (see fn. 1) – it is not the focus of this chapter.

[47] Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013: 773). Also, Richmond (2009a: 565)

[48] Boege et al. (2009).

[49] Pouligny (2005: 507).

[50] Pouligny (2006: ix–xvii).

[51] Pouligny (2006: ix–xvii); Boege et al. (2009: 609); also, Richmond goes as far as to argue that 'from the ground, for many of its recipients, the various iterations of this liberal peace project have taken on a colonial appearance' (2009c).

[52] For an early critique of how social science lacks an analysis of how people in their everyday life individualise or reappropriate the organizational techniques of power and institutions, see De Certeau (1984). Also, for an overview of different conceptualisations of resistance in different fields and approaches, see Pile (1997: 1–32).

[53] Richmond's genealogy of peace and conflict theory is useful to have an overview of the critical perspectives. He identifies that the first three generations of peace have only maintained a marginal inclusion of the locals in the processes of peace. By contrast, the fourth generation of peace or post-liberal peace that I am analysing here wishes to overcome these weaknesses (2006; 2010b).

Although the critics recognize that international policy-makers are increasingly adopting more context-sensitive and local oriented peace endeavours, they regard the shift with utter suspicion.[54] For them, the local turn is only happening rhetorically, as a tactic to improve the legitimacy of the international authorities, but not in practice, wherein the parameters of peacebuilding are established from an external perspective.[55] Boege and colleagues, for example, argue that the recent talks of 'local ownership' are only about paying 'lip service' without actually taking others' customary laws or rules into account.[56] Also, another charge is that international institutions only give support to the locals perspectives that fit their interests or purposes,[57] rather than dealing with a more inclusive, pluralist and contextual representation of conflict-affected societies. For Richmond, the liberal peace provides a superficial dialogue with elites or internationally sponsored civil society instead of allowing for the participation of the more complex, deeper and richer 'local-local'.[58] This is crucial because the failure of the liberal peace is read in these terms. As indicated by critical studies of the peace process in the former Yugoslavia, superficial and limited understandings of the locals have reproduced divisive and violent categories[59] and the process has been co-opted by elites or nationalist entrepreneurs.[60]

Here, for the purpose of understanding the logic underpinning this argument, it might be useful to re-engage with Connolly's 'paradox of ethicality': while some ethical standards are necessary to organize social life, these will inescapably exclude, relegate or undermine some views. For the critics, 'the single-transferable peace package risks minimizing the space for

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[54] For example, Brigg (2013: 13–18); Mac Ginty (2008: 142). This point makes reference to the previous two chapters. As I have argued, critical understandings of the liberal peace have underappreciated the policy evolution of international statebuilding in Kosovo (ch 2) as well as the ethical responsibility to support local views underpinning resilient approaches (ch 3).

[55] Belloni (2012: 35); Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013: 775); Richmond (2009a: 565; 2012: 120).

[56] Boege et al. (2009: 611).

[57] Richmond (2011: 29).

[58] Richmond borrows the concept local-local from Arjun Appadurai to highlight the difference between the liberal engagement with the local and his 'deeper' understanding of the local. So the local-local denotes 'the existence and diversity of communities and individuals that constitute political society beyond this often liberally projected artifice of elites and civil society' (2011: 13–14). Also, see Richmond (2012: 120).

[59] This is, for example, the accusation that international interveners have institutionalized ethnicity and therefore reproduced violent discourses (Devic 2006; Hehir, 2007). Also, Mac Ginty (2008: 151).

[60] For an analysis that highlights the co-option of liberal peacebuilding by so-called illiberal groups in Kosovo, see Franks and Richmond (2008). For an analysis of how civil society is very narrowly framed in Bosnia, see Richmond (2011: 71–78).

organic local, traditional or indigenous contributions to peace-making'.[61] The critique of the liberal peace points out the failure to appreciate and engage with difference – or the deep 'local-local', as Richmond puts it – in present practices of peacebuilding. [62] As Brigg points out, 'currently available theoretical frameworks tend to be insufficient for addressing the challenges of cultural difference in peace and conflict studies'.[63] The observation that difference exceeds the conceptual grasp of an outside or universal perspective is not only a methodological point, but also a normative appraisal. For the critics, as for Connolly, the challenge is to develop an account of peace that affirms the richness of the everyday life without relying upon another set of *a priori* principles or out-of-context institutional frameworks.[64] This approach aspires to an ethical process of peace in tune with the particularism of the other.[65]

However, the critical frameworks of the liberal peace do not entail the celebration of all the ideas or practices proposed by the locals.[66] Post-war societies are not considered automatically unproblematic or benign, opposed to the domineering, interest-based and quasi-colonialist international interveners. For the critics, local actors can also have strong partisan feelings, pursue hierarchical social relations or be willing to exclude ethnic minorities.[67] As MacGinty argues, 'rather than a romantic defence of all things traditional or indigenous or the pursuit of a discourse of authenticity (which attaches premium to anything deemed authentic), all peace-making techniques and assumptions should be exposed to rigorous tests of relevance

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[61] Mac Ginty (2008: 145).

[62] As it will be argued in the last section, this is also the argument used by some scholars to criticise the critics of the liberal peace. That is, the critique of the critique is based on the same logic: difference always exceeds any approach that aims at embracing it.

[63] Brigg (2010: 339).

[64] For Richmond this is the contradiction of peace: 'it requires a method, ontology, and epistemology which is negotiated locally, but prompted externally by agents who must engage with the other, but cannot know one another a priori' (2011: 10 [emphasis in the original]).

[65] It is important to note that beyond discussions of peace, this ethical commitment to the Other has long ago been discussed. A radical interpretation of this position can be found, for example, in the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas, who underscores a relation to the "Other as other", even if this is unknown, incalculable (quoted in Campbell 1998: 172–173). Also, Bhabha (1994: 184).

[66] Connolly (2002: 14–15).

[67] Belloni (2012: 33); Boege et al. (2009: 612); Mac Ginty (2008: 149–150); Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013: 770). It is important to note that this point is very often introduced as a caveat or short insight in this literature. As it will be argued in the next chapter, this framing of the local as 'violent' or 'partisan' leads the critics to deny self-government to the local and legitimize international intervention. Moreover, I suggest that by rethinking this point peacebuilding can be thought differently from the liberal peace and its critical understandings.

and fitness for purpose'.[68] Here, Connolly's negotiation of the paradox of identity/difference clarifies the position of the critics. For instance, even if he is committed to diversity, he does not respect violent faiths and even proposes to take military or police action in these extreme cases.[69] The problems of violence across difference in conflict-affected environments cannot be tamed through the means of reinforcing the existing relations among identity groups or upholding some sovereignty claims at the expense of others. For him, groups that desire territorial hegemony or national dominance have the same problems of exclusion and violence towards difference than doctrines or movements with universal ambitions.[70]

By contrast, as analysed in the previous section, Connolly proposes 'to enliven the awareness of contingency within established constellations of identity and difference' and open up new possibilities for co-operation and coexistence.[71] The important point here is that Connolly's sensibilities eschew both universalist and culturalist frameworks because no hegemonic identity or faith can show fidelity to the diversity of the human condition. His ethics propose to embrace difference through a 'bicameral orientation' toward political life: affirming identities or faiths and, at the same time, negotiating with others in an agonistic process that is never completed.[72] This pluralism is useful to frame the proposed alternative of the post-liberal peace: this is a hybrid project, which moves away from the liberal peace universal assumptions and seeks to avoid the problem of accepting aggressive nationalist movements.

Hybridity: Unsettling binaries and exploring 'infrapolitical' resources

The proponents of a post-liberal peace do not yield an alternative to the liberal peace, at least not in the sense of developing another set of principles or political institutions to foster peace. What they yield is a new way of thinking through the problem of undermining or eliminating difference identified in earlier approaches of peace.[73] Rather than originating in an abstract discussion, the post-liberal peace appears to be a 'real-world condition' of contemporary war-affected zones, in which local actors resist,

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[68] Mac Ginty (2008: 149).

[69] Connolly is very careful to avoid relativism and rather than endorsing existing relations, he proposes to pluralise them (2005: 35, 41).

[70] See for example, Connolly's brief discussion about conflicts such as Bosnia, Lebanon and Northern Ireland (1995: 27); see also Connolly (2005: 28–29).

[71] Connolly (1995: 192).

[72] Connolly (2005: 31–35).

[73] Connolly (2002: 92).

modify, ignore, co-opt, adapt and contest liberal peace governance.[74] This accommodation, negotiation, tension or clash between the international/local divide neither produces a liberal outcome of peace based on market economy, democratic institutions and diverse civil society nor an indigenous peace based on potentially exclusionary illiberal practices. Instead, what is emerging today is an emancipatory form of hybrid, or hybridized, peace.[75] Differently labelled in the literature as 'hybrid political orders', 'hybrid peace' or 'hybrid peace governance' these names provide a new lens for thinking about contemporary cases of peacebuilding and, even more importantly, these interactions between multiple actors provide new opportunities for a more locally engrained form of peace. [76]

A good place to commence an analysis of hybrid frameworks of peace is to understand that these hold a positive view of the 'infrapolitical areas of the conflict affected societies'.[77] For critics like Richmond, the dynamic forces of the everyday resist external forms of governance and need to be engaged in order to foster an emancipatory version of peace.[78] The point is not limited to the need to recognize that culture matters or that one needs to understand other cultures – for liberal forms of peace also have insisted on being cognisant of differences among societies.[79] The point is to see that 'culture' is 'an under-recognised human heritage and resource for processing conflict and pursuing peace'.[80] The distinction was already hinted in the previous chapter: while liberal peace frameworks considered culture a constraint to the development of peace, hybrid peace approaches take it as a valuable resource. These assumptions are clear when acknowledging that, for Boege and colleagues, the success of cases such as Somaliland or Bougainville and the failure of others such as East Timor depend on 'the involvement of traditional actors and customary institutions'.[81] Whether these cases are successes or failures is beside the point. What matters is that peace must

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[74] For example, Belloni (2012: 21–22); Mac Ginty (2010: 392); Richmond (2011: 18).

[75] Richmond (2010a: 688). It is important to note that hybridity is usually seen as 'an ordinary experience' in the sense that 'everything is hybrid'. A hybrid framework therefore is ethically positioned to acknowledge the 'contingency of boundaries' Pieterse (2001: 238).

[76] Belloni (2012: 22).

[77] See fn. 45.

[78] Richmond (2012, 2009a: 571).

[79] For a classic text in which peace depends on the understanding of other cultures, see Benedict (1989).

[80] Brigg (2010: 341). Brigg uses culture here in broad terms, as a way to know human differences. This conceptualisation of culture is similar to Richmond's 'infrapolitical areas', as the sphere where multiple resources for peace are located. Also, Belloni (2012: 34).

[81] Boege et al. (2009: 606–610).

'invariably emerge from below'.[82]

Resources for peace are not always visible at first glance. Indeed, these are invisible to international eyes or approaches that narrowly focus on the modification of formal institutions.[83] According to the critics, it is indispensable to pursue a 'deeper contextualisation' to comprehend more sensitively the needs and complex situations of local actors. Also it is important to adopt 'ethnographic' methods to have access to the opportunities for peace that emerge in the everyday struggles.[84] These approaches seek to appreciate how post-conflict societies already possess mechanisms, norms and tactics to overcome crisis or gain security.[85] This of course challenges the role of international policy-makers, which need to support and be alert to these non-liberal forms of peace through innovative and spontaneous methods, rather than the rigid and institutionalist take-over of the liberal peace.[86] To summarise, hybrid approaches capture 'creative energies' and produce 'pacific and enduring results' to move away from the patronizing and domineering liberal project.[87]

A hybrid approach, however, does not imply a naive middle ground option of peace between internationals and nationals. Indeed, it can be said that the appeal of hybridity in analysis of peace is its readiness to move away from the dominance of binaries, which plague liberal peace thinking.[88] This sensibility goes back to the influence of post-colonial thinkers who argue that 'the hybridity angle on history unsettles the boundaries as well as the codes that sustain them'.[89] For Richmond, hybridity represents 'a form of agonism' between local and international actors, in which there is rejection and acceptance, the negotiation of public and hidden transcripts, contextualization and deterritorialisation.[90] This implies that local and international frameworks are transgressed and modified to the point where it is no longer possible to visualise a fixed or clear – and therefore

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[82] Boege et al. (2009: 611). Notice that the notion 'from below' is used first to criticise statebuilding imposed from above – like the liberal peace – and it is also the starting point for an alternative peace.

[83] Richmond (2011: 128).

[84] Richmond (2009a: 570–571).

[85] MacGinty (2010: 408); Roberts (2012: 369). It is important to recall that this approach shares many assumptions with contemporary resilience approaches in which peace depends on promoting or supporting the resources that communities already have. Sometimes the critics even use the concept of 'resilience' explicitly. For example, Voege et al. (2009: 608).

[86] Roberts (2012: 372).

[87] MacGinty (2010: 407). Also, Belloni (2012: 33).

[88] Peterson (2012: 12).

[89] Pieterse (2001: 234).

[90] Richmond (2010a: 685–686; 2011: 14–15, 145).

hierarchical – divide.[91] This is 'a fusion of global and local', as Roberts proposes, which 'accommodates the inevitable while pluralizing the possible'.[92] A hybrid framework is also in a better position to capture the diversity and complexity of local political orders than other reductionist framings of post-conflict spaces. For example, these societies have a rich mixture of indigenous forms of rule and authority and more formal state-related institutions, very often vestiges of colonialism or globalization.[93] Or, to put another example, a hybrid framework is thus useful to contest discourses that propose to divide and confront people across identity lines, as it might subvert static notions of ethnicity or religion.[94]

Of course, the critics do not assume that all hybrid formulations have an emancipatory potential.[95] But, in lieu of a conclusion, the alternative that comes out from hybrid approaches is a form of emancipatory peace that promises to be 'open to the everyday, difference, resistance, to agency, and the conditions of liberation, especially beneath the state'.[96] It thus moves away from the liberal peace focus on states, institutions or norms to be responsible for the 'poor, powerless, and marginalized' in their everyday contexts.[97] The ethical concerns held by the critics of the liberal peace is a more inclusive approach in which local concerns and agency are the means and ends of the process of peace. As Roberts argues, 'popular peace is the outcome of hearing, centring and responding to everyday needs enunciated locally as part of the peacebuilding process, which is then enabled by global actors with congruent interests in stable peace'.[98] This framework opens up the possibility for peace in tune with every society in their variance. It takes 'a pluralist view of difference and see[s] peace as hybrid, multiple and often agonistic'.[99]

The critique of the critique of the liberal peace

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[91] Richmond (2012: 121). See Bhabha (1994: 4) for an influential text that focuses on hybridity to overcome hierarchical divisions: 'this interstitial passage between fixed identification opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity and entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy'.

[92] Roberts (2012: 372).

[93] Boege (2009: 608).

[94] Constantinou (2007).

[95] For example, Peterson highlights that scholars and practitioners lack a more accurate understanding of different types of hybridity and the reactions to it (2012: 19). For a review of diverse practices of hybridisation, which do not all have positive outcomes, see also Richmond and Mitchell (2011: 9–10).

[96] Richmond (2011: 213–214).

[97] Richmond (2009a: 575).

[98] Roberts (2011: 2543).

[99] Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013: 764).

For long and from different angles, there has been a backlash against the notion of hybridity in post-colonial studies debates.[100] A salient critique suggests that discussions of hybridity tend to focus on identity and culture, while distracting from and silencing (if not reinforcing) the perpetuation of an unequal political economy and social injustices elsewhere.[101] The discourse of hybridity, Friedman argues, creates an 'ideological' dichotomy: 'good guys versus bad guys, essentialist, nationalist, refugees longing for their imagined homeland, versus hybrid cosmopolitans adeptly adapting to their current circumstances.'[102] For Hutnyk, similarly, 'the theorists of hybridity appear complicit in the middle-class comforts that their own cosmopolitan lives afford, while denying the same to others left to languish in the third world'.[103] While the *ad hominem* accusations are not important here, Friedman, Hutnyk and other critics point to those in the third world who cannot be (and those who do not want to be) as hybrid, pluralist or as cosmopolitan as the theorists who exalt hybridity. Boundaries matter for those who struggle to overcome colonial legacies, globalisation pressures, national exclusion, post-conflict situations or the effects of capital accumulation. However, from the advantage point of the promises of hybridity, their claims about identity, territory or statehood are considered erratic.[104] Those people are asked to emancipate from their particularistic views and join the experience and rightness of hybridity, in what soon edifices a hierarchical distinction between scholars and the people.[105] Even if hybrid thinkers affirm difference, this appreciation is true as long as difference is articulated beyond boundaries, in a pluralist guise. As I will argue in the conclusion and in the next chapter, following this critique, peace-as-hybridity is a discourse that, as counter-intuitive as it may seem, confronts and belittles those they initially tried to defend.

The focus now is on another critique of hybridity that comes from a different angle and that is helpful to understand the assumptions of critical scholars of liberal peace (analysed in the previous two sections). Although this might seem a counter-intuitive argument, it can be easily synthesised. The most evident shortcoming is that the critics of hybridity are suspicious of hybridity's hidden essentialist traces and the asymmetrical relationship

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[100] For an interesting overview of the critiques (and counter-critiques) of hybridity, see Pieterse (2001).

[101] See, for example, Ahmad (2001); Friedman (2002); Hutnyk (2005). Even if I am complicit with the framework of these critics of hybridity, as I will argue in the next chapter, this research can also be accused of focusing on discourses of culture and detracting from questions of political economy.

[102] Friedman (2002: 29).

[103] Hutnyk (2005: 95).

[104] Friedman (2002: 25–30).

[105] Ahmad (2008: 81).

established between the two cultures that form the hybrid – albeit these are in constant flux and therefore can never be considered two.[106] Far from rejecting hybridity,[107] as some of the above would suggest, these critics propose to further pluralise or hybridise the hybrid relations that have already been solidified. A principal example is offered by Anthias who is sceptical that 'new hybridities' could replace the dangerous exclusions of 'old cultures'. She inquires, 'to what extent does hybridity signal the end of ethnicity, in the sense of struggle and contestation around the ethnic boundary?'[108] After putting hybrid frameworks to the test of their own objectives (i.e. transcending cultural naturalisations), her conclusion is straightforward: 'while being anti-essentialist, [hybridity] has not been able convincingly to move away from old notions of culture and ethnicity which still lie at its head.'[109] I contend that this critique of hybridity has filtered in the current critique of the critique of liberal peacebuilding.

It seems that the proponents of hybrid peace did not go far enough in their attempt to disrupt the domineering top-down perspective of the liberal peace and embrace difference through a bottom up peace project. The initial flaw identified is that the mixture of local/international fails to capture the complex and diverse relations among agencies existing in post-conflict scenarios.[110] As Nadarajah and Rampton argue, this shallow notion of hybridity 'denies the deeper and more thoroughgoing hybridisation of the world'.[111] Underlying this is the notion that hybridity implicitly assumes the existence of two pure and homogenous entities prior to the hybrid moment.[112] Instead of a superficial local/international divide, hybridity can be conceptualised as the emergence of a 'third space'. As Bhabha argues, 'it is only when we understand that all cultural statements and systems are constructed in this contradictory and ambivalent [third] space of enunciation, that we begin to understand why hierarchical claims to the inherent originality or "purity" of cultures are untenable'.[113] Bhabha's emphasis on the constant ambivalence and flux of cultures that cannot be

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[106] Most authors or texts would fit under these two rather sketchy categories proposed here to analyse the critics of hybridity. For example, Anthias (2001) or, in the context of peace studies, see Nadarajah and Rampton (2014). However, for the purpose of this article, it is still useful to differentiate these two forms of critique, as they have different effects: in short, while the first group seeks to move away from discussions about culture; the second proposes to adopt a more radical understanding of culture. For a similar classification of the critics of hybridity, see Peterson (2012: 12-15).

[107] Ahmad (2008: 84).

[108] Anthias (2001: 622).

[109] Anthias (2001: 622).

[110] Charbonneau (2012: 511–512); Mitchell (2011).

[111] Nadarajah and Rampton (2014: 9).

[112] Peterson (2012: 13).

[113] Bhabha (1994: 37).

represented reveals that the critics of liberal peace have not been able 'to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities'.[114] The crucial point is that, if hybridity is a sensibility that helps to unsettle the violent boundaries that exist in the present,[115] hybrid peace proposals have failed to undo the boundaries constructed by the liberal peace.[116]

This interpretation of a more 'radical' or 'anti-essentialist' form of hybridity is not an esoteric intellectual exercise. Post-colonial writers use it to highlight that critical understandings of peace still carry 'avatars of Eurocentrism'. Sabaratnam, for example, argues that the hybrid peace emphasis on the need to engage with the particularisms of the locals reproduces a static relation and hierarchical division 'between the liberal, rational, modern West and a culturally distinct space of the local'.[117] For these authors, the problem is that by relying upon an essentialist different other – even if there is a positive understanding of local actors in their everyday contexts – hybrid discourses reify power relations when speaking about international actors that are powerful and the local that resists. As Drichel explains, they maintain 'the original *colonial* [liberal] distinction in *post*colonial [postliberal] times'.[118] Even if Mac Ginty, Richmond and others acknowledge that local and international are 'not discrete categories' or propose an agonistic process of negotiation between multiple actors; or even if they incorporate Bhabha's views to think of hybrid peace,[119] other post-colonial critics recognise these gestures as insufficient, unable to overcome their Eurocentric assumptions.[120]

To be clear, the point I am trying to make is not that hybrid peace approaches cannot be accused of having an essentialist understanding of the local and the international. They certainly maintain this (perilous) dichotomy and, in some cases, the naturalisation of these categories is clearer than in others.[121] However, the point here is that the critique directed at hybrid

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[114] Bhabha (1994: 1).

[115] Pieterse (2001: 238).

[116] Recall, for a moment, Connolly's paradox here. Connolly's ethical position was to find ways to cultivate care for identity and difference while assuming that every ethical gesture will conceal some possibilities. While hybridity offers the possibility to cultivate an appreciation of difference that questions boundaries of exclusion, it has to assume its failure: it will also be exceeded by 'the abundance of life' (2002: 10).

[117] Sabaratnam (2013: 267).

[118] Drichel (2008).

[119] Belloni (2012: 23); Mac Ginty (2010: 392); Richmond, for example, argues that 'what Bhaba refers to as the 'in-between space' represents the emergence of hybrid forms of peace' (2011: 128).

[120] Sabaratnam (2013: 267–268); Nadarajah and Rampton (2014: 9–12).

[121] For example, some authors define hybrid peace with clearly identifiable actors. Therefore undermining the original notion of 'hybridity' that problematises binary positions. See, for example, Roberts' proposal for peace: 'a popular peace designed by

peace has a very similar rationale to the previous critique of the liberal peace. That is, so to speak, the same premises the authors of peace-as-hybridity used to dismiss the liberal peace have been placed against them: principally, the elusive reality of conflict-affected zones cannot be captured within an essentialist framework. For the (post-colonial) critics of hybridity, hybrid peace has failed to engage with the particularism of others societies in a sensitive approach that genuinely overcomes hierarchical relations. In its place, it seems that post-colonial critics are pushing peacebuilding toward an even deeper understanding of the particularism of post-war societies, with the challenge in mind of doing so 'beyond Western ways of knowing culture'.[122] As Chandler observes, for the critics 'the alternative is not that of emancipatory social transformation but of the speculative and passive search for different, non-liberal forms of knowledge or of knowing'.[123]

Indeed, Sabaratnam's alternative scheme to liberal and post-liberal peace confirms the point. After detecting avatars of Eurocentrism in the critique of the liberal peace, she proposes a 'decolonising critique' through 'an extended appreciation of the historical political presence of societies targeted by interventions, and of forms of rule, power and resistance that existed in the territories concerned'.[124] How different this 'extended appreciation' is to the proposals of other critical approaches is unclear. But her attempt to embrace the other without fixing or essentialising – and therefore colonising – is useful to understand the nature of *critique* in discussions about peacebuilding. To conclude, the logic of this critique assumes that every attempt to build peace in tune with the other will inescapably fail and reinforce hierarchical relations.[125] This is because difference cannot be exhausted by any particular form of ethics, as Connolly's paradox of ethics indicates. Hence, one should not be surprised by the appearance of new critics who wish to further decolonise peacebuilding 'beyond' the previous attempts to be responsible for post-conflict societies. Drichel, for example, illustrates the point. He is concern is: 'how can postcolonialism continue to embrace "the other" without simultaneously recycling stereotypes?'[126] Following the ethics of Levinas and Derrida his answer is to deconstruct the postcolonialist forms of representation that have arrested and fixated the Other and subsumed its singularity to abstract categories or concepts. His solution promises a step further that goes 'post-the other' in order to

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local societies, furnished externally by international society and mobilised internally through formal and informal institutions' (2012: 368).

[122] Brigg and Muller (2009: 138).

[123] Chandler (2010a: 153).

[124] Sabaratnam (2013: 271).

[125] As it is argued in the previous chapter, in debates about peace, at least since Campbell (1998), critics have repetitively made this claim.

[126] Drichel (2008: 588).

overcome the colonialist traces of previous theories.[127] While Drichel claims to theorise 'beyond' existing perspectives, it may well be that he is only reproducing a critique that is self-devouring. Because if pluralism escapes the framing of any ethical approach that wishes to embrace it, the 'new pluralism' will soon be 'old' for the critics of tomorrow.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the core assumptions of the critique of liberal peace. I have initially framed the critics' ethical concerns through a reading of Connolly's work on pluralism and thereafter I have analysed their critique of contemporary peacebuilding processes. In short, the critics of the liberal peace have emphasised the international policy-makers inability to understand and appreciate the 'infra-political areas' of conflict-affected societies. As an alternative, these authors have proposed a hybrid peace approach that is context sensitive and that it carefully negotiates between the domineering nature of an externally driven approach and the possible exclusivist local practices. For Belloni, for example, 'an inclusive conversation between local and international actors could open the space for the emergence of a postliberal peace centred on a detailed understanding of the local culture, a respect for alterity, and provisions for the welfare and everyday needs of the population'.[128] However, for some authors, hybrid peace still reproduces a hierarchical distinction between the rational and peaceful international actors and the culturally static potentially violent locals.[129] I have concluded that critique always comes from the notion that difference exceeds any approach that seeks to be responsible for it. This is the fundamental assumption that drives critique in peacebuilding debates. In this regard, the challenge of responding ethically to the call of the other will continuously remain. To use Drichel's question again, 'how can postcolonialism continue to embrace "the other" without simultaneously recycling stereotypes?'

The repetition of this question is neither gratuitous, nor pleonastic. I want to use this question as a prelude to the last chapter. This is because, like Drichel, I am also motivated by the challenge of 'embracing the other without recycling stereotypes', even if I have a different answer. I do not intend to go beyond Drichel and imagine, for example, a post-post-the other. Actually, my intention is not to 'save' the other, but engage with it to see what has been missing in the formulation of the critique of liberal peace

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[127] Drichel (588: 602).

[128] Belloni (2012: 33).

[129] For example, Sabaratnam (2013: 267).

frameworks. It is at this moment, when it is important to no longer talk in the abstract and recall the face-to-face encounters with the Kosovars placed at the beginning of the thesis. In Kosovo, Alban, an artist from Pristina, told me: '*I am an Albanian. But independently of the group I belong, I want Kosovo to be a sovereign state*'. Milos, who is in charge of an NGO in Gracanica, had a different opinion: '*I prefer Kosovo to remain as part of Serbia, not only because I am a Serb, but because I want protection for the Serbian community and the religious and historical heritage in Kosovo*'. These two claims are not necessarily representative of Kosovars, but their honesty and clarity are important to heuristically rethink critique in peace studies. It appears to be that, as Friedman argues, 'it may be hybrid-for-us but in the street or the village, things are very different'.[130] The two competing claims about sovereignty – that were terribly important for the two Kosovars presented here – seem difficult to grasp for a critique that prioritizes hybridity. For the critics, the solution is never *there*, it needs to be further cultivated and thoughtfully investigated through a hybrid process of mutual learning. I argue that perhaps if life turns into a 'universal soup', as Pieterse put it,[131] then the Kosovars' dreams of sovereignty will not matter any more. But until then, boundaries will still be important for the people in Kosovo. Since Kosovars do not 'struggle to become hybrid', their claims appear to be inferior, pathological, old-fashioned or potentially violent under the eyes of current forms of critique.[132] The next chapter focuses on a debate about 'national ownership' – that a priori seems to support the Kosovars demands of self-government – to indicate that peacebuilding and critique might need to shift gears to engage seriously with the Other.

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[130] Friedman (2002: 28).

[131] Pieterse (2001: 236).

[132] For a similar critique of hybridity, see Ahmad (2001: 77–81). He puts it this way: 'the assumption that the hybrid has the truest eye has a strong whiff of the triumphant, post-enlightenment meta-narrative of modernity in which the non-West is civilised through colonialism'.

Chapter 5.
Limiting Ownership in Post-Conflict Situations: Protecting Unequal Humans?

Introduction

In the previous four chapters, I have traced the shifts and expansions of dominant discourses of liberal peacebuilding since the end of the Cold War. Schematically, top-down liberal peace frameworks – understood as processes of post-conflict democratisation in the immediate post-Cold War era and as efforts to nurture appropriate social standards through institution building towards the end of the decade – have evolved throughout the 2000s into bottom-up approaches. Now, external organisations have adopted a secondary role to strengthening the resilience of post-war societies. It has been argued that policy-oriented resilience approaches have co-evolved with academic critiques of the liberal peace (I have focused on 'hybrid peace' frameworks), as both share a sensitivity to develop initiatives respectful of the political and societal context of conflict-affected populations.

It is in this sense that, for policy-oriented works as well as theoretical based critiques of the top-down approaches of the 1990s, peacebuilding is increasingly conceived as a hybrid and reflective process between internationals and national actors. This hybrid process seeks to carefully and iteratively work upon the particular needs and preferences of post-war societies. As they are read in this research, therefore, the last twenty years reflect the disillusionment with universal models of peacebuilding that have given rise to peacebuilding projects that engage more sympathetically with those intervened upon. Yet after this analysis the main concern of this thesis remains: *the tendency to embrace difference has failed to engage meaningfully with post-conflict societies and it has done little to resolve the political concerns of these populations*.

This chapter seeks to engage this hypothesis and recapture the analysis carried out in previous chapters through giving an example of (and contesting) a wide consensus in the literature, which has rarely been problematised. The example will be the debate about "national" or "local ownership", which was introduced in policy frameworks in the late 1990s.[1]

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[1] OECD (1996).

The term has widely been understood in the literature as follows: 'the extent to which domestic actors control both the design and implementation of political processes', which is essential because, the wisdom goes, 'any peace process not embraced by those who have to live with it is likely to fail'.[2] The concept is celebrated for practical reasons but also for its ethical aspiration to transform current externally dominated practices and 'criticise a paternalistic attitude of donor countries toward local actors'.[3] Yet even if the practical and ethical importance of ownership is seldom disputed, there is a wide consensus too that ownership is not realised in practice. Indeed, the puzzle in the literature is how to operationalise this concept in post-conflict scenarios. As two commentators wrote: the challenge is that 'the international rhetoric of "local ownership" must be made substantially more real'.[4]

What is intriguing is that even if there are policy reports and academic critiques continuously highlighting that local ownership ought to be fulfilled, these calls almost never include de facto self-determination. This is intriguing because, as Chesterman notes, in its broadest sense, ownership means self-determination.[5] Rather than understanding it as akin to self-determination, though, studies define it as 'a shorthand way of describing the relationship between different local and international actors'.[6] Within this narrower definition, in which self-determination is not contemplated, the major concern is to ensure that international donors act with 'responsibility'.[7] Reich, for example, who calls 'literal' or 'full' 'ownership' an 'unfulfillable goal', wishes to improve the nature of the relationship between donors and recipients by introducing the notion of 'learning sites'.[8] For Donais, similarly, 'local ownership' is 'a delicate, complex, and often shifting balancing act, in which the division of responsibilities between outsider and insider is constantly calibrated and adjusted as a means to advancing the peace process'.[9] Krogstad rightly notes that the literature has mainly focused on the dilemmas faced by donors, but, instead of giving support to self-government, he focuses on the cases in which local authorities ask for an international supervision of their country. For him, there is no longer a conflictive relation between international and local, "coloniser" and "colonised", because sometimes receivers are the ones 'inviting the coloniser

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[2] Donais (2009a: 3).

[3] Reich (2006: 7). See also OECD (2011a: 45).

[4] Ganson and Wennmann (2012: 6).

[5] Chesterman (2007: 20).

[6] Martin and Moser (2012: 3).

[7] Martin and Moser (2012: 24).

[8] Reich (2006: 4).

[9] Donais (2009: 21).

back'.[10] To this, I add, what if they do not invite him? Or what if they do not even have the prerogative to make the invitation?

This chapter explores the tension between an increasing demand for transferring ownership to the local population and the also explicit assumption that self-determination and self-government have to be avoided in post-conflict situations. The tension, the fact that ownership and self-government have opposed connotations within contemporary frameworks of peacebuilding, is important to be questioned because in the literature this position is not contradictory: it is not presented as a tension. Indeed, it seems that the possible ambiguity of wanting more ownership but less self-government has disappeared, it has been "solved". The purpose, of course, is not to say that ownership ought to be self-government. The aim of this chapter is to interrogate how ownership has come to be understood in both the academic literature and in policy reports as a 'learning' relation or 'cultural exchange' between donors and recipients, in which self-government is no longer an issue demanding a response. The example of how national ownership has been conceptualised in the literature relies on the preceding analysis. The purpose of using this example is to push the analysis towards a conclusion. It is argued that the concept of ownership, as it has been interpreted by the discourses of peacebuilding analysed here, has been of little value to post-conflict societies and, furthermore, it has denied their moral autonomy.[11] This denial, disguised by a discourse that promises to embrace difference, puts the equality of intervened populations into a state of permanent displacement.

This chapter is divided into three parts that correspond to three approaches analysed throughout this thesis: liberal peace, building resilience and hybrid peace approaches. The first section focuses on how ownership was initially conceived in policy reports at the end of the 1990s with a brief example of how it was operationalised in Bosnia. It soon became clear in both policy and academic debates that the promotion of ownership was not in contradiction with deferring self-government. The second section explores the growing emphasis on local ownership, which is becoming both means and end of the process. However, as it will be demonstrated by engaging with the case of Kosovo, this greater commitment has not implied that the locals could take full control of the state. Finally, the third section deals with the academic critique of current peacebuilding missions. These authors seek to resolve the dilemmas of ownership by rethinking peace beyond existing dichotomies – such as, for example, the divide between international and local – and essentialist representations of politics to foster a more locally engrained peace. Yet critical frameworks also fail to engage meaningfully

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[10] Krogstad (2014: 1).

[11] In tension with the international framing of ownership, Kosovars, for example, have pursued 'ownership as self-determination' (see chapter 2).

with post-conflict societies. It is argued that their promise of emancipation, which downgrades the capacity of post-conflict societies to think and choose for themselves, is of little relevance for the current concerns of the people in the name of which critics have sought to renovate peacebuilding.

Liberal peace and the dilemmas of national ownership

In 1996, reflecting on the experience of the last five decades of international development, the OECD published a report to set a new strategy for the 21st century. 'Success will depend upon', it argued, 'an approach that recognises diversity among countries and societies and that respects local ownership of the development process'.[12] The concept of 'national' or 'local ownership' soon became a mantra for international organisations.[13] From the UN to the World Bank, there was the belief that there were no universally applicable strategies for development and for this reason developing people ought to be in the driver's seat of economic and political reforms that had to respect the specific socio-cultural context of every society. As one of the World Bank reports stressed: 'action must also take place with local leadership and ownership reflecting local realities. There is no simple, universal blueprint'.[14] In post-war scenarios, ownership was considered more burdensome because groups were generally divided and there were periodic relapses of violence. But nevertheless ownership was also increasingly seen as an important variable for achieving efficiency, legitimacy and context-sensitive solutions throughout the peacebuilding operation.[15] Chesterman explains that after the hands-on and very intrusive policy approaches supervising Kosovo and East Timor, the UN shifted the focus towards a 'light footprint approach' in Afghanistan, where ownership and involvement of the Afghan Transitional Administration were central concerns.[16] A UN official expressed his willingness to correct the overbearing outlook of previous intervention practices in these terms: 'we are protecting a peace process from the hubris

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[12] (OECD 1996: 9).

[13] CIDA (2002); Stiglitz (1998a; 1998b: 16–18); UNDP (2001: 20–30); World Bank (2000: 8–9; 2001: 191–192). Similar to the wording of the OECD, these reports considered that 'national ownership' was one of the 'principles of effective development'. The Canada International Development Agency wrote: 'development strategies, if they are to be sustainable, must be developed by recipient countries – their governments and people – and they must reflect their priorities, rather than the priorities of donors' (CIDA 2002: 4).

[14] World Bank (2001: vi).

[15] See the lessons learned from USAID's experience in promoting social reconciliation in post-conflict populations (Kumar 1999: 9).

[16] Chesterman (2002: 4–8).

of the international liberal agenda as promoted by donors'.[17] Ownership thus was introduced as a politically correct concept, which also provided more efficient results with regard to humanitarian assistance because it widened the scope of acceptance among the local population. Local inhabitants were no longer framed as passive receivers or victims, but as key actors that could actively interact with international partners to develop context-sensitive solutions.[18]

However, the rise of ownership in the broader context of post-conflict democratisation projects at the end of the 1990s contained a potential inconsistency. This is because the commitment to reflect the priorities of the local population – rather than those of external agencies – and devolve responsibility to the nationals appeared at a moment when there was the suspicion that democratisation could disturb the efficiency of peacebuilding missions.[19] As Jack Snyder summarises: 'the transition to democratic politics is meanwhile creating fertile conditions for nationalism and ethnic conflict, which not only raises the costs of the transition but may also redirect popular political participation into a lengthy antidemocratic detour.'[20] It is against this assumption that I seek to highlight the inherent tension haunting 'national ownership'.

That is, by proposing ownership as self-government, they would have infringed the widespread assumption shared by academics and policy-makers at the end of the 1990s that democracy was a destabilizing factor in post-war societies. [21] Nevertheless, according to international administrators, there was no such contradiction. As I shall demonstrate, local ownership turned from a problem for post-conflict democratisation endeavours into the solution for this democracy paradox: being both able to resolve the dangers of democracy, which could lead to conflict, and of interventions, which could be reminiscent of colonialism. That is, 'local ownership' was presented as a step forward strategy in all fronts: on the one hand, the concept appeared saved from the risks related to democratising conflict-affected environments because it ensured an international presence that could promote or enhance ownership. On the other, it freed international

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[17] Quoted in Chesterman (2002: 4).

[18] Pouligny (2009: 5).

[19] See chapter 1. After the experiences of post-conflict peacebuilding of the early 1990s, the main assumption was that rapid elections after the peace settlement would reproduce the divisive lines of the war contributing to the further destabilisation of the country (Carothers 2002; Mansfield and Snyder 1995; Paris 2004: 151–178; Snyder 2000).

[20] Snyder was optimistic that democratic governments were stable, but his point was that countries experiencing democratisation heighten the risk of war (2000: 20).

[21] For an account of the ambiguity of the concept of 'ownership' as it is applied in practice, see Chesterman (2007: 20).

administrators from a neo-colonial approach and it remained positively attached to a respect for diversity.

Let me illustrate how international agencies could dodge the tension between being sceptical about granting self-government and still promoting national ownership with a brief example from Bosnia. In 1999 the High Representative, Wolfang Petritsh, stated that the UN was undertaking a new approach, which he referred to as 'ownership'. For him, this new approach meant that the responsibility for the peace process and implementation of the Dayton Agreement lay with the Bosnian electorate and its elected leaders.[22] However, as Chandler observes, while Petritsch was defending ownership, at the same time, he was discriminating in favour of the leaders he preferred and was convinced that Bosnians were not yet ready to make the "appropriate" (read here non-nationalistic) democratic choices.[23] Almost paradoxically, the UN affirmed its commitment to encouraging local ownership *after* its ruling administration had been prolonged indefinitely and the High Representative had adopted further substantial powers in a meeting in Bonn only two years earlier. The point here is not that Petritsh was hypocritical, but to understand that for the High Representative the approach of 'ownership' did not imply 'self-government' and it was certainly not contradictory with further international assistance. With the benefit of hindsight, it seems obvious to say that, even if international policy-makers have increasingly transferred responsibilities to the local population, the process of ownership initiated by Petritsch has continuously limited self-government supposing that the Bosnians are not capable of taking autonomous actions.[24]

The more policy-oriented literature in the first decade of the 21st century has also conceived local ownership in similar ways: as a strategy which, on the one hand, represents a step forward for avoiding the too intrusive practices of early intervention and, on the other, it has to be limited.[25] For these scholars thus there is the need to support and respect local interests and practices in order to allegedly renovate internationally driven

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[22] Petritsch (1999).

[23] Chandler (2000: 201–202). Also, for a similar critique, see Hughes and Pupavac (2005: 882).

[24] For critiques along these lines, see Chandler (2000: 194; 2005); Pupavac (2004: 391–394). Both authors argue that the apparent contradiction between denying self-government and promoting ownership it is not a contradiction according to the lens of international policy-makers. This is because there has been a redefinition of the traditional meaning of democracy and citizens' political rights: now these come to be understood as processes that can be enhanced or empowered to meet international standards (Chandler 2000: 162–163; 2010c; Pupavac 2004: 393).

[25] I focus on this section on what one could refer to as 'policy-oriented' scholars that have engaged with ownership: Chesterman (2007); Nathan (2007); Scheye and Peake (2005); Pouligny (2009); Reich (2006); Tschirgi (2004).

statebuilding projects.[26] Nonetheless, much like the perspective taken by international administrations, they also think that the delicate realities of post-conflict situations place some constraints on the transfer of ownership. Scheye and Peake, for example, summarise the process by introducing the following paradox: 'the need to ensure that reform is "locally owned," coupled with the awareness that the actions of often the same "local owners" necessitated the intervention of the international community in the first place'.[27] The paradox sustains the idea that ownership needs to be carefully enhanced to avoid giving authority back to those that fought the war. In this fashion, Chesterman tells not to forget that 'operations have tended to be undertaken precisely because of the malevolence or incapacity of existing governance structures'.[28] Furthermore, Narten takes as given that 'international assistance' is a requirement in order to avoid the risk of 'falling back into violence and chaos'.[29]

These authors contend, as a starting point of their argument, that the autonomy of post-conflict societies is unquestionably problematic and thus some degree of external interference is mandatory. The hypothesis is that without an international presence, "they" will fail again or, at least, "they" will be much worse.[30] On this assumption, local ownership is then framed as a set of dilemmas that are resolved through a delicate process of negotiation or cooperation between internationals and nationals. As Scheye and Peake put it: 'the dilemma is how to chaperone a process that incorporates "local ownership," but that does not permit either international actors or the compromised "local owners" to dictate programming choices'.[31] Comparably, Narten proposes 'a field-based emphasis on gradual (co)-ownership between external and local actors' in order to, for example, reduce more effectively the power of 'local spoilers.'[32]

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[26] For example, as Nathan argues, 'What is required is not local support for donor programmes and projects but rather donor support for programmes and projects initiated by local actors. The question for donor governments is not "how can we undertake Security Sector Reforms in partner countries?" but "how can we support local actors who want to undertake SSR in partner countries?"' (2007: 4). Also, see Pouligny (2009: 22); Tschirgi (2004: 16).

[27] Scheye and Peake (2005: 259).

[28] Chesterman (2007: 7).

[29] Narten (2009: 252).

[30] Arguing against those scholars who oppose the need of external interference, Paris argues, first, that 'let them fail' is not option and, second, that less intrusive operations have not yielded better results. His conclusion is that 'most host countries would probably be much worse off if not for the assistance they received' (Paris 2009: 98–108).

[31] Scheye and Peake (2005: 259).

[32] Narten (2009: 278). Analysing the case in Kosovo, Narten considers Vetëvendosje a potential spoiler group. For him, the solution to the problem of spoilers would be to 'invest more in educational projects for the general public' (2009: 275, 279).

Since the early 2000s, along the very same lines of these academic commentators, international organisations have accepted that the process of successfully transferring authority depends on international administrators developing the structural conditions that make national ownership 'efficient'.[33] In 2005, in a manual for conflict resolution and peacebuilding, the OECD wrote: 'in all peace-building interventions particular emphasis should be given to national ownership of the process. Work may need to be done to ensure that it is truly representative and not perpetuating existing divisions in society'.[34] This statement needs a careful attention. While the OECD does not specify why the 'existing divisions in society' are 'not representative', it nevertheless assumes that there is the need to work on building favourable 'country conditions' and 'institutional capacity' to achieve that ownership is 'truly representative'. For the OECD, therefore, "ownership" does not imply the right to autonomously own or choose, but it is subordinated to prerequisites or amendments that internationals allocate and that indicate how ownership ought to be.

Within this framework, questions about the right to self-determination or direct voting mechanisms such as referenda are left aside until the adequate conditions are settled. Chesterman argues conclusively that 'ownership is certainly the intended end of such operations, but almost by definition it is not the means'.[35] How much time will be needed for the end of the operation, he does not say. But his conclusion serves to reaffirm that the literature has reached a consensus on the fact that the transfer of ownership does not mean transferring self-government, at least, *not yet*.[36] The assumption that post-war societies are not yet ready and, therefore, in need of international interference, is indicative of the conceptualization of ownership that is dominant since its initial formulations: rather than framing it as a democratic right to self-determination that populations have or do not have,[37] it has been formulated as a process that can be enhanced or built from a co-ownership perspective. In the next section, I focus on contemporary policy approaches that seek to make ownership more real, without however considering self-determination. Granting full sovereignty

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[33] UNDP (2010a: 23). For example, the *Utstein* group advises that a 'simple commitment to local ownership' without preconditions can be 'fatal to hopes of successful peacebuilding'. Instead, 'there needs to be very careful research about the identity and background of project partners, and recognition that it will be best to attempt to increase the degree of local ownership slowly and carefully as experience offers a growing basis of trust. Otherwise, local ownership risks being a code for working with the most powerful and most opportunistic sectors of society' (Smith 2004: 26–27).

[34] OECD (2005: 4, 7).

[35] Chesterman (2007: 7).

[36] For some more examples on this consensus, see the contributors to the volume edited by Ebnöther and Fluri (2005).

[37] For a defence of self-determination as a principle, see Philpott (1995).

to the people still remains too great a step for the contemporary project of global governance.[38]

Building resilience to make ownership more "real"

By the end of the 2000s, international organisations have progressively put a greater emphasis on the requirement that the local takes command of post-conflict situations. Nowhere has this tendency been more apparent than in recent policy reports that have focused on building peace as resilience.[39] 'Time and again, it has been noted that if there is one overriding lesson for the achievement of development results – and for the sustainability of such – it is the importance of national ownership', stated the UNDP.[40] A quick glance at contemporary reports is enough to identify systematic efforts to transfer responsibilities to the local, while respecting the specificity of each context. As the UN argues, 'peacebuilding strategies must be coherent and tailored to the specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership'.[41] The OECD has a similar position: 'it is absolutely necessary to give the state space to establish itself and to ensure that local ownership leads to locally grown institutions'.[42]

One of the crucial differences regarding previous approaches is that international organisations seek to make ownership more real. That is, in contrast to the previous approach in which ownership was the end that justified other means, now ownership is understood to be both the means and the end of the peacebuilding process.[43] In this vein, international

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[38] The attempts of limiting ownership run in parallel with the reconceptualization of sovereignty as a joint-endeavour in International Relations (i.e. Lake 2003; Ghani, Lockhart and Carnahan 2005).

[39] I refer to contemporary policy frameworks of peacebuilding as 'building resilience approaches'. This is to indicate a policy shift that seeks to move from a top-down to a bottom-up hybrid endeavour, which is intended to be more respectful to the values and interests of post-conflict societies. In chapter 2 I have illustrated this tendency through an analysis of the international missions in Kosovo: from UNMIK to EULEX. In chapter 3 I have engaged with the policy literature to argue that international organisations and critical frameworks of the liberal peace share similar assumptions.

[40] UNDP (2010a: 45). For another example see the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, integrated by developing states and partners. Its members have agreed to 'change the policy and practice of engagement': 'As part of the "New Deal" we commit to focus on new ways of engaging, to support inclusive country-led and country-owned transitions out of fragility based on a country-led fragility' (IDPS 2011).

[41] UN (2010: 6).

[42] OECD (2008: 101; 2011a: 23–25)

[43] See Chesterman's quote above. Recently, the OECD specifies that 'statebuilding is primarily a domestic process that involves local actors, which means that the role of

agencies have limited their role to a mere assistance, support or facilitation of the locally owned process of developing resilience to violence and unpredictable crisis of any sort.[44] In being both the means and the end of the project of peace, peacebuilders have sought to solve more proficiently the dilemmas of local ownership (either too intrusive international partners or too powerful local spoilers) of previous governance missions. Now, achieving local ownership requires international partners to become more self-reflexive throughout the process, aware of their limits and culturally biased assumptions, and more open to the socio-cultural backgrounds of other societies. At the same time, however, their role as facilitators is considered to be still important to ensure that the process is all encompassing and respectful of the preferences of minorities. It always appears that further work needs to be carried out to 'walk the talk' and guarantee 'genuine national ownership'.[45] Predicated on the belief that there can be ever-greater culturally sensitive policies and more inclusive measures, international administrators legitimise the prolongation of the process of transferring local ownership under international auspices.

The result is that energies to foster national ownership within contemporary policymaking frameworks are not translated into processes of de facto self-government. Rather than giving full autonomy or ownership to the local, local ownership has turned into a long-term emancipatory process in which autonomy is, at the same time, enhanced and supervised – without these positions being contradictory. Schmidt goes a step further to argue that, within current practices of internationally supervised democratisation processes, populations come to 'acknowledge' and 'fulfil' their 'lack of autonomy'.[46] However counter-intuitive this claim may sound, EULEX approach in the statebuilding project in Kosovo seems to be translating this idea into practice.

From its inaugural report, the EULEX Mission (2008–present) has stressed that 'there would be total ownership of the reform process by the relevant Kosovo institutions'.[47] Its commitment towards effectively operationalising local ownership seems clear in this statement:

> The EULEX Programmatic Approach is based on a rigorous adherence to the principle of 'local ownership'. In practice this has meant that the final responsibility for translating each recommendation into a MMA Action has rested with the relevant institutions of Kosovo's rule of law. In this way, the EULEX programmatic approach is designed to help

international actors is necessarily limited' (2011: 20).

[44] OECD (2010; 2011b); UNDP (2012). See chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion of resilience building frameworks.

[45] For example, OECD (2011a: 45); UNDP (2012: 101).

[46] Schmidt (2013b: 14). Also, Chandler (2013a: 66–67).

[47] EULEX (2009: 9).

Kosovo's rule of law bodies to make the changes themselves, rather than rely upon an international presence to do it for them.[48]

The willingness to transfer responsibility and leadership to the Kosovars is purposely different from the intrusive strategy led by the UN administration during the immediate post-war period. However, EULEX's predisposition to promote ownership is belied by the important fact that it entered into force just before the Kosovo Assembly declared the independence of the country in February 2008.[49] This implies that EULEX, which operates under UN Resolution 1244 and does not recognise Kosovo's independence,[50] is enhancing ownership to a population that is not sovereign. But under EULEX approach this is no longer problematic: it understands ownership as if there were no longer a conflictive binary or opposition between international supervision and local leadership. That is, ownership has turned into a process that has unsettled any tension between international (potentially neo-colonial) and local sovereignty (potentially problematic).[51] Within this framing, in which sovereignty is a priori eclipsed as an immediate possibility, ever more genuine local ownership can indeed become the means of a cooperative process of peacebuilding that has an unclear end.[52] Although the dilemmas of ownership may be "solved", the discourse of promoting ownership seems to constrain the political agency of the Kosovars who, to paraphrase Schmidt, own and fulfil their lack of autonomy.

The problem of granting ownership to some degree and discarding self-determination and full self-government from the equation is that this process is going against the preferences of the immense majority of the Kosovars. The calls for self-determination are not new. These have been on the agenda at least since the summer of 1990, when the majority of members of the Assembly voted to declare Kosovo a Republic within the Yugoslav Federation.[53] It is very likely therefore that, since the possibility of self-government is left out of EULEX's schema, international policy-makers are doing little to resolve the concerns of the majority of the Kosovars. The

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[48] EULEX (2010: 6).

[49] As discussed above, in the case of Bosnia, talks about 'ownership' were also introduced after the UN mission acquired further regulatory powers.

[50] It is important to add that, as seen in chapter 2, the literature emphasises that there are many international pressures –divided Security Council and divided EU – and domestic constraints – pressures from Serbia and territorials disputes in the north of Kosovo – that make it difficult for EULEX to recognise Kosovo as an independent state (see, for example, Greiçevci 2012; Papadimitriou and Petrov 2012; Weller 2008). However, the point here is to highlight that EULEX framework of statebuilding intends to support ownership without transferring self-government to the Kosovars.

[51] See chapter 3 and 4 for how hybridity seeks to undo the binary between international and national actors.

[52] See Krogstad (2014) for an interpretation, which undoes this binary.

[53] IICK (2000: 43–44).

efforts to respect and support the preferences and priorities of the locals, explicit in contemporary policy texts, become vacuous if these do not include or respond to their principal plea. [54] To be clear, the conclusion drawn here is not that Kosovo ought to be independent. What I seek to understand is the meaning and implications of a strategy that promotes ownership and seeks to respect the local sensitivities but still places firm restrictions regarding self-government.[55] It is important to reflect upon the notion of "transferring ownership within the confines of an international mission" because, at least in the cases of Bosnia and Kosovo, this approach seems to be frustrating one of the citizens' central agenda.

Let me finish this section with a brief remark that introduces the conclusion of this chapter. In a discussion about 'tolerance', Zizek argues that, in liberal democracies, there are limits on tolerance: 'We can go on making our small choices, "reinventing ourselves", on condition that these choices do not disturb the social and ideological balance'.[56] This description could be applied to Kosovo, and to debates about ownership more broadly, since tolerance has been granted on the condition that it does not mean self-government. However, when Zizek is developing the lines of his argument, he refers to the impossibility in contemporary democracies to introduce radical changes in the political and economic system. Against this constraint, his text is a 'plea for Leninist intolerance'. He wants to 'repeat, in present worldwide conditions, the Leninist gesture of reinventing the revolutionary project'. And he adds: 'This simply means that we obtain the right to think again'.[57] In the context of Kosovo, the freedom of choice of its citizens has been constrained to higher levels. Kosovars have not been restricted from carrying on any revolutionary project, as the one Zizek is proposing. What has been foreclosed throughout the statebuilding process is the possibility that Kosovars could govern themselves, like any other sovereign state.[58] Believing that post-conflict societies are fragile, ready to kill each other again

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[54] For instance, it is unsurprising that citizen satisfaction with the work of EULEX has been very low (below 30% most of the periods) and EULEX police even lower, regardless of ethnicity (IPOL 2012: 15–17).

[55] This point is at the core of this research. For instance, the deferral of decisions seems to be respectful of alterity (Campbell 1998), and this sensibility seems to inform current understandings of national ownership.

[56] Zizek (2002: 542). See also Furedi (2011:12), who observes that 'liberalism exists in an uneasy relation with censorious and intolerant attitudes towards those causing moral outrage'.

[57] Zizek (2002: 548).

[58] Liberal scholars frequently place limits on tolerance. Bhikhu Parekh, for example, argues that hate speech cannot be tolerated in a liberal democracy (2006). Although conceptually the point might be similar, I contend that Kosovar's claim of self-government cannot be compared to the discussions about hate speech or racism, which reveals how low the bar on tolerance has been placed in post-war situations.

and in need of a deep therapeutic intervention to build their resilience,[59] international administrators have undermined their moral and political autonomy.[60]

In conclusion, international peacebuilders have aimed to solve the dilemmas of local ownership by introducing peacebuilding processes that are own and led by local actors, in which the international and local are no longer opposed binaries. However, this solution also entails that international administrators still supervise the process, albeit less directly. This is justified given that post-war populations cannot yet make the right choices for themselves and ownership could still be more inclusive.[61] But, until this is realised, these processes suspend the autonomy of post-conflict societies and seem to be questioning the *equality* between these people and the rest of states, who can solve their problems in the political sphere. The last section seeks to expand on this conclusion by engaging with academic critical frameworks of peacebuilding, which presumably take the lead in caring for and tolerating the views of the local population.

Hybrid peace: Embracing difference at the cost of equality?

The critics of liberal peacebuilding[62] highlight two main problems regarding how ownership is operationalized, which explain the unsatisfactory outcomes of current peacebuilding missions. Firstly, these authors point out that international policy concerns related to 'local ownership' are only a rhetorical shift that is not realised in practice, where international and

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[59] It is likely that the fragility of post-war states has been exaggerated in a paternalistic fashion. See Pupavac for an analysis of how humanitarian responses have overemphasised the level of 'trauma' and 'psychological suffering' leading to the 'pathologisation' of war-affected societies (2001: 358–364).

[60] As Furedi argues, 'widespread scepticism about people's capacity to respond to dangerous ideas with maturity indicates that society finds it difficult to take seriously the value of moral autonomy' (2011: 126).

[61] For instance, Martin and Moser wish to "solve" the problem of ownership in Bosnia and Kosovo by the means of never transferring self-government: 'base the international presence around a perpetually renewable contract, in which international actors recognise, reassess and continuously reconfigure their responsibility in Kosovo in conjunction with local actors' (2012: 24).

[62] By critics of liberal peace, I refer to scholars who contest the universal assumptions of the earlier peacebuilding endeavours and that seek to build a more context-sensitive project of peace by embracing the needs and values of post-conflict societies. See chapter 2 for an analysis of these critical perspectives in the context of Kosovo since 1999. In chapter 3, I have analysed their assumptions and put them in dialogue with building resilience approaches. In chapter 4, I have analysed their ethical presuppositions. Here, I will focus on their critique of processes of promoting national ownership.

national actors still maintain asymmetrical power relations. [63] Even if contemporary policy-makers specify that they are willing to place local actors on the driver's seat, the critics nevertheless identify and censure the (liberal) elephant in the room. It is worth quoting Timothy Donais, who has extensively reviewed issues of local ownership,[64] at length:

> While the basic premise of peacebuilding, as Necla Tschirgi has suggested, is that peace cannot be imposed by external forces, military or otherwise, but must rather be nurtured through patient, flexible strategies carefully calibrated to the domestic political context, the empirical record suggests that peacebuilding in practice more closely resembles an externally driven exercise in both state building and social engineering. Local ownership of governance, in other words, is accepted in theory but rarely practiced.[65]

Donais straightforwardly criticises externally driven approaches of peace, which he identifies in the practice of international interventions despite their rhetoric. He suggests that the challenge is to build bridges between theory and practice, to develop strategies more sensitive to local contexts. Along these lines, Pouligny asserts that missions will fail unless internationals take a more 'modest, flexible, patient and unobtrusive' role that facilitates that local actors could lead the process.[66]

Secondly, critical scholars are wary of how ownership is being promoted. The main idea is that international administrators have relied on a narrow and 'self-referential vision of civil society' – one that is based, for example, on liberal NGO's – and have undermined the plurality of views and possibilities that can be found in the everyday of conflict-affected zones.[67] The consequence is that war-prone entrepreneurs, nationalist groups or other local 'spoilers', which do not represent the majority of the population, have co-opted ownership and dominated post-war political transitions. [68] For the critics, Kosovo is a paradigmatic case in which international

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[63] For Mac Ginty and Richmond 'local ownership', like 'partnership' or 'participation', are merely 'buzz phrases' to gain legitimacy and local concern (2013: 775). Notice that international administrators and policy-oriented academics also share the point that ownership has not been translated into practice when they assess some negative results of earlier international interventions (Chesterman 2007: 17; Nathan 2007: 1; Reich 2006: 14–15).

[64] Donais (2008; 2009a; 2009b).

[65] Donais (2009a: 4).

[66] Pouligny (2005: 608).

[67] Belloni (2001: 175–178). The argument goes that a deeper engagement with civil society would challenge a top-down version of peace and would overturn the risks that unrepresentative groups could co-opt the conflict-resolution process (Pouligny 2005; Orjuela 2003).

[68] Donais argues that, besides capacity building, work shall be done to promote 'capacity disabling' of some groups or some practices. This means that there ought to be 'efforts to disable, marginalize, or co-opt those domestic political power structures that stand in the way of the effective establishment of new institutions' (2009: 16).

administrators have become complicit in reinforcing a divided society where nationalist views persist. It is argued that UNMIK policies (i.e. the decentralisation of power to municipalities designed by the Ahtisaari's Plan) have institutionalised 'ethnicity' and legitimised a polarised civil society dominated by 'ethnic' thinking in which reconciliation among groups is far from tangible.[69] Almost consensually, these authors appeal for a reduction of the salience of ethnicity in order to foster an all-encompassing peace process that could be owned by the nationals. The aim is to be respectful of diversity without reifying nationalist positions.[70]

Against these two flaws underlined above, critical frameworks seek to renovate the actual promotion of ownership. The way forward is to involve a great variety of actors, with a specific attention for the powerless, in a truly inclusive peace endeavour. Richmond writes:

> Reforming the liberal peace model … requires an engagement with not just the currently fashionable and controversial issues of local ownership or local participation, but the far deeper 'local-local' (i.e. what lies beneath the veneer of internationally sponsored local actors and NGOs constituting a 'civil' as opposed to 'uncivil' society), which allows for genuine self-government, self-determination, democracy and human rights.[71]

The notion of the 'local-local' deserves special attention.[72] For Richmond, building peace in the plural – attuned to the culture and needs of every society and that is distinct from the democratic peace idealised by the liberal gaze – ought to be pursued by engaging with the 'local-local' and its critical agency. However, he argues, the challenge is that this deeper level is 'hermeneutic, diverse, fluid, transnational and transversal' and cannot be represented, analysed or governed from an external perspective. On this assumption, peacebuilding requires a plural, flexible and open understanding of difference, which does not essentialise or reduce difference to existing (Western-informed) forms of representation.[73]

The critics emancipatory call for peacebuilding – 'hybrid peace' – is driven by this attempt to engage with the local beyond 'ethnocentric ways of knowing culture', as Brigg puts it.[74] As a critical reappraisal of the liberal peace, hybrid approaches seek to foster a context-sensitive peacebuilding

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[69] Hehir (2006: 205–207); Franks and Richmond (2008: 94). These critiques of the statebuilding process in Kosovo have been analysed in detail in chapter 2.

[70] For example, see Devic (2006: 270); Simonsen (2005: 298); Franks and Richmond (2008: 98–99).

[71] Richmond (2011: 10).

[72] Mac Ginty and Richmond defines it as 'the local that cannot be described as subscribing to liberal and neoliberal rationalities' (2013: 774–775).

[73] Richmond (2011: 13–14). See also Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013: 764).

[74] Brigg (2010: 336–341). For a similar point in the broader context of IR, see Inayatullah and Blaney (2004: 14–16).

process, which avoids that it is dominated either by domineering policy-advisors or co-opted by unrepresentative local leaders. Hybridity is thus seen as a corrective framework for both international practitioners and nationalist entrepreneurs', who conceptualise identity as static, homogenous and essentialist and thus undermine multiple forms of being and doing.[75] There is confidence that a reflexive and agonistic conversation between multiple actors opens up new possibilities for cultivating a peace project that embraces difference.[76] As Richmond argues: 'peace-building would be reframed as a process that reconstructs the everyday according to how its subjects need and want to live, where rights and needs are both contextually and internationally negotiated and enabled'.[77] It is through this reflexive process and 'cultural exchange' between diverse international and local actors that critical proposals for peacebuilding seek to overcome the traps regarding the transfer of local ownership: 'merging top-down with bottom-up approaches in creative and culturally sensitive ways is also likely to enhance a sense among local populations of the legitimacy of the broader peacebuilding process'.[78] In proposals for hybrid peace, the dilemmas of ownership are being resolved by engaging in a constructive and agonistic process that corrects invasive international attitudes and potentially pernicious local values or ideas.

These critical perspectives are very similar to contemporary policy approaches of peacebuilding, which have already sought to abandon the top-down and intrusive projects of the late 1990s in order to facilitate and enhance a real process of ownership that is inclusive of diverse views. Although proposals for hybrid peace promise an even greater appreciation of the dynamics and resources of the everyday and a more sensitive engagement with the local (or the "local-local"), the process of transferring local ownership has not been translated into local self-government either. Therefore, these critical views do not represent a step forward compared with current governance approaches: they are still being "intolerant" to post-conflict societies if 'tolerance' is, as Furedi argues, 'a positive orientation towards creating the conditions where people can develop their autonomy through the freedom to make choices'.[79] Furedi starts from the assumption that people are autonomous subjects engaging in the world. Instead, very

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[75] Mac Ginty (2010: 397).

[76] As seen in chapter 4, the process of embracing difference has no end, since every attempt to be respectful with post-conflict societies is necessarily reductionist of their singularity (i.e. Campbell 1998, Drichel 2008). This has been the underlying assumption informing contemporary forms of 'critique' and 'the turn to the local'. However, this implies, as Koddenbrock observes, 'that the critique of intervention becomes ever smaller and empiricist' (2014: 15).

[77] Richmond (2012: 125).

[78] Donais (2009a: 19–20).

[79] Furedi (2011: 22).

similar to policy frameworks, scholars who defend hybrid peace consider the 'autonomy' and 'freedom to make choices' the problem to be corrected through a process of hybridisation that transcends the dichotomy of international "colonials" and local "spoilers".

The negative implication is that these critical perspectives, in wanting to hybridise the process of peacebuilding in an effort to respect and appreciate the pluralism of post-war societies, eschew or belittle the autonomous demands openly voiced by different local actors. The willingness to build peace *beyond* current forms of political representation and identification gives little meaning to the *present* struggles faced by these societies. For example, Richmond argues that the promise of a 'post-liberal peace' goes 'beyond mere rationalism and sovereignty', beyond 'state institutions' or 'territorial' constraints in order to aspire to true 'democracy and self-determination'.[80] But this promise is of little value for current concerns of most of the people in post-conflict societies who want sovereignty, territory and state institutions (e.g. Bosnia and Kosovo). Wishing to build peace beyond the dominant constellations of identity and difference, as William Connolly would say,[81] these frameworks disregard the preferences and political positions that make sense for the local population.

I do not want to close this chapter without introducing a final remark because one important question lingers: *why* have contemporary liberal peacebuilding discourses energetically celebrated (the "real" implementation of) the concept of 'national ownership' and yet it has rarely been translated into full 'self-government'? While this question cannot be exhausted in a single remark, I seek to provide an answer that engages retrospectively with the whole thesis. The point is not to say that hybrid approaches – similar to liberal peace frameworks – are hypocritical or cynical in the sense that they promise one thing (ownership and tolerance to difference) and do another (hybrid project which defers self-government).[82] I do not think that, for example, Mitchell and Richmond are cynical when they defend self-determination and yet they criticise local groups like Vetëvendosje in Kosovo.[83] The same goes for peacebuilders who uphold the value of ownership but only to some degree.[84] It is not cynicism what is at stake here, but dominant understandings that make possible to think of ownership

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[80] Richmond (2011: 130).

[81] Connolly (1995: xiv).

[82] The cynicism of international donors has been a common assumption in the critical literature. For instance, the belief that local ownership is 'empty rhetorical' implies that they are at least suspicious of being cynical (Donais 2009: 18).

[83] Richmond and Mitchell (2011: 335–340).

[84] In my interviews in Kosovo with members of international organisations such as UNMIK or OSCE, it was clear that the intentions of their actions were in concordance with their views. I did not suspect either of any hidden malevolent agenda.

detached from the possibility of self-government. As John Heathershaw argues, rather than framing peacebuilding as a 'cynical construct', we shall focus on the ethical assumptions that sustain current frameworks of the liberal peace. He continues: 'peacebuilding's world is one of bifurcated time, space and ethics: them and us, then and now, bad and good. It is a world divided between the 'enemy-other' (of the past, fundamentalist ethics and ethnic identity) and an 'ideal-other' (of the future, rationalist ethics and civic identity)'.[85]

The conceptualisation of a hierarchically 'bifurcated world' has dominated peacebuilding discourses since the mid-1990s:[86] on top of the ladder, there are peaceful, tolerant to diversity, civic, rational, cosmopolitan peacebuilders and Western societies. At an inferior level, there are war-prone, intolerant, ethnic and irrational post-conflict populations. As I have argued in chapter 1, the notion of a bifurcated world, the divide between Western and non-Western societies, appeared after the disillusionment related with the failure to achieve peace in war-affected societies. The fact that democratisation rarely worked for non-Western societies led to the conclusion that these peoples were (culturally) different. Since then, to put it sketchily here, peacebuilding frameworks have increasingly moved away from universal assumptions to focus and fix the subjective constraints that made these people fail. Having understood the 'universal assumptions' to be the source of the persistent crises of peacebuilding projects, both academics and policy-makers have instead sought to embrace difference conversationally with the aim of cultivating a form of peace that is unique to the needs of every society.[87]

However, within a framework that maintains the notion of a bifurcated world, it is difficult to take the claims about self-determination and self-government of post-conflict societies seriously.[88] In Kosovo, for example, scholars have usually read the struggle about sovereignty and the demands

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[85] Heathershaw (2008: 603).

[86] At the beginning of the decade of 1990s, frameworks of peace were predominantly considered of a universal nature and, therefore, the difference between societies was framed as one between democracies and non-democracies (Boutros-Ghali 1992; Fukuyama 1989; Huntington 1991; Rummel 1995; Russett 1993).

[87] David Scott reads the shift toward embracing culture as indicative of a post-ideological turn: 'a *post*-ideological conception of democratic pluralism and cosmopolitan idiom in which the otherness of the West's Others, once a source of defensive anxiety and the object of truth-determining investigations, [can] now be understood conversationally, antiessentially, ironically, as *mere* difference' (Scott 2003: 111 Emphasis in original). See also Jacoby (1999: 33).

[88] The position of prudence in regards to granting self-governance may be contextualised within the widespread 'distrust of state sovereignty' that informs most of contemporary theories of International Relations. See Bickerton, Cunliffe and Gourevitch (2007: 2–8).

of self-determination with great scepticism. [89] The rise of nationalist movements such as Vetëvendosje are viewed with disdain and fear that a sovereign Kosovo would be dominated by Kosovo-Albanians who silence minority communities. [90] Visoka, for example, explains how in Kosovo local resistance and bottom-up initiatives have 'the potential to revitalise political life' and 'safeguard the pluralist nature of public affairs'. However, having Vetëvendosje in mind, he argues that 'local resistance, while promoting nationalist ideology and denying ethnic differences and pluralism in society, often results in exclusionary practices that risk affecting the subalterns who belong to minority and vulnerable communities'. [91] Visoka makes clear that bottom-up projects have to be selective and is biased in favour of those who are diverse, hybrid and cosmopolitan and wary of those who, for example, reclaim security, territory or self-government. [92] In short, within contemporary peacebuilding frameworks that celebrate difference, there is still a constant reluctance to engage with 'the people whose choices – their difference –', as Zizek puts it, 'do make a difference'. [93]

For contemporary frameworks of the liberal peace, the Other is not taken as the sovereign *equal*, but as the *different* whose peace ought to be approached through a careful conversation and reflexive process of cooperation among multiple actors. Within this bifurcated world that structures peacebuilding on the meta-level, the demand on those intervened upon is to constantly destabilize their identity to accommodate difference. It is not hard to see that questions of self-government and sovereignty, which cannot be thought of without a more or less stable notion of identity and difference (i.e. the local and the international), are increasingly seen as non-possibilities: they even become conceptually and politically "nonexistent", no longer disputed. In lieu of a conclusion, it is argued that the cost of a discursive shift, which has sought to move away from universal approaches (considered intrusive and disrespectful of diversity) to emphasise difference, may be the difficulty to consider post-conflict populations as equals. On the assumption that these people are inferior, [94] the approaches analysed here

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[89] See the quote in fn 33. It is quite obvious the belief in a hierarchically divided world in Narten's account. He interprets the claims of independence made by the Kosovars as a problem of non-education in which the solution is to invest in education in a process facilitated by international organisations.

[90] McKinna (2012a); Richmond and Mitchell (2011: 335); Visoka (2011: 110–115).

[91] Vizoka (2011: 124).

[92] As Richmond argues: 'Peacebuilding should begin from the local, the everyday, from the bottom up, and wary of any problem-solving metanarratives relating to power, security, sovereignty, status, or territory, or even emancipation, which involve the claims to know on behalf of others, to govern on behalf of others or to defer agency and self-determination' (2011: 122).

[93] Zizek (2002:542).

[94] See Friedman for a critique of the hierarchical assumptions underpinning hybrid approaches (2002).

(liberal peace, building resilience or hybrid peace) have promoted ownership while adjourning self-government. This has been problematic, for instance, in the former Yugoslavia, where self-government has clearly been one of the central concerns of the local population. Yet different peacebuilding frameworks have considered that international assistance has been necessary to cultivate an emancipatory peace that is inclusive and plural, in which conflictive positions would disappear. Wanting to protect difference infinitely, the discourse of peacebuilding hides a paternalistic view of post-conflict societies that denies their equality and condemns them to appreciate and enjoy their differences in a process in which self-government is continuously deferred.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the tension between the growing commitment to promote national ownership and the reluctance to grant self-government to war-affected populations. With the purpose of repacking the previous analysis, I have analysed how 'local ownership' has been understood by the three approaches analysed throughout this research. Firstly, for liberal peace frameworks, ownership was introduced at the end of the 1990s both as a mechanism for bettering the results of previous missions and a politically correct concept to improve the practices and relations between interveners and intervened upon. However, the notion of ownership appeared at a time in which there was a great scepticism with democratic processes and thus it had to be postponed until certain social and political conditions were met. In its inception, therefore, ownership can be considered little more than window dressing that allowed post-war societies to implement policies that had been engineered by donors. Secondly, contemporary (building peace as resilience) policy frameworks have intended to correct the gap between an alleged theoretical commitment to ownership and the practice of the operations. In the last few years, local ownership has become both means and the apparent end of the mission (even if this outcome is constantly adjourned) and the role of peacebuilders is secondary in order to facilitate a mutual learning and cooperative process of peace.

However, it has been argued that their role as mere "facilitators" is still considered imperative in war-affected situations. Even if ownership has become a sine qua non principle for any peace process, this has not been translated into self-determination or self-government. The problem has been identified when the citizens in states like Bosnia or Kosovo, who have reclaimed self-government, have been constrained on the assumption that they are not prepared to take sovereign decisions. In this sense, I have argued that the promotion of ownership has undermined the moral and

political autonomy of post-war societies. As a minimum, it has existed in constant tension with the pleas and interests of the (majority of the) people.

This chapter has also analysed academic critical views of the liberal peace. Hybrid peace frameworks seek to resolve the problems of ownership – international domineering attitudes and local potentially violent preferences – by cultivating a process of agonistic relation between multiple self-reflexive actors. Yet it has been argued that their attempt to hypothesise beyond the existing forms of representation – as a means to solve the divisive tensions that exist in the present – seem to offer little value to conflict-affected people. In plain English, while critical frameworks project an inclusive peace process in which statehood, territory or security are no longer relevant,[95] meanwhile, before this promise of peace is fulfilled, sovereignty, territory and security are the wants of post-war populations. Along similar lines to policy approaches, therefore, hybrid peace perspectives have belittled the priorities of local actors that are not considered plural, emancipatory, hybrid or open to difference, and have legitimised further international assistance. The analysis of these views, adding to the findings of the previous chapters, has led me to the conclusion that, within the frameworks of peacebuilding that have increasingly embraced difference, the *equality* of post-war peoples has been degraded.

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[95] See, for instance, Richmond's promise of peace: 'A deterritorialised, non-sovereign polity would be the outcome of incorporating the everyday as a key priority of peacebuilding in desecuritised form, maximising critical agency rather than the national interest of the state or interests of donors (2011: 138–139).

Conclusion

This research started with the narrative of my face-to-face encounter with people from Kosovo. In the field trip, at least among the people I talked to, I identified a problem of two competing visions of sovereignty and a large desire to move forward through the possibility of governing themselves. The literature on peacebuilding, though, seems to have explained the tensions in Kosovo very differently. International policy-makers and academics have focused on an ethnic clash and the social and subjective malaise of the Kosovar population that has to be contained and supervised by an international supervision process. For them, the problem has to be resolved by cultivating tolerance among people, educating their views and developing a managerial process that could be respectful of diversity and could overcome the nationalist dreams of Kosovar society. The critical question posed by the literature that has justified an open-ended international crisis management operation in Kosovo has been: what if democracy and self-government allows Kosovars to fulfil their "ethnic" aspirations?

The research has pivoted around the misfit between my interpretation of the problems affecting the Kosovars and my reading of the different international framings of the politics in Kosovo. This misfit is relevant because the uneasiness of the Kosovars regarding international supervision chimes with the experiences of other affected societies that have been subject to supervision measures. In the literature, a "local turn" has proved significant, guided by an ethical fervour to cultivate a peace process that affirms, protects and pluralises the particularism of these societies. Yet my hypothesis at the beginning of this research has been that *this tendency to embrace difference seems to have failed to engage meaningfully with post-conflict societies and it has done little to resolve the political concerns of these people.*

This thesis has interpreted how dominant discourses of international peacebuilding (in policy-making and academic critique) have moved away from universal assumptions of peace, prevalent at the beginning of 1990s, and have co-evolved throughout the 2000s towards a commitment to cultivating a hybrid process that is context-sensitive and respectful of the needs of post-war societies. As it has been argued in **chapter 1**, this shift was nurtured in the mid-1990s, when processes of democratisation failed to facilitate sustainable peace following wars which seemed to be conceptually

different from previous conflicts.[1] Countries emerging from war were said to lack the appropriate social conditions for democracy to flourish. The emphasis on barbarism, cruelties, irrationality and the newness of these wars – as opposed to the wars fought for interests and rights – made it increasingly difficult to defend universal blueprints. By the end of the decade, critiquing democratisation through resort to 'the record of experience', Carothers observed that very few of the peace-building operations had succeeded to promote democracy, concluding that 'it is time to recognise that the transition paradigm has outlived its usefulness and to look for a better lens'.[2]

Since the late 1990s, then, following the critique of peace-as-democratisation processes, international administrators have experimented with processes of therapeutic institutionalisation that attempt to fix and rectify the deficient subjective constructs of post-war societies.[3] The work of Douglass North, analysed at the start of this research, was useful to conceptualise the tendency to adjust formal rules that could correct the informal constraints of underdeveloped or war-affected societies. In **chapter 2**, I have analysed how this focus on institutions sought to promote peacebuilding in Kosovo by managing the 'ethnic' desires of the Kosovars. I have argued that, on the assumption that Kosovo might relapse into "ethnic" violence if left alone, international supervision has been prolonged continuously with further managerialist mechanisms. As a conclusion, I have sought to undo the "ethnic dilemma" by rethinking the tensions in Kosovo within a national-democratic framework, as people who discuss and disagree over the sovereignty of the country. This explanatory framing is interesting not because it reveals that the majority of Kosovars desire independence from Serbia, of course, but because it suggests that the link between ethnicity and politics is a specifically international framing of the problem, which has led to an indefinite deferral of self-government, as it is apparent since EULEX commenced its technical mission in 2008.

Today, peacebuilders, who currently experiment with cautious and context-sensitive peace projects that are owned and led by local actors, increasingly share post-structuralist sensibilities, as I have argued in **chapter 3**. In this sense, David Campbell's critique of liberalism at the end of the 1990s has been useful to understand contemporary approaches of peacebuilding. For example, his ethos to strive for a promise of democracy and justice for the Other that will permanently remain 'to come',[4] echoes the policy strategy of building resilience without an end-goal for peace. Whereas

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[1] See, for example, the debate on the 'new wars': Kaldor (1999); Kalyvas (2001); Snow (1996).

[2] Carothers (2002: 6–9).

[3] North (1990).

[4] Campbell (1998: 192).

Campbell sought to undo the narratives that had concealed 'the complex and contested nature of Bosnian life',[5] policy-makers are adopting minimal and constructive roles in the peace process to ensure that societies build upon the resources they already have. Projects of mutual learning, iterative actions and self-reflexivity seem to invoke openness to context and a clear willingness to overcome the limits of the liberal peace.

Academic critiques of the liberal peace find themselves in disarray with the tendency of policy-makers to embark in a project of 'relational sensibility' with post-war societies.[6] As argued in **chapter 4**, contemporary critics argue that the policy shift is only rhetorical and, therefore, have emphasised the need to understand and appreciate further the 'infra-political areas' of conflict-affected societies.[7] A deeper appreciation of context will lead to a hybrid or post-liberal peace. As Belloni writes, 'an inclusive conversation between local and international actors could open the space for the emergence of a postliberal peace centred on a detailed understanding of the local culture, a respect for alterity, and provisions for the welfare and everyday needs of the population'.[8] However, I have argued that the logic of these critical arguments assume that every attempt to build peace will inescapably fail and reinforce hierarchical relations.[9] As such, critique has become an endless plea for further hybridisation. The suggested image of a vorarephilia of critique captures an endless process of a self-devouring critique whose only way forward seems to be to go 'local'.[10]

Chapter 5 has re-engaged with the previous analysis through an example: the conceptualisation of national ownership. While this concept would seem to be relevant for addressing the demands of self-government articulated by the Kosovars, it has been reinterpreted instead as a process in which self-government is not contemplated. For contemporary advocates of local ownership, it has turned into a process of careful and mutual apprenticeship in which there is no longer a tension between the presence of international actors (potentially neo-colonialist) and sovereignty (potentially problematic). Today, self-government seems no longer a question to be posed for current frameworks of global governance. By formulating this question – how has ownership been understood as a hybrid process in which self-governance is no longer a goal or an anxiety? – I have highlighted that discourses of peacebuilding might need to shift gears.

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[5] Campbell (1998: 114).

[6] Brigg (2013).

[7] See, for example, Richmond, whose views have been analysed through much of this work.

[8] Belloni (2012: 33).

[9] Campbell (1998); Connolly (2002).

[10] See Koddenbrock's analysis of contemporary forms of critique in IR (2014).

The sensibility to embrace *difference* in an indefinite process of hybridisation has failed to address meaningfully the problems and concerns of post-conflict societies. The conclusion of this research is that, drawing on the assumption that these societies are incapable of undertaking sovereign acts, the discourses of peacebuilding have legitimised a permanent role for external agencies that, seeking to strive for a deep appreciation of difference, have continuously questioned the political and human equality of post-conflict populations in a hierarchically-ordered world.

After the analysis of this research, it seems that the political autonomy of the people is one of the key problems of our times. To be sure, I would feel much more comfortable to discuss and disagree with the projects of (autonomous) people in the world than problematising their autonomy to the level in which they cannot speak or they cannot be comprehended. Today, "we" fear the people and democracy in processes of statebuilding and the remedy has been the cultivation of emancipatory processes of self-reflexivity and mutual learning. In the context of debates about peacebuilding, this thesis has been critical of the shift towards embracing difference that has deferred the possibility of self-determination.

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