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Peacebuilding – Imperialism’s New Disguise?

A Critical Assessment of the Neo-Imperialistic Agenda of Peacebuilding

A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in Justice and Transformation (Conflict Resolution)

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University of Cape Town

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Student:	Constanze Schellhaas
Student Number:	SCHCON003
Proposed Degree:	MPhil Justice and Transformation (Conflict Resolution)
Department:	Political Studies
Supervisor:	Annette Seegers

COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Abstract

Since the early nineties the world has become witness to the emergence of new forms of military intervention. So-called multilateral peace operations have become the latest response of the international community to what has been perceived as one of the greatest threats to international security since the end of the Cold War: the growth of intra-state conflicts and 'Complex Political Emergencies' specifically in the global South. Its supporters have promoted peacebuilding as a new international paradigm guided by humanitarian values and with the objective of bringing peace and justice to the war-torn and 'underdeveloped' nations of the world. In contrast to that stands the critique of peacebuilding or 'Liberal Peace' as 'Neo-Imperialism' designed to predominantly serve the interests of the main global powers by pacifying and even re-colonising the countries of the South.

This thesis critically assesses these different perspectives with the aim to highlight and better understand some of the main issues and implications that are underlying this unfolding debate in peacebuilding literature.

At first glance peacebuilding seems to mark a new stage in the relationship between the core and the periphery. The influence of outsiders into the domestic affairs of countries in the global South has once again increased: directly, through interim administrations and military presence and indirectly through the greater dependence on international aid. In addition, the quality of influence has also changed. Peacebuilders are concerned not only with rebuilding the infrastructure or redistributing material resources, but they are now attempting to transform societies as a whole by changing the behaviour and attitudes of the people living within them. But despite the outer appearance of something 'new', peacebuilding is, at a very fundamental level, based on the same underlying assumption of 'Modernisation Theory' that already presented the rationale for 'Development'. The very 'Development' that was declared dead and buried once it became obvious that it did not seem to have the intended outcomes of alleviating poverty and underdevelopment in the Third World.

From a critical perspective the symbolic line that has been drawn between the past and the present is therefore only an artificial one. The declaration of a 'new global order' is part of a greater narrative that has allowed the reinvention of development by giving it a new strategic role. The so-called 'new wars' have provided an opportunity to rediscover Development as a second chance to make modernity work.

The majority of peacebuilding literature, by focusing on the micro level and by being non-reflexive, is helping to legitimise this dominant ideology. Now is the time to ‘think anew’ and to call into question existing institutions and social relations by enquiring into their origins and how and whether they might be in the process of changing. In showing the linkages and how the whole fits together, critical research becomes a moral force that can play a vital role in radically reforming the institutions and networks of global governance. Instead of looking for managerial solution, future studies on peace operations should focus on uncovering ideological preferences of dominant theories and practices and seek more radical alternatives.

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Introduction

Background

Since the early nineties the world has become witness to the emergence of new forms of military intervention. So-called multilateral peace operations have become the latest response of the international community to what has been perceived as one of the greatest threats to international security since the end of the Cold War: the growth of intra-state conflicts and 'Complex Political Emergencies' (CPE) specifically in the global South.

In the attempt to deal with these phenomena the principle of non-interference was abandoned and replaced by a new will to intervene and transform societies as a whole. This meant that the international community not only redefined and widened its approaches of peacemaking and peacekeeping but also put a growing emphasis on post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. Guided by the paradigm of so-called 'liberal internationalism', peacebuilding is based on the assumption that by (re)-introducing democratic structures and a market-orientated economy, war-torn societies would be less likely to relapse into violence.

Alongside the international community's stronger involvement in the affairs of an increasing number of societies, the academic literature on peace operations began to flourish. But even though literature on 'Humanitarian Interventions', 'Peacekeeping' and 'Peacebuilding' has been burgeoning in recent years, it seems to be largely cut off from the rest of political science. As Roland Paris (2000) points out, in their research most peacebuilding scholars have focused on the micro level, meaning they have asked why some peace missions have been more successful than others and mainly dealt with practical, policy related issues such as the design, conduct, and outcome of particular missions. In this general pre-occupation with improving the effectiveness of future operations, only a few academics have been doing some "*thinking anew*" (Bellamy & Williams 2004a:1) by actually problematising the very existence of peace operations and by analysing peacebuilding in a broader, macro context. This seems quite surprising considering that these new generations of multilateral interventions raise core questions of the study of International Relations i.e. concerning the role of interests, ideas and norms in international politics, the possibility of cooperation among international actors and the nature of their relationship with each other.

Its supporters have promoted peacebuilding as a new international paradigm guided by humanitarian values and with the objective to bring peace and justice to the war-torn and 'underdeveloped' nations of the world. In contrast to that stands the critique which has been voiced by, for example, some of the recipients of humanitarian action who denounce this concept of 'Peacebuilding' or 'Liberal Peace' as 'Neo-Imperialism' designed to predominantly serve the interests of the main global powers by pacifying and even re-colonising the countries of the South.

Research Objective and Methodology

Peacebuilding - imperialisms' new disguise? The purpose of posing this question is to critically engage with this emerging debate within peacebuilding literature by

- A) providing a critical analysis of the main positions in peacebuilding literature,
- B) further investigating the critique of peacebuilding as neo-imperialism.

A) Studying the relevant literature one can find different explanations for why peacebuilders have not managed to build peace. In this thesis I will analyse and compare these various perspectives using a specific framework. This is relevant for two reasons: Firstly, apart from some exceptions (see Fetherston (2000a), Johnstone (2005), Llamazares (2005) and Bellamy (2004)) there have been only few attempts to categorise the vast amount of writing on the topic. Secondly, it responds to Paris critique that the main focus of peacebuilding literature seems to be on the micro level by comparing the micro with the macro theory.

B) When reading peacebuilding literature one might easily get the impression that we are dealing with a new era or phenomenon of humanitarianism where military interventions are undertaken with the selfless objective of bringing peace. Investigating the critique of neo-imperialism also means analysing peacebuilding in the historical context of the relationship between the richer countries in the West and 'the rest'. From a coloniser-colonised dichotomy, the liberation of colonies saw a shift in approach, from 'domination' to 'development', in the 1960's. Looking at the terminology and the debates of the so-called 'Development Discourse', one will find many similarities to the present 'Peace Discourse'. The question one is therefore inclined to ask is: what has changed? The challenge within this

objective lies in linking the two discourses of 'Development' and 'Peacebuilding' by drawing from theories of imperialism and neo-imperialism and to highlight some of the continuities and discontinuities.

This thesis attempts to provide a critical analysis of the current debate within peacebuilding literature by focusing on the concept of imperialism. In doing so I have analysed secondary as well as primary literature. The type of discourse analysis I am engaging in is primarily a historical one, starting with the origins of the concept and following it through the various phases of the 'Age of Development' and the 'New Humanitarian Era'. Considering the vast amount of literature on these topics, the limitations for this thesis are quite obvious. It does not only attempt to provide an overview of the main debates within one discourse, but also tries to bring two discourses together. In doing so it cannot go to a deep level and elaborate on the details, but has to stay broad and focus on the main issues.

Structure

The first part of this thesis introduces the concept of 'Peacebuilding' as it is generally understood and presented by its promoters - namely as a strategy for achieving global peace. The second part, summarises various concepts of imperialism and how they have evolved over time. Part three brings the two concepts of peacebuilding and imperialism together: after sketching out the main arguments of the less optimistic interpretations of this new phenomenon of 'liberal internationalism' (either as a strategy of poverty containment or even a form of neo-colonisation) I will use a specific framework to compare the various interpretations of the concept of imperialism. This is followed by my own critical assessment of these positions.

Part I: Peacebuilding – An Introduction

Despite the fact that peacebuilding has become a rather popular term, there is still a general lack of conceptual clarity. As David (1999) points out, peacebuilding may be broadly or narrowly defined and there seems to be no agreement on the precise parameters. The origins of the term peacebuilding are usually traced back to the 1992-1995 editions of *An Agenda for Peace* by then-United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in which he proposes responsibilities and responses for the United Nations (UN) and the international community in dealing with contemporary conflicts.¹ Since then peacebuilding has become a much debated and rather elastic concept with great differences between theory (meaning the academic peace and conflict research community) and practice (meaning practitioners and doctrine writers).

The point of departure for this thesis is the actual ‘practice of peacebuilding’, meaning peacebuilding as it has been implemented by the various actors of the international community such as UN, the international financial institutions (the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB)) and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs).²

In order to provide a conceptual framework for the later analysis, this chapter will introduce the concept of peacebuilding as it is generally understood and presented by its promoters - namely as a strategy for achieving global peace - before introducing some of the main criticism of it. After a brief description of the evolution of new generations of peace

¹ Though one has to point out that in the academic fields of peace and conflict research ‘peacebuilding’ was a well-known concept, even before the *Agenda for Peace*, although some authors used a different terminology. Lederach (1997) for example talks about “*social reconstruction in sustaining peace*” (Lederach 1997:14).

² Haugerudbraaten (1998) has identified two different concepts that seem to exist in peacebuilding literature. The first concept, which I refer to as narrow, is the short-term involvement of the international community. The means to achieve positive peace are to promote good governance and dispute settlement mechanisms through primarily centralized political intervention. Action is primarily undertaken by external actors even though attention is paid to obtaining the consent and support of the indigenous population. The second concept refers to the more long-term efforts by mainly indigenous actors who try to address the ‘root causes of conflict’ by promoting political and economical development in a broad sense, meaning a) in political as well as economic, humanitarian and social spheres and b) relying on a multitude of divers actors (Haugerudbraaten 1998). Both of these concepts have to be understood as ‘ideal’ types, meaning they exist mainly in theory. Especially the ‘broader’ concept which predominantly appears in the academic field of Peace and Conflict Studies can be seen more as a ‘vision’ of how peacebuilding ‘should be’ rather than as describing the actual practice. The ‘reality’ or ‘practice’ of a post-conflict situation is somewhere in-between those ‘ideal types’ and rather complex and difficult to define. Even though it seems closely related to the first, so-called ‘narrow’ concept, peacebuilding as it is presently undertaken exceeds it in a number of ways. For example it is more than just a political intervention, it includes both short-term as well as long-term activities of not only the different actors of the international community but also ‘local’ stakeholders.

operations in the context of the so-called New World Order, I will present the underlying logic and main components of peacebuilding. The last section provides an introduction to the main part of this thesis by giving an overview of the existing body of literature focusing on the evaluation of peacebuilding efforts.

From Traditional Peacekeeping to Post-Conflict Peacebuilding

Post-conflict peacebuilding is usually presented as one of the new forms of international intervention into the internal affairs of states that have evolved after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The emergence of new generations of peace operations is generally closely linked to the phenomenon of so-called 'new wars'.

The Internationalisation Of 'New Wars' And Complex Emergencies

The end of the Cold War has been seen as creating the conditions for increased civil strife and internal wars. These civil wars (such as in ex-Yugoslavia, Somalia and Rwanda) characterised by the breakdown of political, economic and social order and by the targeting of the civilian population have also been referred to as 'new wars' and 'complex humanitarian emergencies' or 'complex political emergencies', though the newness of contemporary conflicts has been subject to much debate.

The term 'complex political emergency' (CPE) was coined in the United Nations to describe those major war-related crises, which seem to have proliferated since 1989. The growth of CPEs is documented in the increasing number of refugees since 1990 as well as in the numbers of internally displaced persons and the higher proportion of official development assistance. But whilst some authors have argued that the violence in 'old' wars tended to be more limited, disciplined or at least understandable, compared to the senseless, gratuitous and uncontrolled character of the 'new wars' (Kalyvas 2001), others have disagreed and pointed out that the appalling atrocities of war and genocide in the 1990s are not really new phenomena, but have precedents in previous wars in this and other centuries (Thusi 2001; Slim 1997). According to the latter the 'newness' has more to do with the change in perception of international security and the de-ideologisation of wars after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This allowed for a growing awareness of the spread of these so-called 'complex humanitarian emergencies', which are believed to be a by-product of the removal of

superpower restrains on client states (Commins 1996), followed by the “*desire to do something about it*” (Stephenson 1994:16).

Peacekeeping And Peacebuilding In A New World Order

As has been outlined in the previous point, the evolution of new forms of an increasing number of so-called ‘peace operations’ of the international community has been linked to a rising number of civil wars after the Cold War, specifically in the global South. In order to better deal with this ‘new’ threat to International Security a number of conceptual shifts have occurred, especially within the UN.

Before 1989 intra-state conflicts were mainly seen as internal state affairs, which, because of the principle of state sovereignty, were not to be interfered with except with the consent of the parties involved. International interventions during this time usually took the form of so-called traditional or first generation peacekeeping, which has been described as a “*dissociate strategy that merely tried to return the parties to the status quo ante*” (Ryan 200:33) by reducing the level of direct violence but not addressing the structural causes. In operational terms, the main tasks of traditional peacekeeping were the inter-positioning of UN troops to separate the armed forces of belligerents (of usually inter-state wars) after an agreement was reached, and the provision of humanitarian assistance (Slim 2000).

But the collapse of the Soviet Union gave birth to a so-called ‘New World Order’ proclaimed by the American President at the time, George Bush (Senior). It is argued that in this new veto-free post-Cold War security framework, the international community expanded its peacekeeping mandate in the hope of taking on a leading and more proactive role in resolving the ‘new’ conflicts around the world (Honwana 2002).

In contrast to the first generation, the so-called ‘second generation peacekeeping’ (as well as the following generations) is said to reject the status quo ante. These new generations of military operations go ‘beyond’ peacekeeping by not only attempting to reduce the level of direct violence, but in addition, by aiming at constructing more peaceful and just societies (Ryan 2000). As Lund (2003) describes, the involvement of the international community *broadened* laterally in terms of policy sectors that are implicated, *deepened* in terms of the

engagement with the internal workings of societies and *lengthened* in terms of stages of conflict when it operates.

This change did not occur overnight. As Duffield (2002b) points out, in the first half of the 1990's the main concern of the international community regarding conflict was more that of humanitarian intervention, meaning the developing of new institutional arrangements that allowed aid agencies to work in zones of ongoing conflict and to support civilians in war zones. Only after the limited success of this approach became apparent, the policy focus began to shift in the mid-1990's to include conflict resolution, post-war reconstruction and nation-building.

The landmark for this shift was set in 1992 when the then-UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali published *An Agenda for Peace* in which he declared that "*the time of absolute and exclusive sovereignty has passed*" (Boutros-Ghali 1992 quoted in Slim 2000:2). Boutros-Ghali not only proposed the UN's right to pursue a new strategy of military humanitarianism but also sketched out the responsibilities and responses for the UN and the international community in dealing with contemporary conflicts. The main modes of intervention by which the UN intended to become an "*overarching force for peace and security throughout the world*" (Slim 2000) were listed as: emergency assistance (humanitarian provision to victims of war), preventative diplomacy (political or diplomatic activity to reduce the likelihood of a conflict escalating into physical violence), peacemaking (political, diplomatic and sometimes military interventions directed at bringing warring parties to agreement), peacekeeping (provision of peace-keeping military forces, verification (of elections, of respect for human rights, etcetera) and other techniques used to monitor compliance with agreements and foster mutual confidence), post-conflict peacebuilding (the promotion of institutional and socio-economic measures, at the local and national level to address the underlying causes of conflict) (Goodhand & Hulme 1999).

Summing Up: The Rise Of A New Humanitarian Era

Why is it that with the end of the Cold War there seems to be a greater desire in the international community to do something about these 'new' wars? Terminology such as the "*New Humanitarian Era*" (Slim 1997, 2000), "*The Responsibility to Protect*" and "*the internationalization of the human conscience*" (International Commission on Intervention and

State Sovereignty 2001:vii) in mainstream peacebuilding literature seem to suggest that external intervention into civil wars since the end of the Cold War is conceived primarily as an impartial humanitarian pursuit. According to Slim (1997), for example, the “*New Internationalisation of Civil War*” (Slim 1997:1) in the 1990’s has largely moved away from a war-making to a humanitarian and peacemaking paradigm. The end of the Cold War is said to have given rise to a new freedom of humanitarian action for the international community, more especially the UN Security Council which increasingly linked humanitarian concern with its concerns for peace and security (Malone 1997 in Slim 1997). The phenomenon of a great part of the international community joining forces in the name of peace and humanity is also referred to as the “*New Interventionism*” (Mayall in Slim 1997:5) or “*Military Humanitarianism*”(Slim 2000).

Having outlined how the origin of peacebuilding is usually linked to the emergence of a ‘New Humanitarian Era’ after the end of the Cold War, in which new (and supposedly more humanitarian) forms of UN military interventions are seen to have evolved in order to deal with the increasing number of civil wars, it is now time to explore the actual concept of peacebuilding as it is generally presented and understood by its supporters: as a strategy for achieving global peace.

Peacebuilding - Strategy For Global Peace

Since their emergence peacebuilding activities have continuously expanded and resulted in new notions of peacebuilding. As Lund (2003) points out what used to be called just ‘peacekeeping’ in a post-conflict settings has evolved into ‘second generation peacekeeping’, from which it has transformed into ‘peace operations’. More recently military activities have been intrinsically linked to civil administration and other functions under the rubric of ‘post-conflict peacebuilding’. It is not my intention here to describe the exact shape, parameters and facets of peacebuilding in the last decade. Focusing on the common features of more recent efforts, I want to outline a more general conception of peacebuilding by addressing the following questions: What is peacebuilding meant to achieve? What is the underlying theory? What are the main tasks and activities? Who are the main actors?

The Aim Of Peacebuilding

What is it that the international community seeks to achieve by sending their military troops, their political and economic advisers and their NGOs into a post-conflict society?

In *An Agenda for Peace* peacebuilding has been defined as an “*action to identify and support structures which tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict*” (Boutros-Ghali 1992 quoted in Fetherston 2000:201, emphasis added). According to Ramsbotham (2000), this was at firstly largely identified with military demobilisation and the political transition to participatory electoral democracy, which has remained at the core of the UN’s post-settlement peacebuilding ‘standard operating procedure’. Since *An Agenda for Peace* the concept has been progressively expanded in subsequent versions to include a broader agenda aimed at alleviating the worst effects of war on the population and promoting a more “*sustainable development approach which tackles the root causes of emergencies*” (Michael Pugh quoted in Ramsbotham 2000:171, emphasis added).

In order to understand how the different activities of peacebuilding are meant to achieve these aims, it is necessary to take a closer look at what exactly are the perceived root causes of conflict and further, how the specific activities of peacebuilding practice are meant to address these.

Peacebuilding - A Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework explains and therefore also justifies why a particular strategy is designed in a certain way. It further provides the rationale for expecting that doing things that way will achieve the desired results. The perception and promotion of peacebuilding as a strategy for preventing a relapse into violent conflict and building a more sustainable peace is based on specific underlying explanations and assumptions.

Understanding Conflict

It seems that in trying to explain (and therefore respond to) the phenomenon of contemporary civil wars and communal violent conflict, most actors and especially external ones such as the World Bank and the UN system, have mainly focused on ‘internal’ causes - meaning causes in the national context of a post-conflict society.

Slim (1997) highlights theories of 'ethnic conflict' or 'politicised ethnicity', which are concentrating on identity as a critical determinant of social contemporary civil war, as well as classical ideas of 'failed' or 'collapsed states' as the most popular theories explaining 'new' wars even though it is the latter that is seen as the most dominant one and at the heart of, for example, UN foreign policy. William Zartman, one of the scholars promoting this theory refers to the phenomenon of state collapse as "*a situation where the structure, authority (legitimate power), law, and political order have fallen apart...the state itself, as a legitimate, functioning order, is gone*" (Zartman 1995:1). The logical conclusion from this interpretation -and therefore one of the underlying assumptions of peacebuilding- has been that (re-) building functioning state structures will prevent a relapse into war.

In addition, structural factors have increasingly been recognised as causing violent conflict.³ In *An Agenda for Peace* peacebuilding is described not only as assistance in "*rebuilding the institutions and infrastructures of nations torn by civil war and strive*" but also, and this goes beyond rebuilding the state, as assistance "*in the largest sense, to address the deepest causes of conflict: economic despair, social injustice and political oppression*" (Boutros-Ghali 1992). This is an important addition, which explains the involvement of other actors apart from the UN such as the World Bank; though it is important to highlight that in addressing structural factors the focus is still on the domestic context of the specific country rather than for instance on global structures.

Having outlined the perceived causes for the 'new' wars, I will now proceed to the theoretical considerations of how peacebuilding is meant to address these.

Theoretical Assumptions

Basically, the international community's way to build sustainable peace in a war-torn society is to (re-) introduce and (re-) build a democratic system as well as to (further) liberate the market.⁴ This approach is also known as 'liberal internationalism'. According to Paris (1997),

³ Johan Galtung (1996) introduced the idea of 'structural violence'. Whilst direct violence has a receiver and a sender, indirect violence comes from social structures (hence 'structural violence'), with its two major forms being repression (political) and exploitation (economical).

⁴ 'Re' and 'further' is important to note, because in most cases the countries have undertaken (usually due to the pressure of the international community) previous attempts to liberate their political and economical spheres. Economical liberation in this context means both the internal restructuring of a nation into a capitalist economy (for example privatisation of state assets) and its integration into global capital market (for example opening the market for foreign investment).

the underlying assumption of this concept is that, equipped with a liberal democratic polity and a market orientated economy, war-torn societies are less likely to relapse into fighting. The basic peacebuilding formula, which has served as a blueprint in all peacebuilding interventions, can therefore be summarised as:

Democracy + Market Economy = Peace

This assumption has to be understood in the context of the recent history of the West. Firstly it seems to prove that democracies are less likely to experience internal violence. The idea for post-conflict societies is that democracy opens up possibilities for formerly excluded parties to access political power. Political objectives will now be fought over in parliaments rather than on battlefields. Secondly, it is hoped that in the long run, the benefits of stable economic growth through a free market system will eventually trickle down and further strengthen and solidify peace. The establishment of a democratic system as well as the liberation of the local economy and its inclusion in the global capitalist system can therefore be described as the primary objectives of peacebuilding as presently implemented. In other words, building peace in practice means transforming post-conflict societies into liberal capitalist democracies.

As Lund (2003) and Paris (1997) point out, and as will be further discussed at a later point, peacebuilding in this sense is a continuation of the so-called 'Modernisation Project' by being intellectually based on the predominant consensus around liberal values which are seen as a remedy for violent conflict *ipso facto*, in any context, form and increment in which they can be applied.

Having outlined the theoretical framework, what follows is a more detailed look at the actual implementation or 'reality' of peacebuilding by introducing its main tasks and activities.

The Implementation Of Peacebuilding

David (1999) structures the 'practice of peacebuilding' into the three main objectives of security transition, democratic transition, and socio-economic transition.

Security transition, which is aimed at preventing the resumption of violence, involves tasks such as disarming and demobilising combatants, re-integrating them into civilian life,

reforming the military and police forces, facilitating the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, de-mining and recovery of light weapons. Democratic transition includes more political objectives attempting to create an environment conducive to a process of democratisation. Tasks involve the preparation and monitoring of elections, support for the judiciary and legislative bodies, as well as the strengthening of civil society. The socio-economic transition includes (re-)building the society (for example through promoting human rights), reforming and strengthening government institutions, as well as promoting a market economy. These tasks are usually linked to longer-term international development aid programmes.

Another classification of specific peacebuilding activities is given by Ramsbotham (2000). Building on the distinction of negative and positive peace⁵ he claims that peacebuilding is basically made up of two tasks:

Task A as the 'negative' task of preventing a relapse into overt violence

Task B as the 'positive' task of constructing a self-sustaining peace

According to Ramsbotham (2000), Task A predominates in the immediate aftermath of a peace settlement and consists of a sub-cluster of tasks that allow for the continuation of the conflict albeit transmuted into a non-military mode. In other words, it means persuading the conflict parties that their continuing interests will now be better served by entering the peace process than by continuing to fight. Task B complements and underpins Task A by aiding national recovery and expediting the eventual removal of the underlying causes of internal war. In order to consolidate peace Task B focuses on "*long-term sustainability by constitutional and institutional reform, social reconstruction and reconciliation, and the rebuilding of shattered polities, economics and communities*" (Ramsbotham 2000:174).

What is important to note here is that the different activities of peacebuilding are not only aimed at the transition (more short-term) but also at the consolidation (more long-term) of 'peace' (and again, that the transition and consolidation of peace is basically understood as the transition and consolidation of a liberal capitalist democracy). In practice it is therefore

⁵The distinction between 'negative peace' characterised by the absence of war but presence of structural violence, and 'positive peace' as the absence of exploitation and the presence of social justice was first made by Johan Galtung (1996)(in Haugerudbraaten 1998).

difficult to make an exact distinction between the different forms of intervention (humanitarian assistance/relief, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding (in a 'narrow' sense) and development).

Consequently, the usage of the term peacebuilding in the literature usually refers to a 'broader' understanding of peacebuilding by a) including a whole range of activities that theoretically might be considered as part of the other forms of interventions such as peacekeeping and development; and consequently by b) being implemented by a wide range of actors as I will briefly elaborate in the following point.

The Actors Of Peacebuilding

Due to this broader understanding of peacebuilding there is a wide range of different actors who contribute to building peace. The times of just sending in UN military personnel to disarm former combatants and to monitor a ceasefire agreement are over. Nowadays other external actors such as the international financial institutions (the IMF and the WB)⁶ as well as international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) play a significant role in implementing 'liberal internationalism'.

The mandate of the United Nations has differed according to the specific mission. Nevertheless one can identify a recognisable overall pattern. In the 1997 *Reform Announcement* by Kofi Anan post-conflict peacebuilding was seen to involve "*the creation or strengthening of national institutions, the monitoring of elections, the promotion of human rights, the provision of reintegration and rehabilitation programmes and the creation of conditions for resumed development*" (Anan 1997).

Not as 'present' as the UN but no less influential are the Bretton Woods Institutions in post-conflict societies in influencing their future economic policy. Building on neo-liberal ideas of a free market system, the international financial institutions have been guiding countries towards reforming key areas of economic management such as exchange and trade policy, pricing policy and fiscal policy through so-called Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP). These programmes are not new but were adopted in the mid-eighties with the objective of

⁶ also known as the Bretton Woods Institutions

down-sizing the postcolonial state by promoting the liberalisation and privatisation of national economies (Nabudere 2000).

The activities of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) are not as resource-intensive and high profile as the UN operations but nevertheless INGOs are regarded as major actors on the ground. As Duffield et al (1994) point out, the internationals' response to complex emergencies has been to put NGOs on the front line. The reliance on NGOs to implement international policy has been particularly heavy in the sphere of international relief.

By providing both humanitarian relief and development assistance foreign NGOs are described as making a more continuous contribution to the peace process. One can distinguish three kinds of intervention: integrated (working with national structures and therefore conforming to national priorities), semi-autonomous (involving coordination with government planning whilst retaining a high degree of decisional autonomy) and autonomous (working mainly with communities and civic associations as these initiatives may or may not fit official relief and development priorities) (Chr. Michelsen Institute 1997).

Apart from the external actors there are a wide variety of internal actors involved in building peace such as political elites, civil society and the business sector. The nature of the relationship between internal and external actors has become subject to much debate and is one of the key issues when assessing the imperialistic agenda of peacebuilding. The critique that a) 'liberal internationalism' is imposed on conflict-ridden societies with internal actors having little choice on how they want to build and consolidate peace and b) that by looking at its outcomes peacebuilding seems to be designed to benefit the external actors more than the local actors, will be further investigated later.

Looking at the different actors involved in the practice of peacebuilding what springs to mind are the new civil-military relations that have evolved over the last decade. The 'civil-military co-operation' (CIMIC) is said to be a cardinal concept and very distinct from the relationship between military and civilian actors during the Cold War. As Pugh (2001) points out, the institutionalisation of CIMIC that emerged from the military interventions in Somalia and the Balkans manifests a hegemonic approach to civil-military relations that subordinates humanitarian action to military necessity. The trend towards the integration of much of the

voluntary NGO sector into state-based relief, peacebuilding and development efforts resulted in the blurring of roles. The confusion of identity has led to a debate about and re-assessment of impartiality and accountability especially within the NGO sector or, as they often call themselves the 'humanitarian community' (see for example Rieff 2002; Macrae 1998).

Summing Up: Peacebuilding - Social Engineering On A Grand Scale

Peacebuilding as it is understood and implemented by its supporters initially had the objective of achieving sustainable peace in countries ridden by civil war. Guided by the paradigm of 'liberal internationalism' the various actors of the international community have attempted to reconstruct war-torn nations by (re-)introducing democracy and free market economies. In taking the practice of peacebuilding as a starting point, it is hard to separate the narrow UN concept of peacebuilding from other activities such as 'Humanitarian Aid' and 'Development'. The concept of peacebuilding that underlies this thesis is therefore a broader one that sees peacebuilding as a complex process that includes overlapping activities of humanitarian relief, peacebuilding (in a narrow sense) and development. As Paris (1997) says "*Peacebuilding is in effect an enormous experiment in social engineering – an experiment that involves transplanting western models of social, political, and economic organisation into war-shattered states in order to control civil conflict*" (Paris 1997:56). Due to the fact that by defining, shaping and facilitating the creation of new processes and organisations in cases such as Bosnia and East Timor, international actors seem to not only build peace but in fact build a nation, it is not surprising that the terminology of 'nationbuilding' has often been used synonymously with peacebuilding (Talentino 2002, Lund 2003).

Peacebuilding Under Review

As the international community became more intimately involved in the affairs of an increasing number of national societies, peacebuilders reached a more mature stage of being somewhat reflective about how they go about their work and the wider implications of it. Looking at the negative outcome of peacebuilding efforts in cases like Angola and Rwanda it seems that the short-term impacts of peacebuilding efforts with their ideological emphasis on political and economic liberalisation in many cases have had the 'perverse' effect of actually destabilising the peace process in post-conflict societies. Consequently one of the central questions in the theoretical discussion has become whether peacebuilding actually does build

peace (David 1999). In addressing this question one can distinguish two types of (nevertheless sometimes overlapping) approaches. The first one, whilst accepting the necessity and value of liberal internationalism, focuses on the 'micro' level meaning on the design, conduct and outcome of specific operations and mainly addresses issues of efficacy. The second type puts peacebuilding more in the context of the international system and questions the basic validity and legitimacy of the peacebuilding enterprise (Lund 2003).

The Micro Approach: Improving Efficacy

In evaluating peacebuilding the main focus of the academic literature has been on issues of efficacy and professionalism. Certain events such as acts of omission (for example failure to fully demobilise armies in Angola before the election) and commission (for example unintended consequences of humanitarian action in the refugee camps in western Zaire, which led to the maintenance of the Hutu Interhamwe militants) have brought greater attention to the evaluation of what are effective conflict interventions and highlighted the need for greater accountability to local populations.

Within the NGO sector, for example, the last decade saw a growing recognition that despite its good intentions aid actually has the potential to 'do harm'. With the emergence of the new humanitarian commitment one of the main operational challenges aid/relief organisations had to face has been connected to the principle of mid-war operations of humanitarian interventions. This implied that they were pulled in from the periphery of war to nearer its epicentre. Relief agencies are now often required to cross lines of conflict and to operate between them whilst interacting with war economies and politics in extremely volatile ways (Slim 1997). In doing so, aid frequently sustains a form of development that supports certain elites and thus strengthens the existing status quo. In addition, aid agencies often inadvertently contribute to conflict by trying to achieve their own internal objectives (Leonhardt 2001:239). It is authors such as Mary Anderson (1996, 1999, 2000, and 2001) and John Prendergast (1996) who have contributed to the rising awareness of the ambiguity of relief work and the so-called 'dark side of humanitarianism'. The mounting awareness of negative effects of humanitarian assistance has led to the adoption of a 'do no harm' approach of international agencies to regulate the negative consequences of humanitarian assistance. Apart from fuelling into the discussion around accountability and neutrality the principles of 'doing no harm' suggested an analytical framework to continuously monitor and evaluate the dynamics

between the conflict and the intervention and the inclusion of longer term-strategies of peacebuilding (Anderson 1999; Department for International Development 2002). In other words: a conflict assessment methodology that assesses the conflict itself as well as the impacts of an intervention and prompts a dynamic feedback process for ongoing assessment of a situation which results in an appropriate programme redesign. By comparing different interventions and by introducing 'peace and conflict impact assessments' the aim of this kind of research has been to generate 'best practices' and learn lessons from recent experiences (Lund 2003).

Other authors have emphasised the competitive nature of both the democratic as well as the capitalist system as the main obstacle for achieving successful transformation of war torn societies. As Paris (1997) and David (1999) point out, the adversary politics of democracy, rather than fostering greater tolerance, can sharpen confrontations and conflict in divided societies. Capitalism on the other hand not only "*presupposes a society of acquisitive competitors vying for larger share of national wealth*" (Paris 1997:77) but also creates economic inequality visible in the worsening of living conditions of ordinary people and by doing so fuels resentment and frustration. As an alternative to the existing peacebuilding practice Paris promotes an approach of so-called '*strategic liberalization*' which, for example, includes a more gradual and controlled process of democratisation, a greater emphasis on electoral arrangements that reward political moderation and more equitable and growth oriented economic adjustment policies. This according to Paris is a more 'realistic' approach of peacebuilding, which still "*preserves the liberal internationalist goal of transforming war shattered states into market democracies, but recognizes that tension in the internal logic of democracy and capitalism pose a potential threat to the domestic peace of these states*" (ibid:81).

Another interesting critique is brought forward by Michael Ignatieff (2003a). Using the concept of a 'Humanitarian Empire' in which Western powers led by the US, band together to rebuild state order and reconstruct war-torn societies for the sake of global stability and security, he highlights the contradiction of achieving democratic goals through imperialist means. On the other hand, in cases of civil war temporary imperial rule is necessary to bring order into chaos. His main critique goes to the 'lite'-ness of the undertaking. As he points out at "*the moment empire lite does neither: it neither provides a stable long term security*

guarantee, nor creates the conditions under which local leadership takes over. Everything is done on the cheap, from day to day” (Ignatieff 2003a:126).

The Macro Level: Addressing Legitimacy

The previous critique largely confines that the expansive notion of peacebuilding as transforming societies into liberal democracies is in itself desirable, but would need to be improved and adjusted to deal with the specific needs of war-torn societies. In contrast to that, another position emerged especially, but not exclusively, in the South, which raises questions on the actual legitimacy of liberal internationalism. In their interpretation international peacebuilders -despite their good sounding intention of building peace- seem to be part of a reformation strategy of the global capitalist system aimed at either pacifying or re-colonising the poor countries of the periphery. It is this critique that will be further investigated in the following chapters of my thesis.

Summing Up: Peacebuilding – A Strategy For Global Peace Or Imperial Pacification?

Peacebuilding efforts have thus far had very mixed results. In some cases, like Angola and Rwanda, former combatants took up arms again despite the presence of the international community. In other cases the outcome can be described as merely a situation of negative peace, meaning thus far there has been no relapse into violent conflict, but the root causes of conflict such as great economic and social inequalities have not been addressed which in the long run could lead to a relapse into violence again. When it comes to evaluating peacebuilding one can find two different kinds of critics. The more optimistic critics would argue that the general strategy to build peace namely the political and economic liberalisation should be maintained but needs to be reformed. Liberalisation has to be done more gradually whilst the whole peacebuilding industry needs to become more professionalised. The focus of this literature is more on the micro level or as Bellamy and Williams (2004b) put it ‘managerial’. In other words, it is perceived as predominantly instrumental and aims at solving problems. The more pessimistic explanation of why peacebuilding has not really had the intended outcomes is that it was not really meant to build peace but is in fact a tool of either riot control or even neo-imperialism designed to re-colonise the conflict ridden nations of this world. Focusing on the macro level this perspective engages more critically with the broader relationship between peace operations, world politics and ideology. It is this position,

which I will further assess in the last part of this thesis. Before I investigate this line of argument, I will first introduce one of the key concepts within this critique.

Part II: Imperialism - A Conceptual Framework

In their critical assessment of the peacebuilding enterprise some authors have concluded that despite its good sounding intentions it represents a new form of imperialism. The concept or rather concepts of imperialism and neo-imperialism have not just evolved with the new generations of peace operations but have been around for a much longer period. They have been closely interlinked with the so-called 'Development Discourse', which has accompanied and influenced international attempts to 'modernise' the 'underdeveloped' societies of the world since their independence in the 1960s. The critiques of peacebuilding as imperialism follow the historical-structural analysis of the relationship between the 'advance' countries of the West and the 'poor South' that has been the heart of the critique of the so-called 'Modernisation Project'.

In order to better understand the controversy around peacebuilding one has to understand the historical and ideological context of the current debate. The following part will therefore present some terms of reference and also touch on the historical context and the evolution of the various concepts of imperialism.

The structure will be as follows: After giving a brief overview of earlier theories of imperialism I will introduce the main schools of thought within the so-called 'Development Discourse'. Having presented the main arguments within this debate between 'Modernizers' and the so-called 'Dependency School' (also known as 'Theories of Underdevelopment') I will continue to focus on the latter. Their explanation of underdevelopment in the countries of the periphery is linked to their understanding of imperialism as the distinct stages of capitalist expansion. I will conclude this part by providing an analytical framework that will also guide us through the main issues of the current debate.

'Classic Theories Of Imperialism'

The concept of neo-imperialism is nothing new but was first presented as part of a critique of the efforts to develop the countries in the so-called Third World also known as 'Theories of

Underdevelopment'. This perspective emerged during the so-called 'First Development Decade' in the 1960s, but their model of dependent development has been influenced by theories that were developed almost a century before that.

The term *imperialism* itself has a long and tortured history. From the third quarter of the nineteenth century onwards it was used to describe various forms of political control by a greater power over less powerful territories or nationalities, although analytically the phenomena, which it denotes may differ greatly from each other (Encyclopedia 2004). As Lake (2001) points out, the term was initially used as an incentive against the expansionist policies of Napoleon I, and has most frequently been employed to either refer to the colonial practice of the European states in the late 19th early 20th century attempting to revise the international territorial status quo or the economic domination of one country by another.

Before the period of national expansion known as '*New Imperialism*'⁷ (ca 1850-1914) major European powers had for centuries engaged in colonialism. The 'natural outflow of nations' such as Britain mainly consisted of emigration to thinly populated, temperate regions under some sort of plan to institute self-government.

In explaining the expansion of a nation state beyond its own borders for the purpose of acquiring overseas dependencies and possibly uniting them in a world-wide empire (such as the Roman or the British Empire) early theories viewed imperialism as forcible extension of mainly political rule motivated by for example power politics or nationalist ideas. It was theorists of the classic liberal capitalist economy who, having become witness to the phenomenon of so-called 'New Imperialism', linked imperialism to the nature of the capitalist system in pointing out that the possibility of growth of the modern capitalist system were not unlimited and that it therefore was important, if not essential, to extend this system to so-called virgin territories (Mommsen 1980). Since most theories of imperialism emanated within the Marxist tradition, I will start with Karl Marx who, even though he never actually used the term himself, is said to have preceded the great global controversy on imperialism.

⁷ The term 'New Imperialism' has been used to describe the period between around 1850-1914 characterised by an unprecedented colonial expansion of European powers

Theory Of Capitalism And Class Conflict

Karl Marx' (1818-1883) Theory of Capitalism and Class Conflict has been one of the main foundations for classical theories of imperialism. In analysing the inequalities in modern capitalist societies Marx emphasised the importance of class conflict. The main roles within this conflict are played by on the one side, the dominant class, the capitalists who own or control the owners of the means of production and thereby exploit the other, subordinate working class. According to Marx, in capitalist societies the capitalist class exploits labour by employing it to produce items for sale, so-called commodities, in return for a wage. This wage is used to support workers in order that they can continue to exert labour power. But this wage is less than the value of production, which their efforts had created. Capitalists' profits are made by the employer taking or appropriating this newly created value (surplus value). Thus a person's material security is highly dependent on his or her class membership (Webster 1990). In other words, it was the division of labour, which on the one hand helped industrialisation and development in the West, that on the other hand has been responsible for increasing class inequalities and consequently conflict. According to Marx capitalism was bearing the seeds for its own destruction since the conflict between capitalists and working class would eventually lead to the socialist revolution.

It is important to recognize though that rather than simply denouncing capitalism, Marx admired its achievements, which he thought as necessary for its transition to socialism (Wolfe 2004). The world-wide expansion of industrial capitalism seemed to Marx not only inevitable but even as objectively progressive. Marx without regret noted the destruction of 'outdated' economies and social systems as a necessary stage towards bourgeois and eventually communist societies (Mommsen 1980).

Marx further describes how the capitalist class in their search for labour power has crossed national boundaries. In the 16th century wealthy merchants in Western Europe built their fortune on plundering the raw materials and labour of other nations: "*The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the indigenous population of that continent, the beginning of the conquest and plunder in India, and the conversation of Africa into a preserve for the commercial hunting of blackskins, are all things which characterise the dawn of the era of capitalist production*" (Marx 1997:915 quoted in Webster 1990:69).

As Webster (1990) argues, it seems that already in Marx' thinking the development of Western capitalism has to some extent been dependent on this source of capital accumulation from abroad in which the raw materials and the productive power of the countries mentioned above were geared to serve the interests of industrialising Europe. This basic proposition underlies much of neo-Marxist thinking on underdevelopment. It is in this period of 'primitive accumulation of capital' that the theories of underdevelopment see the origins of the present socio-economic problems of so-called underdeveloped countries.

Classic Marxist–Leninist Theories Of Imperialism

Around 1850 the European powers had started to expand their colonies in an unprecedented way. Competitive industrial nations, with Great Britain taking the lead, set out on a wild scramble 'to partition the earth', or at least those parts that had not already been occupied, namely Africa and Asia. Since these tropical regions were clearly not intended for settlement, and since their commercial value was seriously questioned even then, many scholars have since looked for the cause of such unprecedented expansion, which was also referred to as 'New Imperialism'.

One of the main debates even between these early scholars focused on the question whether imperialism was a direct product of the capitalist system or whether it was a form of atavism in the capitalist age, a survival of predatory behaviour from pre-industrial epochs that would disappear with the development of capitalism (Mommsen 1980). So-called 'radical liberals with socialist tendencies' like J.A. Hobson, Joseph Schumpeter or Karl Kautsky maintained that imperialism was "*not an economic necessity*" but only "*one of many ways of promoting the expansion of capitalism*" (Kautsky 1909 in Mommsen 1980:34) and could be explained as a psychological attitude of aristocratic rulers rather than with concrete economical interests. In fact "*a purely capitalist world*" would "*offer no fertile soil to imperialist impulses*" (Schumpeter 1951:90 in Mommsen 1980:23).

In contrast to that, the more radical socialist scholars such as Vladimir Illyich Lenin, Rudolph Hilferding or Rosa Luxemburg argued that monopoly capitalism and imperialism were a logical stage in the evolution of capitalism. Capitalism depended on economically virgin territories for its development not only in the initial stages (as for example Marx argued), but even more during its maturity. Lenin in fact saw in imperialism the "*Highest Stage of*

Capitalism” (Lenin 1916; 1996). By its very nature, the more capitalism develops, the more it requires raw materials and markets leading to the phenomenon of colonialist expansion at the end of the 19th century. With the words of Rosa Luxemburg, “*capital needs the means of production and the labour power of the whole globe ...it cannot manage without the natural resources and the labour power of all territories*” (in Mommsen 1980:41).

Whilst Marx describes its competitive nature as one of the main features of capitalism, Lenin points out, that in time production has increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few capitalists. In addition, finance has also become concentrated so that monopoly banks can make huge loans for overseas investment and trade. A new stage of capitalism is reached which is characterised by relatively non-competitive monopolies protected by their states (Lewellen 1995). According to Lenin imperialism as the ‘monopolistic stage of capitalism’, was bound to expand by every possible means, including the export of capital, economic penetration with political support of all kinds, forcible annexation and imperialistic war. He further argued that imperialism might for limited amount of time bring about a certain increase in economic growth and thereby furnish monopoly capitalism with extra profits. Thanks to these it would be able to bribe the upper stratum of working class in Europe and win them over to social chauvinism, and thus stave off catastrophic class conflicts. But with Luxemburg he shared the opinion that this phase was coming to an end as the carve-up of over-sea territories was completed (Mommsen 1980).

These theories of imperialism further adopted Marx’ view, that capitalist expansion would have a progressive effect on non-capitalist societies if penetrated. Even though capitalism would initially disrupt, plunder and exploit these societies this very exploitation would eventually lead to the development of the more productive capitalism in these ‘backwards’ societies.

Again, what is important about these classic Marxist-Leninist theories is that they link the phenomenon of imperialism, meaning the expansion of a nation state over its own borders and the direct or indirect domination of a colonial or dependent territory to the nature of the capitalist system and more precisely to the economic interests of the imperial powers. Lake (2001) therefore categorises them as ‘*metrocentric*’ theories due to their focus on the disposition or internal characteristics of imperial states. In contrast to that, more recent theories would emphasise other factors internal as well as external ones.

Political Theories Of Imperialism

In the years after WW II, political theories of imperialism focusing more on extreme nationalism or power politics were once again revived. In explaining the phenomenon of New Imperialism writers such as Hannah Arendt (1945/46), George Lichtheim (1971) and David K. Fieldhouse (1961) for example emphasised the role of intensified nationalism in the nineteenth century as motive force. In Britain “*imperial enthusiasm for a ‘Greater Britain’ played an important element of social integration by which the rising middle class was helped to find its place in society still largely dominated by conservative elite*” (Mommsen 1980:73). Theories of imperialism as a tool of power politics were also given new attention. Deriving from Ranke’s conception of history as the embodiment of the unending contest among great powers for self assertion or hegemony, neo-Rankean interpretations viewed imperialism primarily as a form of intensified great-power policy within the framework of a world-wide system, in which maintenance and acquisition of power are seen as decisive factors of social change (Baumgart 1975 in Mommsen 1980).

Socio–Imperialist Theories

In contrast to theories that emphasised either economic or political causes of imperialist policy others would highlight the interdependence between economic, political and social factors. In his concept of “*Social Imperialism*” Hans-Ulrich Wehler 1972 would explain modern imperialism as a result of the secular process of modernisation, which dissolved the social and economic structures of traditional societies and prompts the dominant classes to seek diversion strategies (in Mommsen 1980). In other words, the policy of colonial acquisition was a strategy “*practiced by the ruling élites of traditionalist societies in order to protect their privileged position, threatened by the development of industrial society and especially the rise of democratic and socialist movements*” (Mommsen 1980:99). *The objective threat is here mixed with subjective fears in such a way that they are hard to disentangle*” (ibid.:97)

Peripheral Theories Of Imperialism

Whilst the above theories are all with different degrees 'endogenous' theories, meaning they would look for the causes of imperialist expansion solely within the industrial societies themselves, another school would highlight the importance of non-European factors such as the crises in the third world territories that helped to provoke imperialist action. Robinson and Gallagher (1960) criticised that Eurocentric explanations for imperialism ignored the role played by indigenous people and their political elites. In contrast to political theories that would point to the ambitions of European statesman as decisive factor, Robinson and Gallagher argued that politicians usually took a hesitant and distrustful view on imperialist expansion. According to them it was nationalist crises in Africa itself due to the effects of informal imperialist penetration that provided the main impetus of formal imperial rule. In their view economic arguments were generally abducted as after-thought to justify previously undertaken territorial gains. Another author supporting this line of argument is Fieldhouse (1973). He provides statistical evidence to prove that there was in fact no necessity for overseas markets to expand national trade. Whilst not denying that economic factors were at work he argued that they were not suffices to account for the vast process of expansion of the European industrial class over the globe. According to him colonial rule resulted from the break down of traditional political order in the overseas territories and the inability of the local elites to deal with the political problems caused by the European economic penetration. It was only when previous forms of cooperation between local elites and European settlers had collapsed that European leaders felt the need to fill the consequent power vacuum and to reconstruct collaboration (Mommsen 1980). What is further notable is that imperialism is no longer framed as a rational deliberate and well planned exercise but a highly complex process "*which both its European agents and their victims regarded as accidental but inevitable, and which increasingly escaped their control*" (Mommsen 1980:111).

Informal Imperialism

It was again Robinson and Gallagher (1960) who were responsible for one of the most significant innovations in the development of Western theories of imperialism. Up to this point one of the outstanding characteristics for imperialism had been the establishment of formal colonial rule. In their study "*The Imperialism of Free Trade*" on British imperialism in the 19th century, Robinson and Gallagher point out that imperial forces at the colonial periphery were by no means obliged constantly to resort to the actual use of political power but instead emphasised the importance of imperialist factors of a non-governmental character.

According to these scholars, economic expansion, which preceded the establishment of formal territorial rule, was no less imperialistic. Areas where foreign trade and overseas investments achieved a dominant economic position were examples for an 'informal empire'. The primary instruments of informal imperialism were cited as "*the institution of intensive trade relations in which technological advantages of the home country were brought to bear, the penetration of the peripheral economy by means of large scale overseas investment, and the process by which indigenous ruling circles and interest groups were persuaded to cooperate with the metropolis*" (Mommsen 1980:90).

In other words, imperialism was presented as continuous reality of economic expansion in modern times. British imperialism throughout the 19th century remained essentially the same inner logic despite the concentration on expanding free trade in one period and on annexing colonies in another (Bellamy Foster in Magdoff 2003). In fact, in their quest to expand their markets Victorian imperialists preferred to exercise informal control. It was only when they saw their economic interests threatened that they would resort to formal rule. Robinson and Gallagher (1960) therefore summarised the policy of the free trade empire as trade with informal control if possible and trade with rule where necessary (in Magdoff 2003).

The concept of informal imperialism broke decisively with the traditional view, which defined imperialism exclusively in terms of formal territorial control and formed the foundation for theories of neo-imperialism that appeared once colonial rule was replaced by more indirect forms of control.

Objectivist Theories

According to so-called objectivists interpretation imperialism was an objective process due to the unavoidable impact of advanced Western Civilisation on the comparatively backward native cultures of the Third World. Herbert Lüthy (1961) for example, saw in the process of colonisation a necessary stage in the evolution of a worldwide civilisation based on modern technology. Colonial policy far from merely exploiting the conquered people was even regarded as an "*educative work aimed at final emancipation*" (Lüthy in Mommsen 1980:76). Also critiquing economic explanations of imperialism of the Marxist-Leninist authors David Landes (1961) emphasised that it is in fact imbalances of power be it political, military,

cultural or economic that are responsible for the temporary domination of one set of people by another (Mommsen 1980).

Summing Up: Imperialism As A Progressive Force

Early theories of imperialism were largely based on the experience of a particular period of industrial capitalist development. Imperialism -understood as the domination by one set of people over another- at this stage was predominantly recognised in the form of direct political control of the underdeveloped countries by the main European powers.

In explaining this phenomenon of political empire classic Marxist writers would increasingly focus on the economic relations of the late-nineteenth-century capitalist system. Imperialism was seen as an economic necessity to wave off the crises of the capitalist system by opening new markets not merely as an outlet but in order to realise the otherwise surplus value of the capitalist production of the capitalist countries.

More recent theories regarded imperialism not as a necessary phase of the capitalist system but were emphasising other factors such as nationalist or power political motives, social factors and developments in the peripheries. Objectivist theories would even go as far as legitimising imperialism by presenting it as an inevitable process in which a stronger culture would dominate over the weaker. It was also increasingly recognised that, in addition to direct political control, there is an informal type of imperialist domination that seems to either precede formal rule or even make it unnecessary.

In classical Marxist-Leninist tradition, the effect imperialism would have on the colonised regions, was generally seen as progressive: the expansion of the Western Civilisation and the capitalist system would help the development of the undeveloped nations. This view that the underdeveloped countries would in the end benefit from having become subject to imperialist rule became increasingly subjected to strong criticism. As we will see in the following, neo-Marxist scholars of the so-called Dependency School have argued that it is exactly because of imperialism that the countries of the South have become underdeveloped. According to them imperialism has been an obstacle to development in places like Africa and Latin America by draining the resources or economic surplus from these societies which stagnate as they become more underdeveloped. But before taking a closer look at their arguments regarding

the concept of imperialism as different stages of capitalist penetration, I will give some background to the so –called ‘Development Discourse’.

The Development Discourse – An Overview

The ‘Development Discourse’ is a rather complex and continuously changing battleground informed by different ideologies and has itself been described as “*one of the means by which the dominant social class organizes its rule so it seems `natural` to its subjects*” (Moore 1995:1). It is not my intention here to critically analyse and engage with the details of this debate. Nevertheless, there are a number of reasons why a brief excursion seems necessary: understanding the main components of this debate will not only help us to better comprehend the concept of neo-imperialism, it is also useful in order to place the critique of peacebuilding as neo-imperialism into its ideological and historical context. The following section will therefore outline the historical context as well as the main positions within this discourse and summarise its influence on the actual practice.

Historical Context

“The old imperialism -exploitation for foreign profits- has no place in our plans. What we envisage is program of development based on the basic concepts of democratic fair-dealings”
(Public Paper of the Presidents (January 20: 115 in Rist 1999:71))

Following World War I public opinion became more pro-emancipation and there was an institutionalised collective effort to advance the cause of emancipation through the League of Nations. Under Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, a number of mandates were created with the expressed intention to prepare countries under colonial rule for self-government. At the same time more and more resistance to the colonial rule grew in the colonies.

The so-called process of decolonisation varied considerably from country to country: whilst in some cases the end of colonial rule was achieved through peaceful negotiations, in other cases it took years of violent revolt and armed struggle. But it was only after the Second World War, between the years of 1945 to 1960, when an increasing number of countries had attained their independence, that a “*new way of conceiving international relations*” (Rist 1999:72)

entered the international stage. 'Development'⁸ was presented as a '*bold new program*' aiming at mobilising non-material sources (science and technology) for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. It also meant that development was no longer understood as an intransitive phenomenon, which simply happened, but a transitive one, meaning an action that was performed by one agent upon another. From this point onwards North-South relations were no longer described in the terms of coloniser/colonised but developed/underdeveloped (ibid).

In the beginning of this new 'Age of Development' 'Underdevelopment' was still defined as a lack rather than as a result of historical circumstances. The 'underdeveloped' were treated mainly as poor without seeking the reasons for their destitution and 'development policy' (made of growth and aid) was presented as the only possible answer (Rist 1999). Whilst the main actors of the international community such as UN, the World Bank, the IMF, various governments in the North and of course the growing number of NGOs were preparing themselves to assist the poor regions of the global South in their development, critical minds saw the dawn of a new form of imperialism also known as '*Neo-Imperialism*'. Before investigating this concept in more detail I briefly want to highlight the main arguments of both sides, the promoters of Development and its critique by presenting an overview of what is often referred to as the 'Development Discourse'.

Main Positions

Usually the two main positions/paradigms or schools of thought within the 'Development Discourse' are referred to as 'Modernisation Theory' and its critique, which Webster (1990) summarises as 'Theories of Underdevelopment'. It is important to note that it is to the latter school of thought that one can trace back the critique of peacebuilding as a new form of imperialism.

Modernisation Theory

'Modernisation Theory' conceptualises a global system divided into centres of modern progress and peripheries of traditional backwardness, with the centre showing the periphery its future. In explaining and addressing the issues of underdevelopment and poverty in the so-

⁸ I am using Gillian Harts (2001) terminology of 'big D' Development defined as the post-second World War Project of intervention in the Third World that emerged in the context of decolonisation and the Cold War.

called 'Third World'⁹ countries scholars of the 'Modernisation Theory' have promoted the idea of 'development' as a natural process from traditional societies to advanced societies (such as the industrialised nations of the West) which they argue is linked to the presence of specific norms and values in a society such as the drive for high achievement. In other words, underdevelopment/development is seen as intrinsic to the society itself. One of the most famous models borne to 'Modernisation Theory' is W.W. Rostow's '*Stages of Economic Growth*' (1960). According to Rostow all societies lie within one of five historical categories: traditional societies, the precondition for take-off stage, the take-off stage, the drives towards maturity stage, and finally the age of high mass consumption.¹⁰ Following his argumentation, the stages of growth the West has experienced is nothing unique but can be replicated in any other country. According to 'Modernisers', the evolution of societies occurs as traditional behaviour patterns give way under the pressure of Modernisation. While these pressures build up gradually within Western societies, the developing countries of the Third World can be exposed to them from the outside. That is they can be 'helped along the road to Modernity' with the assistance of the developed countries whose ideas and technology can be introduced and diffused throughout these poor countries (hence this process is referred to as 'Diffusion'). In short, development in Third World countries is possible through their full inclusion into a global capitalist system (meaning by opening their markets) and by promoting 'modern' meaning 'liberal' ideas.

⁹ This terminology evolved during the Cold War in which the industrialised countries of the capitalist West saw themselves as 'First World' whereas the socialist Soviet Union and its allies were referred to as 'Second World'. The term 'Third World' was used to distinguish the growing number of newly emerging, economically less developed states that tended to share a common colonial history from those identified either with the East or the West (Kegley & Wittkopf 1999). After the end of the Cold War the terminology has changed to some extent. The countries of the former West are now described as Global North whereas the rest is often referred to as the Global South, though especially the former countries in the Second World, so-called 'countries in transition' are difficult to place. I will come back to changes in the terminology at a later point.

¹⁰ In the traditional society stage, societies have spiritual attitudes towards the physical world, which placed a ceiling on their productivity and limited economies to the agricultural level. A hierarchical social structure, in which political power was held by landowners, provided little scope for social mobility. The value system was derived from long-run fatalism. In the precondition for take-off stage insights of modern science were translated into new production functions in agriculture and industry by setting given dynamism by international expansion. Britain was the first to develop these preconditions. Elsewhere they arose exogenously and shook traditional society and hastened its undoing. In the take-off stage the proximate stimulus for takeoff was mainly technological, but elsewhere a political context favourable to modernisation was necessary. In this stage investment rose as well. In the drives-toward-maturity stage, 10-20% of national income is invested and growth outstrips any increase in population. There are sufficient entrepreneurial and technical skills to produce anything it chooses. In the stage of high mass consumption real income rises to a level permitting a large number of people to consume at levels far in excess of their needs, and the structure of the work force changes toward the urban skilled and office types of employment (Peet 1999, Rist 1997).

Theories Of Underdevelopment

In contrast to that, 'Theories of Underdevelopment' which have been promoted by neo-Marxists, Latin American 'Dependentistas' scholars and Pan-Africanist intellectuals¹¹ have the one argument in common: underdevelopment, rather than being a lack of capitalist development, was seen as its result. Their main critique has been that, in representing Western development as a model which the Third World could repeat, 'Modernisation Theory' suppressed the fact that development and underdevelopment were not distinct stages but a *relationship* (Wolfe 2004). The development of the advanced societies is seen as a consequence of their exploitative relationship with the countries of the South. In other words, the growth of advanced industrial centres in the so-called 'core' meant simultaneous underdevelopment of those countries in the so-called 'periphery' whose economic surplus was exploited by 'the West'. Whereas scholars of 'Modernisation Theory' have been focusing on the internal structure of the individual country as reason for underdevelopment, the focus here is on the country's place in the international capitalist system. The causes for underdevelopment in a particular country are thus seen as mainly external (Lewellen 1995). According to the critics of the 'Modernisation Theory' the situation of Third World countries is an historical account of an active process of underdevelopment with distinct stages of exploitation (mercantilism, colonialism and neo-colonialism) which disrupted the social and economical character of colonies and explain their 'distorted', 'incoherent' or 'imbalanced' character (Webster 1990).

Following their line of argument that the insertion of the national economy into the international system resulted in dependency for the poor regions of the South the Dependentistas promoted the strategy of 'de-linking' from the system. The principle of self-reliance (or autonomy or 'auto-centred development') was therefore the logical conclusion of the work of the dependency school. In practical terms this meant to prioritise production within the country of goods useful to the population by subsidising and protecting local industries while at the same time limiting the importation of both luxury goods and manufactured goods that can be produced within the country.

¹¹ Some of the most famous representatives of the Third Worldists are i.e. Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy (US), Raul Prebisch (Chile), Fernando Cardoso (Brazil), Samir Amin (Africa), Andre Gunder Frank and Johan Galtung (Europe)

The Rise(s) And Fall Of Development

To some extent the different positions in the discourse also informed the actual practice of Development:

From 1945 until early 1970's Development efforts were still guided by International Keynesianism and state mediated capitalism characterised with stronger planning and welfarist tendencies. At the same time as American dominance over the world became more apparent the countries of the South were starting to organise themselves and assert pressure on the industrialised nations.¹²

The 70s began with an almost revolutionary atmosphere marked by the support for liberation movements, growing influence of Dependency Theory and hopes in the Tanzanian model of self-reliance. It reached its peak with the declaration of the New International Economic Order (NIEO)¹³. But whilst Development actors began to recognise the need to incorporate 'basic needs', more grass-root participation and environmental concerns giving the impression that the dominant discourse had seriously been challenged, the victory of 'Third Worldism' suddenly seemed to pass over to the other side (Moore 1995).

The 80's became also known as the 'lost' or 'wasted' decade. Already by the end of the 70's it became clear that most of the numerous 'Development' projects had not fulfilled the hopes placed in them. An ever-greater part of the population in the South was sliding into absolute poverty while the North was refusing to accept any radical change of international structures. There were different explanations of why Development so far had not shown the expected results. On a national level the blame was put on the bloated administrative apparatuses of Third World countries (which seemed to be designed to look after regime's clientele rather than serve the public), low productivity of nationalised corporations and tax evasion linked to activities in the informal sector. At a global level, it was attributed to, for example, low levels of foreign investment, bad world prices for primary products resulting in payment imbalances

¹² For example, after the October war broke out in 1973 between Israel and Egypt, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) had quadrupled oil prices underlining the vulnerability of the West.

¹³ The declaration on the establishment of a NIEO was issued in 1974 after a special session of the UN General Assembly. With the intention to recast the rules of the international economy to the advantage of the poor countries in the South it i.e. demanded stronger regulations of the activities of transnational organisations, the right to nationalization and reaffirmed collective self-reliance (Rist 1999). Though critics like Magdoff would say despite its radical tone it did no more than reinforce the existing order. At the heart of its proposed strategy for development were still the concepts of mainstream economics: economic growth, expansion of world trade and increased aid by industrial countries.

and worsening terms of trade. Most of the developing countries began to feel the growing weight of debt services leading up to a crisis in 1982, when Mexico was unable to meet its international obligations thereby causing huge problems to a number of US banks. But as Rist (1999) stresses it was mainly due to the rather irresponsible credit policy led by the financial institutions and to inflation that the interest rates grew and borrowers became unable to keep up payments.

Whilst the reason for the crisis can be found on both sides, it was the South, which had to bear the consequences and was forced to change. In the debtor countries the monetary disorder meant that economies had to be adjusted and trade balances corrected. Also known as the Washington Consensus, the new policy reform demanded fiscal austerity, control over inflation, trade and capital account liberalisation, privatisation and deregulation of product and factor markets from the developing countries (Moore 1995). Government programmes (particularly the ones in developing countries) were seen as unproductive since they allocated funds to less or non-productive parts of the economy such as welfare expenditures and consumerism of elites and also stimulated pressures for trade protection and financial controls which would further undermine the efficient working of the market.

The budgetary austerity and the marked liberalisation involved in so-called 'structural adjustment' policies often meant drastic cuts in public services, in subsidies of all kinds and in health and education. To mitigate this new deterioration in living standards a new term 'with a human face' was added which was supposed to make adjustments more acceptable. But like the other ameliorative tendencies such as 'Good Governance', 'Participation' and 'Sustainable Development' emanating from the World Bank in the late 80's it never really reflected a shift away from the neo-liberal orthodoxy (Hart 2001).

Contributing to the rise of neo-liberalism was the fact that the 'Third World', which had challenged the dominant ideology just ten years before, ceased to exist as an entity. It disintegrated into ultra-rich countries that were living off their oil rent, least developed countries (LDCs) or the so-called Fourth World characterised by extreme poverty and in-between the newly industrialising countries (NICs) which had no more common interest (Rist 1999). In addition to that 'Third Worldists' had come under severe critique for supposedly closing their eyes to the exactions committed in the name of anti-imperialism and for failing to recognise the responsibility of Third World elites, which were exploiting the very people

they were meant to lead to development. The ideas and ideals of the Dependency School received their final blow with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the break down of the Soviet Union. Now even the last major model of alternative development was gone opening the way for capitalism to become the dominant mode of social organisation (Rist 1999).

By the 1990's, it seemed that Development not only had reached an impasse, but it was even declared dead (Hart 2001) with some academics such as Escobar (1995) already promoting a 'Post-Development' era¹⁴. But over the years dissent with the neo-liberal agenda of the Washington Consensus grew. Two factors helped to induce a new debate: The 'Asian Miracle' with its rapid and comparatively equitable growth in the early nineties and the 'Asian crisis' in 1997, which showed that pressures for radical financial deregulation were producing potentially incendiary conditions in many parts of the world. In his famous 'Post-Washington Consensus' speech Joseph Stiglitz (1998), then senior vice president and chief economist at the World Bank, asserted that financial market liberalisation had contributed to instability and called for a reversal of the neo-liberal orthodoxy (in Hart 2001). The balance of power seemed to shift once again toward more 'Participatory Development' and the 'Developmental State'.

In the new millennium Development was brought back on the agenda with a vengeance. A flourishing industry centred on social capital and social development had re-emerged at a time when peacebuilding has also appeared on the agenda of the international community.

Summing Up: From Formal To Informal Imperialism

In the context of the progressing decolonisation the relationship between the industrialised North and the poor regions of the global South had to be described in different terms. The dichotomy of colonies/colonisers was exchanged by underdeveloped/developed. At the same time the alleviation of the suffering of the 'economically backwards' areas of the global South was declared as one of the main objectives of the international community, though there were major differences in opinion on how to achieve this.

¹⁴ Post Development Theory has been described as "*a radical reaction to the dilemmas of development*" (Nederveen Pieterse, 2000 in Siemiatycki 2005:58). Post Development theorists like Escobar held the view that development must be "*rejected not merely on account of its results but because of its intentions, its world-view and mindset*" (ibid.)

The promoters of 'Modernisation Theory' would look at underdevelopment as a natural stage in the evolution of societies and their way of speeding up the development process was to help integrating these economies into the global system. In contrast, Dependency scholars argued that the expansion of global capitalism had been the root of the whole problem of underdevelopment and demanded disassociation from the structures of exploitation. They also emphasised that the end of colonialism did not mean that the exploitation of the former colonies was over. Behind the facade of Development, imperialism had just entered a different stage, one that no longer needed formal colonial rule.

Meanwhile, the actual "*post-Second World War project of intervention in the 'Third World'*" (Hart 2001:650) took its course. In its initial phase, Development (also referred to as 'Modernisation Project') was strongly informed by international Keynesianism and ideas about state-mediated capitalism. In the second phase, starting in the 1970's and up until the turn of the millennium, the strategy changed and it was ideas of neo-liberalism and de-regulated capitalism that had a strong influence (Moore 1995). After Development had been declared dead in the 1990's, it arose phoenix-like from the ashes and with it its critique which Hart (2001) describes as "*both reminiscent of the 1960's and yet startling new*" (Hart 2001:649). The re-appearance of Development is closely linked to the emergence peacebuilding. Duffield (2002) for example refers to it as the radicalisation of Development. Similarly, the concept of neo-imperialism that came out of the Dependency School and which was their interpretation of the 'Age of Development' provides the foundation for the critique of peacebuilding as imperialism in a new disguise. For analysing the debate around peacebuilding as neo-imperialism it is therefore quite essential to take a closer look at the neo-Marxist concept of imperialism, namely as historical stages of capitalist penetration

Imperialism As Historical Stages Of Capitalist Penetration

Whilst Marx held the opinion that the underdeveloped countries would in the end benefit from having become subject to imperialist rule, neo-Marxist scholars of the Dependency School turned classical Marxism on its head. They argued that it is exactly because of imperialism that the countries of the South have become underdeveloped. According to them imperialism has been an obstacle to development in places like Africa and Latin America by draining the resources and economic surplus from these societies which stagnate as they become more

underdeveloped. According to them the underdevelopment of the Third World is an account of the different stages of capitalist penetration.

In their historical analysis of the reproduction and amplification of inequalities between advanced and so-called dependent economies as the by-product of the very process of capitalist growth, neo-Marxist theorists have differentiated between three distinct stages of imperialism which historically mark out the increasing penetration of Third World countries by capitalism from the advanced centres of the world economy: 'Merchant Capitalism', 'Colonialism' and 'Neo-Colonialism'.

Merchant Capitalism (1650-1850)

Merchant capitalism refers to the accumulation of capital through trade and plunder which is said to have started around the 16th century and continued until the late 18th century. The profits of this form of early capitalism were to some extent used to organise production in Europe.

One of the authors discussing the role played by the merchant class over this period was Samir Amin (1976). The mercantilist trade pattern has been described as a triangle or a three cornered system of exchange. Starting in Africa European merchants took advantage of the long established system of local slavery and, at a profit, exchanged goods such as weapons and clothes for slaves who were to be sold to the plantations of the Caribbean Islands and the American mainland. It is estimated that from 1650 until 1850 about 9 million Africans were shipped across the Atlantic. On their return to Europe merchants filled their ships with agricultural products such as cotton and sugar, which they again traded in at a profit in their home countries (Webster 1990).

According to critiques of the 'Modernisation Theory' it was this early form of capitalism that marked the starting point of the active process of underdevelopment. Africa was one of the regions in which mercantilist capitalism had its most damaging impacts. The trans-Atlantic slave trade not only slowed down the population growth but also had a harmful effect on existing social and economical structures.

The French traders, for example are said to have contributed significantly towards the fragmentation of traditional authorities. In order to weaken the negotiation power of the dominant elites in West Africa, French traders supported traditionally subordinated groups thereby driving a wedge between the former and the latter with serious consequences not only for the political stability in those regions.

In encouraging the emergence of new, small but prosperous elite in the overseas territories, which had close connections with European business, merchant capitalism is said to also have laid the foundations for the basic pattern of production. To be able to import manufactured goods from the more industrialised Europe, the new elites in Third World countries became increasingly dependent on the export of their resources such as raw materials and labour (Webster 1990). In addition, the introduction of Western currency systems undermined local currency forms eventually leading to their complete displacement.

In sum, Merchant Capitalism, from a neo-Marxist perspective, inaugurated the process of increased interlocking of economies on a world scale dominated by the capitalist centre and is seen to have sowed the first seeds for economic weakness and dependency of Third World countries. This process was further developed during the subsequent period of colonialism.

Colonialism (1850-1914)

The 'New Imperialism' signifies the policy and ideology of the main period of colonial expansion adopted by Europe's powers and later the United States between the 1850s and the outbreak of World War I in 1914. The period is distinguished by an unprecedented pursuit of what has been termed 'empire for empire's sake' and aggressive competition for overseas territorial acquisitions. The renewed drive for both market and territorial expansion among the world's more powerful nation-states added 20% of the Earth's land area (nearly 23,000,000 km) to Europe's overseas colonial possessions (Encyclopaedia 2003).

Even before 1850 there had been formal colonies such as the ones in Latin America but, according to Webster (1990), these were basically run as overseas feudal estates for the Spanish and Portuguese settlers, and most of them were granted independence by 1830. Most of the new 'scramble' for overseas territories took place on the African continent where

France and Britain as the main imperial powers followed by Germany, Belgium, Portugal, Italy and Spain fought over the political control of the sub-Saharan territories.

As mentioned earlier, Marxist and neo-Marxist scholars have linked the phenomenon of the unprecedented extension of European powers to the shift in production system in Europe in which the feudal system was slowly replaced by the modern capitalist mode of production. Merchant Capitalism, even though is seen as having been hugely profitable to the industrialisation in Western Europe, is at the same time described as an obstacle to the more efficient organisation of production and control over raw materials that the emerging class of manufacturing capitalists needed in order to expand their businesses and compete with each other.

Before the colonial period, for example, most African societies were characterised by self-sufficient agriculture and an economy that produced surplus and allowed for trade (DeLancey 2001). In the mercantilist stage, Europe mainly benefited through profitable trading patterns with existing structures in their colonies. The 'New Imperialism' differed in the sense that, in order to better serve the needs and interest of the colonial powers (and thereby to resolve the economic problems in Europe), new economic, social and communicative networks were introduced to the colonised countries with severe impact on existing forms of production, land ownership, labour patterns and political structures (Freud 1984).

From a neo-Marxist perspective colonies, from the late 19th century on, were seen as fulfilling two main purposes. Firstly, they were regarded as source of cheap raw materials. In some countries like South Africa, a more efficient system of mining was created which needed a great labour force to be able to exploit the natural mineral resources such as gold and diamonds. In order to better exploit the agricultural resources new export crops such as cotton, coffee and tea were introduced (also referred to as cash crop farming) to satisfy a growing demand in Western countries (DeLancey 2001). Secondly, the new colonies served as an expanded outlet for manufactured goods from Europe. Having reached a stage of having satisfied the demand of their domestic markets, the 'mother countries' had an interest in creating new markets in the African continent to sell their manufactured products to the "*captive consumers*" (ibid.:105). Colonialism therefore not only affected production, it consequently influenced consumption as well as distribution on the African continent.

In assessing its impacts, Freund (1984) further points out, that this second stage of capital penetration also led to the increased social differentiation, higher social mobility and erosion of traditional institutions and values. With the purpose of establishing 'authority' political, legal and administrative structures were introduced to the colonised territories. The colonial state was not only ignoring pre-colonial boundaries but has further been described as a centralised and highly authoritarian bureaucracy created to control the territorial population. In order to be able to maintain their colonial power the colonisers relied on creating a class of intermediaries who would effectively run the administration on the ground. Whilst the British tended to use existing structures in their policy of 'indirect rule' which often (re-) enforced existing ethnic divides, the French, as has been pointed out already, reduced the power of the traditional leaders and fostered a new political elite altogether (Tordoff 1997; Freund 1984). But whatever the strategy, the result was on the one hand a new African ruling class that benefited from the colonial system and which, in the process of decolonisation was reluctant to having to give up their status, and on the other hand, the formation of resistance to this political order (DeLancey 1992). It is precisely this "*deeply ingrained political legacy of imperial rule*" (Gordon 1992:55) that according to some authors has laid the foundations for the phenomenon of personalised rule and contributed to most of the political problems in African countries, ethnic conflicts being the most severe one.

In other words, the weak and corrupt elites in many of the developing countries are not seen as an indication of some pre-modern tradition society (as i.e. the 'Modernisers' would argue) but instead they are the direct result of political and economic interference of the advanced industrial countries who have created and supported a so-called 'comprador elite' that would represent their interests in the peripheries.

In addition, the fact that in many cases one main company was granted monopoly rights over what was produced, as well as labour regulations and legal powers over land use had a considerable impact on the local population especially in regards to access to land (Webster 1990). The introduction of cash crops and cash economy further meant that traditional crops farmers could not longer sustain themselves and had to sell their labour. Also contributing to these developments was the institution of various forms of taxation, including the taxation of individuals. In order to be able to pay taxes farmers were compelled to seek cash paying jobs. In cases where the local population did not 'volunteer' to satisfy the great demand of labour power, colonial authorities did not refrain from using forced and/or indentured labour and

intimidation. With Webster's words, colonialism "*inaugurated the first real pattern of large scale labour migration and displacement in the world*" (Webster 1990:77).

To legitimise their doings, the imperialists went on a "*conquest of public opinion*" (Rist 1999:67). With his famous poem "*The White Man's burden*" published in 1899, Rudyard Kipling, for instance, urged the United States to bring the European version of civilisation to the other peoples of the world, regardless of whether they wanted this form of civilisation. Even when abuses and excesses against the local population were exposed these were presented as unfortunate mistakes within a noble framework. "*Far from sacrificing the population to the national interest, was not colonisation entirely geared to their 'material and moral well-being' as part of the general progress of humanity*" (*ibid.*). Through the evolving League of Nations colonisation presented itself as a '*sacred trust of civilisation*'.

Neo-Colonialism: Imperialism Without Colonies (1960 Onwards)

The end of the First World War is seen as the beginning of the process of decolonisation. After a long period of national struggles against their colonisers most of the colonies had gained their independence by the early 1960s. Once completed, decolonisation marked the end of formal political control of Third World countries by colonial powers. The age of imperialism appeared to be dead and buried.

Contrary to the predictions of Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg, it seemed that the disappearance of formal colonial rule had left the Western capitalists unscathed. Since Western powers were no longer in a position to use political, let alone military power, to protect their economic interests, it became evident that capitalism was able to overcome its internal contradictions without the aid of formal imperialist structures in Third World countries (Mommsen 1980).

However, it did not take long for the political leaders of the ex-colonial territories to realise that the after-effects of colonialism were still persisting. It soon became apparent that the achievement of constitutional independence and sovereignty did not give total freedom to the governments of the newly formed national states. Political autonomy was found to be something of a façade behind which lurked the continuing presence of powerful Western financial and commercial interests (Smith 2003). As Nkrumah, the Ghanaian president of the early 1960's argued in his book "*Neo-Colonialism the last Stage of Imperialism*": "*The*

essence of neo-colonialism is that the state which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its internal policy is directed from outside." (Nkrumah 1965:ix in Webster 1990: 79)

Similarly neo-Marxists and scholars of the Dependency School would argue that colonialism in most cases had been used as a political weapon to effectively transform and control the colonies in the interest of capitalist expansion occurring in Europe. This process, apart from the previously mentioned changes in economic and social structures on the national level of the effected countries, also involved the establishment of international laws and regulations covering prices, currency dealings and bank systems. Once established, these arrangements were strong enough to withstand the granting of formal political independence to the colony (Webster 1990).

Whilst the foundations for the 'complete subordination of the Third World economy to that of the imperialist system' were already laid down in the previous stages, neo-colonialism, which was also described as 'latest stage of imperialism' had developed a couple of new and more indirect means, in which the metropolis maintained their influence:

MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS

Multinational Corporations (MNC) and big monopolies were seen as playing an increasingly important role in the continued exploitation of Third World countries. Taking Lenin's theory of Monopoly Capitalism and extending it to MNCs, neo-Marxists like Magdoff (2003) have argued that in order to evade the law of falling rates of profit at home due to the excessive supply of surplus capital MNCs, especially the ones based in the United States which have been the principal source of growth on the world economy after the 2nd World War, were seeking investments in the Third World, which make it possible to siphon off a large surplus. In addition, MNCs were found to be using their worldwide business structure to control production from the raw material, through the processing, to the final retails stages. Through a skilful combination of policies (for example capital investment, price fixing and production based on the worldwide division of labour) MNCs now got into a position of controlling the economies of Third World countries (Mommsen 1980).

The MNCs represent therefore the increasing concentration of capital and the integration of production on a world scale (Mommsen 1980, Webster 1990) whilst the exploitation of the

Third World countries continues unabated though at a new level and with greater efficiency. With the words of Paul A. Baran (1957): *“The contemporary form of imperialism ... is now directed not solely towards the rapid attraction of large sporadic gains from the objects of its domination, it is no longer content with merely assuring a more or less steady flow of those gains over a somewhat extended period. Propelled by well-organized, rationally conducted monopolistic enterprise, it seeks today to rationalize the flow of these receipts so as to be able to count on its perpetuity.”* (Baran 1957 in Mommsen 1980:1).

DEVELOPMENT AID

Whilst MNCs are presented as the primary exponents of imperialism, public development aid has been exposed as yet another vehicle in ensuring external control over Third World countries. Radical authors such as Hayter (1971), Payer (1974) and Griffin (1976) have highlighted that aid acts as a form of leverage, as an instrument that has a strong influence on the direction in which third world economic go. The way it does this is by donors specifying certain conditions to which the recipient country must agree before any grant or loan is given. A crucial intermediary for this form of imperialism is the International Monetary Fond (IMF) which functions as an international credit agency sponsored by developed capitalist states. All contributing states may veto investments and loans to a country if the applicant does not agree to conform to IMF conditions. That is the IMF will only grant credit if the borrowing country institutes a ‘stabilisation programme’ to control inflation, the assumption being that inflation generates a balance of payment crisis. The convention IMF condition for example includes anti-inflationary policies (such as reducing government spending and bank credit as well as the devaluation of the borrowers currency) to promote exports and the development of ‘incentives’ for foreign investment by such policies as anti-strike legislation and tax benefits (Webster 1990).

Based on their analysis of Third World economies Hayter (1971) and Payer (1974) claim, that the combined effect of these conditions that supposedly serve to keep the recipient economic house in order, in fact weaken their economy in the long run, ensuring its increasing dependency on foreign capital (in Webster 1990).

COMPRADOR GOVERNMENTS

Development Aid is further linked to the third major feature of neo-imperialism. According to critical authors aid serves the needs of the metropolis by helping to create and maintain a

subservient bourgeoisie in the peripheral countries. On the one hand aid is used as a short-term prop to support unstable governments whose continued existence is to the strategic interest of the West (i.e. Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines). In the longer run, aid also ensures the loyalty of so-called 'counter-revolutionary élites'. According to the Dependistas these élites or 'comprador governments' have played a major role in the transition from foreign to internal domination of peripheral territories through global capitalism. In their dependence on foreign investment they have become political allies of capitalist states in the North and so provide a strong barrier to any attempts by poorer people within the Third World to challenge the status quo. Baran 1957 points out, that "*the new ruling group merges with the old ruling group, and the amalgam of property-owning classes supported by imperialist interest uses its entire power to suppress popular movements for genuine national and social liberation*" (Baran 1957 in Mommsen 1980:130). And as Gunder Frank (1969) concludes in his analysis of Latin American countries "*neo-imperialism and monopoly capitalist development are drawing and driving the entire bourgeoisie class into ever closer economic and political alliance with, and dependence on, the imperialist metropolis*" (Frank 1969 in Mommsen 1980:131).

Summing Up: Neo-Imperialism – The Last Stage Of Capitalist Penetration?

In explaining the phenomenon of poverty and underdevelopment the critics of the 'Modernisation Theory' have focused on the historical relationship between the so-called First and Third World and the role of imperialism characterised by the distinct stages of capitalist penetration. In contrast to earlier scholars who argued that despite its negative side-effects the expansion of the 'advanced' capitalist European societies would in the end benefit the countries in the periphery, neo-Marxist authors have been more pessimistic. According to them, Third World countries have been subject to a socio-economic experience that is unlike anything that advanced industrial societies underwent in their period of industrialisation. It is the very history of mercantilism and colonialism that has laid the foundations for the problems Third World countries have been faced with after de-colonisation. In reshaping the African production and society to serve their own interests and in interlinking the two markets, the colonisers succeeded in establishing an economic and social order that would preserve their monopoly and keep the African continent in a dependant position that would allow the West to continue to influence African politics even after their formal independence.

The concept of 'Neo-Colonialism' was coined to describe this novel type of colonialism, a form of socio-economic domination from outside that does not rely on direct political control. In this new stage of imperialism, subordination is achieved by three principal means: firstly, the shift of the terms of trade against developing countries (due to unfair international trading structures that benefit industrialised countries and the rising influence of MNCs on the markets of the periphery); secondly, by public development aid which is used as a leverage to influence national policies in the receiver countries; and thirdly, by the influence of the social groups at the periphery whose interests link them to the capitalist world system.

Some authors of the Dependents referred to neo-colonialism as the last stage of imperialism. It seemed that the economic and social structures at the periphery had been so fundamentally transformed during colonial times to make formal rule abundant and still serve the economic interests of the West. So one of the interesting aspects about the current debate around peacebuilding as a new form of imperialism will be to investigate what actually has changed, both in terms of external environment and in terms of the specific features of imperialism.

Summing Up: Old Wine In New Bottles?

In trying to get a clearer understanding of the concept of imperialism I revisited the various debates between Liberals and Marxists, Modernisers and Dependency School in order to

- a) provide the terms of reference for the following analysis of peacebuilding as a new form of imperialism.
 - b) illustrate the historical context and the evolution of the concept
- a) It has become evident that there are a variety of understandings of imperialism. The only thing that most authors seem to agree upon is that imperialism refers to *a relationship of domination of one set of people over another*. Domination meaning that one party has more power than the other, allowing it to assert control over the weaker party. But from then on we come across great differences along various lines:

Who exactly is the set of people that is dominating?

Are the main actors politicians or capitalists? Are they based in the metropolis or in the periphery? Outsiders or insiders? Are they from different classes or/and different cultures? Is it one state or multilateral coalitions? Is it a territorial empire at all? And what is the exact nature of the relationship between the various stakeholders?

What is their motivation?

Are they on a mission to civilise 'the barbarians' and/or to alleviate poverty? Or are these humanitarian values just a cover up for more atavistic behaviour of power politics or, even worse, for the continued economic exploitation of the countries in the periphery?

What is their rationale?

How do they explain the situation in the periphery? Is it because the other cultures are less developed and their values do not yet allow them to better organise themselves? Or, is it because of structural changes due to colonialism that lead to the active underdevelopment? In other words, is it because of internal or external factors? Or, is it maybe just the way things are?

What are the impacts of imperialism, both in the short and in the long run and who will eventually benefit from it?

Is it only the capitalists? Is it the industrialised and more developed nations of the West, including the workers there? Or will the economic benefits eventually trickle down and benefit a greater part of -if not all- people on this planet?

What are the concrete features of imperialism?

Or put differently: Which strategies are used to assert influence? Is it direct political control through formal colonial rule? Or are the means more subtle i.e. subordination through aid conditionality and comprador elites?

What needs to/can be done?

Do we need more 'Development' and integration of the poor countries of the South into the global economy - or less? Is the solution the liberalisation of markets or the de-linking of the local economy? More or less state? And do we need to focus on changing global structures or national ones?

In following the current debate on peacebuilding I will use this framework to analyse the various positions.

b) As we have seen, along various lines and with great differences in opinion, two positions have emerged in an ongoing debate at the heart of which lie various descriptions or rather interpretations of a dynamic relationship: the relationship between colonisers and colonies, developed and undeveloped, First World and Third World, metropolis and periphery, the West and the Rest, North and South.

On the one side, we have the Liberals and Modernisers who in essence argue that if there has been something like domination of the poorer countries by the West, then it is benign and will eventually lead to the well being of all people. Each society has to go through specific stages of growth. With the evolution of a more progressive (Western) value and social system in these countries (the current more backwards values being one of the main obstacles to growth) undeveloped countries will transform into developing and finally into fully industrialised nations. This process can be helped along economically i.e. by further opening the local economies to foreign investments, and politically i.e. by fighting corruption and ineffectiveness of national governments. It was this thinking also that has underlain and legitimised most of the actual intervention by the industrialised nations within the last 60 years.

Their critique, which has come from Marxist and later from neo-Marxist academics, various political leader of Third World countries as well as some development practitioners, argues that the good sounding intentions of 'Colonialism' and 'Development' are serving as a cover up for the political and/or economic interests of certain elites in the metropolis. Whilst early Marxists would still argue that the integration into the global economy would eventually benefit the colonised territories, the next generation of critics was less optimistic: instead of helping undeveloped countries along the path of development, the industrialised North has been building up its own achievements by exploiting and thereby actively under-developing the countries of the global South. Their proposed strategies of de-linking local economies and self-reliance had some influence on the actual practice though they did not bring the hoped for results for those countries where they were implemented. The same applied for their call for a global socialist revolution. In retrospective, some representatives of the Dependistas self-

critically admitted that whilst dependency theories had been a useful tool to understand 'underdevelopment' they never provided a real alternative strategy to achieve actual 'development'. The basic presuppositions of the dominant (capitalist) system which come down to the idea that growth is necessary to gain access to the Western mode of consumption, was never really challenged (Cardoso 1980 in Rist 1999).

Both position had some influence on the actual practice and looking at the evolution of Development practices more closely, one can see certain shifts from a more state-centred approach (until mid 1960's) to neo-liberal strategies (until mid 1990's), to again supporting the idea of a developmental state (mid 1990 onwards).

And now it seems that with the advent of peace operations we have reached yet another stage with different terms and dichotomies. Now it is the international community helping the countries coming out of civil wars in various parts of the worlds. Development has been integrated into the much bigger paradigm of Peacebuilding. And again the debate between the two camps has been invigorated. Whilst one camp voices its support of the new form of well intended international involvement into the domestic affairs of so-called failed states, the other camp sees in it a new form of imperialism that has appeared on the battlefield of the West against the Rest, in other words, it is no more that old wine in new bottles.

The background given in this part will not only help us to better understand the current debate within its historical and ideological context but also when it comes to outlining the continuities and discontinuities in theory and practice. In other words, when it comes to the question of what is actually new.

Part III: Peacebuilding – Imperialism's New Disguise?

Having introduced peacebuilding as it has been promoted by its supporters, namely as a strategy for global peace, and having provided a conceptual framework on imperialism, it is now time to bring the two concepts together. I will do so by focusing on the following questions: What are the features of peacebuilding that supposedly make it an imperialistic enterprise? And what is new about it, meaning where are the continuities/discontinuities in both theory and practice?

The structure will be as follows: firstly I will present the assessment of peacebuilding as it has been voiced by authors coming from a critical theory perspective as well as some practitioners on the ground. In a second step, I will take a closer look at some of the main understandings/interpretations of imperialism that are underlying the current debate using the framework outlined in the previous part. In a final exercise I will compare the current debate between peacebuilding supporters and its critiques with the previous debates between Modernisers and Dependents and highlight some of the continuities and discontinuities.

Peacebuilding And What Critical Theory Has To Say About It

“The interventionism by the self-styled international community, although paraded as ‘ethical’ by leaders such as Clinton and Blair is an aestheticisation, an embellishment, of the sustained attack by the West on the remaining elements of non-conformity with neo-liberal global capitalism...” (van der Pijl 2002:1)

In the first part, I have outlined how in mainstream discourse peace operations have been promoted as a strategy to deal with violent conflict and to build sustainable peace in countries suffering from civil warfare. In their positive interpretation the supporters of peacebuilding are looking at these new types of intervention as part of a new global order in which the international community owes up to its responsibility to protect. In other words, it is humanitarian motives that are supposedly guiding their actions. In explaining the ‘new wars’ the main international actors have focused on the local context: it is ‘home grown’ causes such as poor governance and failed states, politicised ethnicity and protracted social conflict that are at the root of it all and that can only be dealt with by applying social engineering on a grand scale. The basic formula to reconstruct post-conflict societies has been to (re-) introduce and (re-)build a democratic system as well as to (further) liberate the market also known as ‘liberal internationalism’. In looking for reasons for the limited success rate of peace operations the main body of literature would argue that it is due to mistakes in the implementation, i.e. that there were too little resources, not enough coordination and/or that one has to liberalise more strategically over a longer period of time. Following this argumentation what needs to be done is to revise the strategy and allow for a more gradual liberalisation, mobilise more resources and carefully apply the principles of ‘doing no harm’. This is in sum, the optimistic assessment of peacebuilding as it is presented in the majority of literature.

I now want to turn to the more negative interpretation of the peacebuilding enterprise/paradigm. By drawing parallels between peacebuilding and neo-imperialism this position, which has emerged in recent years especially, but not exclusively, in the South has raised questions on the actual legitimacy of liberal internationalism. Authors coming from this camp, which Bellamy and Williams have summarised under 'Critical Theory', have a very different interpretation/understanding of the causes of conflict, the global context, motivation of the international actors, and of what the way forward should look like.

Alternative Understandings Of The 'New Wars'

In contrast to the body of literature that in looking for the root causes of violent conflict has been focusing on the micro level, in other words, the internal factors within the respective nation, authors coming from a critical perspective have emphasised the importance of external factors.

One group of authors is particularly critical to "*the silence surrounding the role of interventionary core capitalism in perpetuating poverty through discriminatory policies that structure the global economy*" (Pugh 2005:9)

Yash Tandon (2000a) for example who sees himself more as a peace activist than an academic points out that the mainstream theories on the causes of Africa's conflicts neglect to mention the external or international dimension to Africa's conflicts. According to him it is the continued poverty that is at the root of conflict and violence in Africa. The real causes of Africa's underdevelopment, and hence its peacelessness, lie in the manner in which Africa is integrated into the global economy, in other words, it is due to the inequities inherent in the system of relations between Africa and the industrialised West.

"The fact of the matter is that Africa is weak and impoverished because its rich natural resources are taken away from the continent at a fraction of their value. The terms of exchange between Africa's natural resources and the West's capital-and-knowledge intensive technologies continue to remain the basis for vast seepage of net value out of Africa and into Europe, the USA and Japan. The 'debt problem' is only a part of it. Africa's poverty does not

just 'exist', it is systematically created. It is created not by any conspiracy. It is created by the simple operation of the so-called 'law of the market'." (Tandon 2000a:178-179)

In his analysis of Latin American countries Alejandro Bendaña comes to a similar conclusion. For him it is not enough to talk about the interdependence of peace, democracy and development on a national basis; it must also permeate the international power structures and the issue of global governance, which it does not. International structures exclude most countries of the South from meaningful political and economic participation. Economic crisis, which in his opinion underpins major social tension and instability, is fed by Northern governmental insistence on the extension of deregulated market globalisation intensifying poverty and social polarization, instability and conflict. IMF, World Bank and donor 'reform' programmes which are supposedly aimed at speeding up development and building peace and whose acceptance is often a condition for development assistance or debt relief, are seen as part of the problem by contributing to conflict and violence. To support his '*systemic critique of neo-liberal corporate globalization and U.S.-dominated international political*' Bendaña (2003) quotes UNCTAD's Least Developed Countries 2002 according to which poverty is increasing in those developing economies that have the most open trade regimes advocated by the IMF and donors.

From a more academic point of view and focusing more on discursive practices A.B. Fetherston (2000a) stresses that mainstream understandings of war and violent conflict (an understanding that treats conflicts as objective (caused by knowable, measurable, reducible objects, outside of and separate from the subject) lack connection to the everydayness of war zones and in their description of war continue to fail to catch its complexity and deep effects on social space and meaning. Drawing from the works of Pierre Bourdieu, Vivienne Jabri and Carolyn Nordstrom, Fetherston argues that the irrationality of violence and the psycho-social effects it inflicts become part of everyday life in form of systemic intolerance practiced through i.e. educational structures. These so-called 'cultures of violence' are not cut off from the rest of the world but in fact are part of a wider discourse. The everydayness of war zones is seen as outcome of domestic as well as international structures, institutions and ways of life that are fundamentally based on repression. With the words of Jabri, "*specific instances of war are a manifestation of the longer-term processes which have established war as a form of institution linked to discursive and institutional practices which define social continuities*" (Jabri 1996 in Fetherston 2000a). Alex J. Bellamy (2004) argues along the same lines.

According to him most literature on peacebuilding has been unable to evaluate the extent to which dominant peacekeeping and peacebuilding practices may actually help to reproduce the social structures that cause violent conflict in the first place. This is due to an objectivist worldview that treats problems as pre-given and intervention as a discreet act. In doing so peacebuilding theory and practice contributes to the myth that the post-Cold War world is more perilous than the Cold War world that preceded it, that the end of the Cold War created a 'new world disorder' in which ethnic rivalry and 'roguish' behaviours which were previously held in check by the super powers exploded into internal violence. The 'problems' that peace operations seek to address are not discovered but created and the relationship between the intervener and the 'target' is much more complex and interwoven. In other words, peace operations supported by objectivist theory help to construct, reproduce and maintain a particular vision of order. In contrast to that subjectivist writers like Fetherston, Jabri and Bellamy want to draw our attention to the role played by the international peacebuilding community in participating in and actually perpetuating war as social continuity.

As we will see in the following, the recognition of the macro context in what at first sight appears to be domestic conflicts, be it in terms of international terms of trade or in form of a dominant discourse consequently has a profound impact on what authors coming from a critical theory perspective suggest as a way forward.

The New Humanitarian Era: A Cover Up For Imperial Pacification Or Re-Colonisation?

Instead of looking at the advent of peace operations as signifying a new global order in which the actions of the international community are driven by humanitarian values and aimed at building peace, authors coming from a critical theory background have come up with a very different assessment of the current situation. In their interpretation international peacebuilders -despite their good sounding intention of building peace- seem to be part of a reformation strategy of the global capitalist system aimed at pacifying or even re-colonising the poor countries of the periphery.

The first critique is best expounded by Mark Duffield. He argues that peacebuilding efforts rather than aiming at establishing global peace represent a new policy of poverty containment. The ultimate goal of 'liberal peace' is global stability. Since the 1970 the nature of capitalism

as a globally expansive and inclusive system has been increasingly questioned (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1996 in Duffield 2002b). Whilst the productive networks in the core have been thickening and deepening, the inclusion of the South, even as uneven and exploited subjects can no longer be taken for granted. The irrelevance of the South to the formal global economy is manifest in the shift from attempts to promote economic development in favour of what Robert Cox calls 'international riot control' (Cox 1999 in an Interview with *New Political Economy*). Whilst having no economic relevance to 'the North', it has been recognised that poverty in 'the South' is one of the root causes of conflict, criminalized and terrorist activity and therefore international instability. 'Liberal peace', as Duffield calls it, has become part of the international community's strategy to deal with the new security threat of underdevelopment. According to Slim (1999), in Duffield's interpretation peacebuilding has the objective to provide minimalist international welfare and "*to contain the insoluble problem of the poor and hungry masses of 'the south' and prevent them from fleeing towards the rich contented 'north'*" (Slim 1999:6).

Along the same lines Bendaña (2003) asks if peacebuilding has become a euphemism for what he calls conflict management - that is the administration of poverty and violence to prevent larger challenges to global capitalist stability. His argument is that the international conflict management system is being utilised by an unjust globalisation system to keep the globalised victims at bay. Similarly Micheal Pugh points out, that peace support operations (PSOs) help to sustain a particular order of world politics that privileges the rich and the powerful states in their efforts to control or isolate the unruly part of the world. In other words, they serve a narrow problem solving purpose "*to doctor the dysfunctions of the global political economy within a framework of liberal imperialism*" (Pugh 2004:39).

But whilst Duffield argues that 'the West' has abandoned its 'Modernisation Project' in favour of its new strategy of poverty containment, the second criticism differs in a sense that it sees peacebuilding as the continuation of old power structures and even a new form of colonialism. According to these critics, peacebuilding is the latest attempt of the capitalist West to re-colonise the poor and crisis ridden countries of 'the South' to gain or increase access to their raw materials and their cheap labour force.

Contrary to studies on motivations behind the investment decision in Africa that view the liberalisation of local economies in benign terms and as a necessary agency for development

and peace in Africa, Yash Tandon (2000a) for example argues that the strategy of 'Liberal Peace' particularly the aspect of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) is motivated primarily by profit, and in its pursuit of profit, to conquer all markets. This perception is also shared by Sahara Bracking and Graham Harrison (2003). In their analyses of Africa's relation with global economy they conclude that capitalist development in Africa fails to be developmental but instead is characterised by "*external dominance and socially –damaging and extraverted form of accumulation*" (Bracking and Harrison 2003:9). In her analyses of capital accumulation Bracking argues that a large proportion of the aid budget provided to develop African countries is transferred to multinational companies and other institution of the North (for example consultants, NGOs). Through this strategy of re-exporting into the North aid bypasses the recipient country up to 98%. Similarly, Branwen Gruffydd Jones in her assessment of the situation in Mozambique argues that the liberalisation of Africa is not in the interests of the rural producers; "*it will not enable the development of Africa's capacity to produce for itself, to meet its own needs. The current discourse of poverty alleviation in Mozambique and in Africa more broadly thus provides legitimisation for a set of practices, which form an integral part of the continuing reorganisation of the world in the interests of global capital.*" (Jones 2003:43). Further reflecting on the role of aid in sustaining a neo-colonial linkage Tandon (1996) identifies four roles of aid agencies: 1) a diversionary role (by supporting micro enterprises aid draws the attention away from the real causes of poverty), 2) an ideological role (by proclaiming the universality of Western values), 3) pacification of people suffering from the effects of structural adjustment programmes and 4) destruction of traditional African institutions und thereby undermining local authorities.

In sum one can say that the motivation behind the new will to intervene and protect is generally seen as less altruistic than the dominant discourse would like us to believe. According to critical theorists the narrative of peace has conveyed the preferences of the hegemonic power and its allies and furthermore identified these values with the UN and the international community. This has become part of what Robert Cox refers to the "*nébuleuse of hegemonic policy for global capitalism*" (Cox 2002 in Pugh 2004:48) aimed at maintaining the existing status quo. In other words, international peacebuilders -despite the veneer of multilateral action and international legitimacy- are viewed as part of a reformation strategy of the global capitalist system aimed at either pacifying or re-colonising the poor countries of the periphery.

Discourse Uncovered

From a critical perspective it is not only the practice of peacebuilding that plays a crucial role in maintaining a certain status quo. The majority of peacebuilding literature by focusing on the micro level and by being non-reflexive is also seen as helping to legitimise the dominant ideology.

According to Paris (2000), for example, the problem with the literature on peace operations is that it is too limited in the scope of its inquiry and devotes too much attention to 'policy relevance' or the goal of offering advice to policy makers. Paris argues that students of peacebuilding have concentrated so intently on the operational details of these missions that they have neglected the role that peace operations play in the diffusion of norms and institutional models from one part of the international system to another. "*Among other things, peacebuilders attempt to bring war-shattered states into conformity with the international system's prevailing standards of domestic governance or standards that define how states should organise themselves internally*" (Paris 2002:638). He even goes as far as describing contemporary practice of peacebuilding as a "*modern rendering of the mission civilisatrice*" (ibid.). "*Like European colonialism a hundred years ago, today's peacebuilding operations convey norms of acceptable or civilised behaviour into the domestic affairs of less-developed states*" (ibid.). Whilst Paris supports this transmission of norms of appropriate or civilised behaviour from the core of the international system to the periphery he appeals to peacebuilding scholars to actually question the underlying assumptions of peace operations.

Other authors (Pugh 2004, Bellamy & Williams 2004a/b) take their critique a step further by pointing out that, what they refer to as the 'dominant problem-solving approach', whilst yielding important insights about the effectiveness of particular peacebuilding strategies, also helps to obscure the fact that it is usually the interests, values and priorities of the interveners, not of the victims that are shaping contemporary peacebuilding practice. Bellamy (2004), for example, highlights that in their attempt to improve peacebuilding practice most scholars have identified and categorised symptoms that peace operations ought to address, concepts and tools that peacekeepers have at their disposal and the most effective way to utilise them. But they have neglected to place the evolving practices and conceptions of peace operations within a global context meaning the broader relationship between peace operations world politics and ideology. By focusing on the classification of peace operations most scholars have overlooked the role that politics play in the construction of peace operations, that leads

to a narrative which obscures many of the unlearned lessons, simplifies the genesis of peace operations and limits discussion on what peace operations ought to fulfil in global politics (Bellamy 2004). By seeing themselves as removed from the social world they inhabit, objectivist scholars tend to overlook their own biases and partialities and are therefore unable to evaluate the extent to which dominant peacekeeping and building practices may actually help to reproduce the social structures that cause violent conflict. *“Although such approaches may mitigate particular violent conflicts they do not challenge or seriously reflect upon the global structures that contribute to human suffering and, sometimes, violent conflict in the first place. Moreover, problem-solving approaches define certain forms of action as relevant, identify particular lines of causality and render certain practices legitimate at the expense of others.”* (Bellamy and Williams 2004a:6).

But it is not only the focus on policy relevance and the subjectivist worldview that is seen as problematic. Both Pugh (2004) and Duffield (2002b) have also paid some attention to the fact that in countless UN reports, consultancy documents, NGO briefings and academic works, conventional descriptions of the ‘new wars’, create a series of implicit ‘them’ and ‘us’ dichotomies. ‘Their wars’, for example, are presented as internal, illegitimate, identity-based, characterised by unrestrained destruction, abuse civilians, lead to social regression, rely on privatised violence, and so on. By implication, ‘our wars’ are described as between states, as legitimate and politically motivated, showing restraint, respecting civilians, leading to social advancement and based upon an accountable force. According to Pugh and Duffield, this representation/construction is to capture the moral high ground to legitimise actions that are otherwise illegal. It promotes moral values and responses that reinforce the superiority of liberal ideology, whilst avoiding to having to deal with the injustices that foster instability in the system.

In explaining the tendency (if not preference) of many to refrain from tackling the underlying assumptions of the peacebuilding concept reducing the notion to management techniques, application of tools and employment of Northern experts as consultants, Bendaña (2003) highlights the question of power. According to him the question of power informs both theory and practice, including ‘liberal policy’ in the North and the superficial procedure of democracy and consensus building in the South.

“Unfortunately and tellingly, understanding of power in the global context does not figure prominently in most ongoing peacebuilding discussions. This is logical if one recalls that these discussions have been “donor” and policy driven (where conflict prevention is developed as a service for rich countries’ foreign ministries). Also unfortunate is the fact that UN agencies figure as prominent contributors to the field, beginning with the Agenda for Peace. As the UN itself must take care not to upset the power centres, especially the Washington Consensus, the confusion of loyalties carries over into carefully worded ambiguous peacebuilding postulates. A confused organization can only contribute confused conceptualizations, generally characterized by evading the central notions of power and market generated inequalities. And donors and agencies seem to remain analytically and politically paralyzed in the face of United States power, compromised themselves by their own alliances and shared financial interests in securing ‘stable’ markets”. (Bendaña 2003)

Policy reform as suggested by most peacebuilding experts is therefore seen as a means of upholding and legitimizing the structures of oppression. In other words, as long as there are no substantive political-policy-power shifts in the North, recommendations on peacebuilding can be regarded as forming part of an ideological project that excludes addressing international power structures.

In sum, conventional/mainstream theory on peacebuilding, by presenting the prevailing international framework as incontestable, by focusing on policy issues and by constructing ‘them’ and ‘us’ dichotomies, is seen as helping to maintain the status quo. In other words, because it does not question its own normative and ideological foundations or the impact that it has, micro theory has become part of the global power structure designed in the interests of the powerful. The mainstream of peacebuilding studies is therefore seen as an ideological legitimisation for the practices of neo-liberal reordering of capital accumulation in what critical authors regard as the latest phase of imperialism. In doing so it joins other historically and socially determined theories such as liberalism/neo-liberalism and realism/neo-realism as ideologies designed to cope with the instabilities and inequalities within the world order that is itself dysfunctional (Pugh 2004).

Proposed Ways Forward

In acknowledging the importance of external factors in understanding contemporary violent conflict and in pursuing to comprehend the potential for emancipation and new forms of dialogue and democracy, authors from a critical theory background are also suggesting very different and at times conflicting 'solutions' to the problem. Their ideas of what needs to be done to build peace are numerous and concern both peacebuilding practice as well as theory. In the following I will therefore only present a selection of proposed ways forward that is by no means comprehensive

Suggestions Concerning Actual Peacebuilding Practice

Starting with the actual practice, some authors would argue that an essential step to tackling the problem of peacelessness lies in transforming global structures and institutions.

Tandon for example demands a radical restructuring of the terms of integration into the global economic system with one major issue being the cancellation of debts. Bendaña (2003) further highlights the importance of improved commodity prices, access to Northern markets and protection of nascent industries. Also, the power of the World Trade Organization and the IMF and other -as he finds- undemocratic bodies controlled by the richest countries and corporations importance have to be actively contained. George Monbiot (2003) even goes as far as suggesting a wholesale replacement of the Bretton Woods institutions, with democratic and Keynesian-orientated organisations, which would be more relevant to the poor (in Pugh 2004: 53).

Whilst the UN is seen as having the potential for contesting the dominant status quo, it is also pointed out, that as long as the big powers dominate the Security Council and many member governments lack democratic legitimacy, putting more power in the hands of the UN (including the power to intervene) becomes counterproductive (Bendaña 2003). To achieve more international democracy and accountability Monbiot (2003), for example, suggests the restructuring of the UN general assembly with votes weighted according to the size of population that would replace the Security Council.

In order to transform these international structures and institutions what is further needed is a "*nationally based, but transnationally orientated, globalisation from below*"(Cox 2002 in Pugh 2004:52). At a national level the emphasis is therefore put on greater local economic

independence, self-reliance, re-localisation. Reasserting the social responsibility of local public authorities, is seen as integral to alternative strategies. This could entail the public regulation of external corporations, controls on the flow of capital and investment and provisions for broad social participation. Tandon, (2000a) for example, emphasises the importance of self-motivated endogenous development undertaken by people at the grassroots. Apart from re-negotiating the terms of integration into the world market, Tandon therefore proposes the partially de-linking from the global system, and the development of alternative forms of production at the economic level and governance at the political level.¹⁵ *“The economy has to be brought back under the control of the people and reshaped to service primarily the needs of the people, and not those of the exporters of Africa’s wealth. The kind of state that is needed is not the minimum state, much favoured by the IMF and the World Bank, but the responsible state”* (Tandon 2000b: 5). This requires a new kind of moral and political culture, and new structures of political decision-making and accountability that are more locally accountable, more diversified and that are recognising ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences and are able to create conditions of national unity based on the fullest expression of these diversities (ibid.).

Ballentine and Sherman (2003) are also highlighting the role of a strong and active state in planning and implementing expansionist policies to increase employment, income generation and consumption power. According to them, vulnerable people can be weaned off illegal activities through i.e. investment in public services and social protection. The cases of France, Cuba, Sweden and the Asian states have shown that investment in public goods, infrastructure, social welfare systems, and public employment -even though such dirigisme may entail a degree of political authoritarianism- can be useful to redress a situation in which a few individuals flaunt obscene affluence but public facilities are often squalid (in Pugh 2005).¹⁶

¹⁵ He argues that even though Africa's peacelessness is rooted in this continued impoverishment by the system, de-linking from the system is not a viable or practical way for Africa. But there are ways in which Africa could partially de-link itself from the global market, especially through a more concerted effort to strengthen the institutions and structures of the so-called 'informal' markets that are able to survive in a de-linked environment. In addition, African governments must close all the channels by which domestic savings are spirited out of the country whilst pressure to conform to the inequities of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) must be resisted. Also there should be no 'open door' policy towards FDIs in general (Tandon 2000a/b).

¹⁶ Statist measures might include i.e. high taxes on luxury items and rationing or subsidies for basic foodstuffs; government intervention to boost re-training, employment and public services; maintenance of public sector salaries; increased purchasing power through public works; deficit financing (Pugh 2005).

Looking at the community level and in addition -and one could also say in contrast- to strengthening state institutions some authors argue that more attention should be paid to the political economy of the grass-root level. According to Pugh (2005) collective and cooperative production and marketing, whether part of the formal or informal economy, are often viable mechanisms for economic organisation. Similarly credit unions are also seen as a vehicle of empowerment from centralised banking and insurance companies, by serving the various needs particularly of those people who have limited access to towns, who are penalised by traditional bank profiling and charges or who need to receive remittances from diasporas abroad.

A key role in counter-hegemonic resistance and globalisation from below is also given to building a 'broader peace constituency' (Fetherston 2000a) and so-called 'horizontal networks of national resistance' (Bendaña 2003).

According to Fetherston, building a broader peace constituency than currently exists provides a counter-discourse to violent nationalism and opens space in civil society for diversity and difference. Citizen's empowerment encompasses a transition from being objects into subjects, as considering themselves active agents in society. Therefore the main tool of peacebuilding should be -what she calls- "*radical peace education*"¹⁷ which self-consciously aims to build a vocal and active counter-discursive constituency and in the long-term aims to transform social spaces in divided societies like Croatia. Such spaces would, for example, allow people to challenge prevalent negative attitudes towards Serbs, Muslims, and other minorities in Croatia, be critical of the government, and protest against high levels of military spending and militarisation without threat of reprisals (Fetherston 2000b).

Similarly, Bendaña (2003) advocates what he calls process-minded peacebuilding closely associated with social justice and the autonomous political capacities (power) to protect the formation of national and local democratic spaces based on inclusiveness and greater equity. Particularly important are horizontal networks, not only in resisting imperialist globalisation,

¹⁷ Fetherston emphasises the importance of non-hierarchical, non-judgmental learning space, which avoids providing packages of unproblematised knowledge for absorption (and regurgitation) by the participants. Instead of offering any kind of framework, be it non-violent communication, an evangelical approach, or whatever, facilitators need to create a space for 'many truths', where the focus and starting place for learning is the experiences (and localities) of the participants and facilitators. The aim is not to build a specific 'correct' and final training programme, but rather to engage in a continual process of self-reflection, action, and, where appropriate, transformation (Fetherston 2000).

but also as alternative models of global governance. The call is for another type of globalisation based on cooperation and solidarity with greater rooting in associative and cooperative enterprises at both local and global levels (Bendaña 2003). With ideas ranging from the emergence of a 'transnational civil society' (Korten 1990 in Duffield 2002) to a 'consolidation of cosmopolitan politics' (Kaldor 1999 in Duffield 2002) these views hold the possibility that global networks linking different local, national and international groups and institutions will come to embody and operationalise humankind's shared values and responsibilities (Duffield 2002). In doing so these authors reject the existing top-down socio-economic model where rich and powerful states are still the sources of key decisions about policing and riot control and provide the vast bulk of humanitarian assistance and experts. In other words, a radical cosmopolitan framework, in which the state system is resolved into a complex of entities of global socio-economic networks to world cities and mini states, is put forward as an alternative to the statist one (Cox in Pugh 2004).

Is there a role for peace operations to play in this cosmopolitan framework? Critical scholars like Bellamy would say, yes. But would have to be very different from the interventions we are seeing at the moment, which are seen to be concerned with the maintenance and reproduction of a particular, liberal type of international order. Peace operations need to be released from state centric control systems, incorporate local voices in the planning and execution and have to be made answerable to more accountable, transparent and democratic institutions. Mary Kaldor (1999), for example suggests for peace operations to resemble '*cosmopolitan law enforcement*' which would entail '*risking the lives of peacekeepers in order to save the lives of victims*' and creating '*a new kind of soldier-cum-policeman*'. This will require '*considerable rethinking about tactics, equipment and, above all, command and training*' (in Bellamy and Williams 2004b: 199). Richmond (2001) advocates, what he calls, 'third generation' of peacebuilding that focuses on multidimensional and multileveled approaches that aim to transform conflict situations by prioritising local forms of knowledge (in Bellamy 2004).

Though even these approaches based on a mutually acceptable definition of peace and order are in danger of replacing one totalizing discourse with another one. To avoid the danger of being hegemonic themselves, critical scholars have suggested a set of counter-hegemonic

practices¹⁸. These are aiming at “*creating the outlines for the coexistence and legitimization of a multiplicity of social meanings and realities*” (Fetherston 2000a:213). Fetherston (2000a), for example, in promoting what she calls ‘transformative peacebuilding’, links the works of Michel Foucault on power and ‘regimes of truth’, Davida Cooper on anti-hegemonic projects, and Jürgen Habermas on communicative action with the work of Antonio Gramsci and concludes that a “*minimal requirement appears to be the opening of critical space, where the very foundations of social meaning and practices are examined and where a diversity of critical social movements contest the “regime of truth” without reproducing it. A maximal potential, encompassing some minimal shared normative base (produced through communicative action) would attempt to reconstruct a consensual basis for local hegemony, repairing and reforging distorted communication networks at localized ‘everyday’ sites of social structures and action*” (Fetherston 2000a: 213).

Suggestions Concerning Peacebuilding Theory

According to critical scholars theory plays an important role in constructing/deconstructing ideologies. Robert Cox (1981) argued that knowledge is never politically neutral, but it is always for someone and for some purpose. In other words, all theories have a perspective. Knowledge can either act as a guide to help solve problems that arise within a particular perspective, or it can reflect upon the process of theorising itself. From the first one emerges ‘problem solving theory’ from the second one ‘critical theory’ (in Bellamy and Williams 2004a). Most literature on peacebuilding has been shaped by a problem-solving epistemology and in doing so has been part of the problem rather than of the solution to peacelessness. Therefore it is now time to ‘think anew’ and engage with issue in a more critical manner. According to Bellamy and Williams (2004a), critical knowledge calls into question existing institutions and social relations by enquiring into their origins and how and whether they might be in the process of changing. In showing the linkages and how the whole fits together,

¹⁸ In highlighting the need for counter- hegemonic strategies, Bellamy and Williams (2004b) suggest a ‘pragmatic solidarist approach’ that encompasses three techniques:

- Dialogic ethics: actors should engage in free and open dialogue, and agreement what constitutes ‘good practice’ should be arrived at through consensus
- Inclusively: dialogue should include all stakeholders affected by the course of action under discussion and different perspectives should be evaluated according to theirs weight of content rather than the ideational or material power behind it
- Fallibility: theorists and practitioners must realize that even their most clearly held beliefs are fallible and must therefore be open to revision on the basis of the first two techniques

According to Bellamy and Williams employing these techniques will limit the danger of creating totalizing discourses.

critical research becomes a moral force rather than a means to technical solutions (Duffield 2002). In relation to peace operations, *“a critical approach seeks to investigate who benefits from certain types of practices, what linkages exist between local actors and global structures and why certain voices and experiences are marginalized in policy debates”* (Bellamy and Williams 2004a:6). Duffield (2002b) therefore calls for the rediscovery of research and knowledge as a moral and connecting force that plays a vital role in radically reforming the institutions and networks of global governance.

As we have seen, in critical theory the suggestions for a way forward include a wide scope of activities at different levels. For a start, research on peacebuilding has to more self-consciously acknowledge that proposed alternatives are shaped by the perceptions, identities, and interests by those that articulate them. Instead of looking for managerial solutions, future studies on peace operations should focus on uncovering ideological preferences of dominant theories and practices and seek more radical alternatives. In terms of actual practice, the ideas range from transforming international structures and institutions over more state intervention at a local level to opening critical spaces at community level to allow for local knowledge to find the right solution. Whilst there is considerable disagreement among critical authors about the ontology of so-called market democracy and the power of its non-state networks and agencies vis-à-vis states, they have in common a concern to construct an inclusive and emancipatory concept of political economy (Pugh 2005).

Summing Up: Towards Post-Hegemonic Societies

In contrast to ‘problem solving’, ‘objectivist’ or ‘micro’ theory which with its preoccupation with practical operational issues neglects to question existing institutions and power relations, ‘critical’, ‘subjectivist’ or ‘macro’ theory demonstrates that most peacebuilding theory and practice so far have helped to construct, reproduce and maintain a particular vision of order.

From a critical perspective the newness to the current wars is mainly the amount of attention that is paid to them. The way in which the violence in the periphery is portrayed and explained by micro theory serves the expansion of the neo-liberal ideology of global capitalism. Whilst acknowledging the importance of local factors, critical theory emphasises the importance of the macro context i.e. the way in which countries are integrated into the global economy. The motivation behind peacebuilding interventions is therefore seen as less

altruistic and humanitarian. In fact the good sounding intention of building peace is seen as a cover-up for the national self-interests of the Western hemisphere under the lead of the US seeking imperialistic pacification or even re-colonisation of the countries in the periphery. To achieve the objective of building global peace authors from critical theory background as well as practitioner from the South suggest very different measures. Instead of focusing on the micro level, alternative peacebuilding would have to also include addressing international power relations that have manifested in various institutional and structures and that are mainly benefiting the economically developed metropolis and its satellites. Whilst some authors are supporting the idea of a stronger welfare state, others are highlighting the importance of supporting economic and political structures at grass-root level. The common feature though is a bottom up-approach to peacebuilding. Therefore, the main tasks of a peacebuilders should be the facilitation and empowerment of local knowledge and the coordination of horizontal networks.

A major concern though is to not only engage in counter-hegemonic discourse and practice and in doing though face the danger of replacing one ideological bias with another, but to create “*the outlines for the co-existence and legitimisation of a multiplicity of social meanings and realities*” (Fetherston 2000a: 213), in other words, to path the way for post-hegemonic societies.

Current Understandings Of Imperialism

The level of international control over the domestic affairs post conflict societies has reached an extent that in their assessment of peacebuilding scholars and practitioners have often drawn parallels between peacebuilding and neo-imperialism, if not use the terms synonymously. But whilst its supporters are talking about a benign form of imperialism, others raise the concern that liberal internationalism is but a vanguard of global capitalism designed to further exclude and exploit the countries in the periphery. Taking the terms of reference outlined at the end of part II as a basis for an analytical framework, I will now summarise the main understandings/interpretations of imperialism that are underlying the current debate in peacebuilding literature.

The New Face Of Imperialism

Most authors would agree that with the advent of peace operations the level of international interference into the domestic affairs of supposedly sovereign states has reached a new high. But in what form -or in other words- what exactly are the strategies used to assert influence?

Obviously peace operations have opened the door for once again very direct external control: garrisons of troops and foreign civilian administration resemble imperial means of the colonial past. According to peacebuilding supporters like Ignatieff (2003) and Rieff (2002) this is a necessary evil that needs to be tolerated and highlight the fact that these measures are only temporary. What these authors do not mention though are the long-term consequences and the increase in indirect external influence that has accompanied peace operations.

According to Duffield (2002a), for example, over the past twenty-five years, donor governments, UN agencies, regional bodies, NGOs, commercial companies, and so on, have gained new forms of informal economic, social and political influence in relation to the internal affairs of contested states within zones of insecurity. At the same time the giving of 'neutral' humanitarian aid has been replaced with targeted aid conditionality based on the attainment of liberal goals and the use of lightly armed peacekeepers as impartial arbiters has been replaced by a 'Military Humanism'. The types of economic and social policies being pursued, the levels of poverty, the degree of popular participation, the extent of corruption and criminal activity, respect for human rights, the role of women, the status of the media, psychological well-being, the quality of political institutions, and so on, have all become areas in which the periphery or 'borderland', as Duffield calls it, as a social body have been opened up to levels of metropolitan monitoring, intervention and regulation unprecedented since the colonial period.

"While political alliance and arms superiority will continue to remain an important if disputed element of international security (Rodgers 2000), over large areas of the borderlands it has given way to new possibilities and experiments in the will to govern. Rather than forming alliances with states, the aim is now to modulate and change the behaviour of the populations within them... Within this framework, control is not exerted directly or territorially as in the colonial projects of the past. It exists in the management of processes and the encouragement of capacities and potentialities. Through the inclusion (or exclusion) of populations and countries in relation to the flows and networks controlled by

donor governments and aid agencies, the aim is to encourage positive behaviour while discouraging the bad.” (Duffield 2002a: 1063).

He further points out that this form of influence cannot be taken as universal or even particularly effective. *“On the contrary, it tends to be selective, unevenly distributed and of varying impact” (ibid.:1062).*

As we have seen earlier, the notion of socio-economic domination from outside or ‘*global liberal governance*’ as Duffield (2002a/b) calls it, that does not rely on direct political control is nothing new but has already been described in the concept of neo-colonialism meaning *“the informal penetration and control of weaker states by great powers and multinational corporations based on the formal colonial powers”* (Neta Craw 2002 in Champagne 2003:19). What has changed though is that in the context of a nation coming out of civil war, the dependency on foreign aid is obviously even greater than in ‘developing countries’. Newly established governments are therefore more pressed to agree to certain aid conditionalities i.e. allowing foreign investors access to certain sectors of their economy. Also, in sending their experts to assist countries coming out of civil strife to (re-) build a democratic system (democratic transition) and reform their economy (economic transition) external actors have once again gained greater influence in shaping the structures of the countries in the periphery which will continue to have a fundamental impact on how things are done even when the peacebuilders have left the country.

In sum, in the age of peacebuilding the strategies used by outsiders to assert control are a mix of formal and informal ones. In a post-conflict situation outsiders are once again given the opportunity to directly influence the way political, economic and social structures are being rebuilt. Once the foreign troops and administration withdraw, the dependency on international aid and foreign investment will continue to influence domestic politics. What seems new though is that peacebuilders are now also concerned with reconstructing social relations and changing behaviour and attitudes.

Who Is Calling The Shots? Multilateral Peace Or Pax America

The question of who exactly the set of people is, that is dominating in this supposedly latest phase of imperialism is also not an easy one to answer. In looking at the various international

institutions and organisations participating in the peacebuilding enterprise one could assume a certain level of multilateralism involving a large variety of states, international and non-governmental organisations, and corporations (Fearon and Latini 2004). But at a second glance, it is the 'Western powers' that are seen to dominate the agenda. Yet within the Western powers faction one can again distinguish between European social-democratic leaders on the one hand and those of the US on the other. The former seem more committed to internationalisation and human rights and less bound to the cruder forms of *realpolitik* that still have powerful resonances in the US, whilst the latter are seen to remain much more within a narrowly national concept of interests, and the election of Bush (junior) has reinforced these tendencies (Shaw 2002). Then again, other critics point out, that by closer investigation what becomes apparent is the hegemony of only one nation that is calling the shots at i.e. the UN and the Bretton Woods institutions. For them, the existence of an American Empire is no longer a secret (Foster 2003). But whilst some authors like Ignatieff are arguing that the US empire "*is not like empires of past times, built on colonies, conquest and the white mans burden... the 21st century imperium is a new invention in the annals of political science, an empire lite, a global hegemony whose grace notes are free markets, human rights and democracy, enforced by the most awesome military power the world has ever known*" (Ignatieff 2003b), US critics like Cox (2005), Panitch (2000) and Bellamy Foster (2003) point out, that after the end of the Cold War the US Empire was able to go and expand almost unchallenged to dominate over world capital flows and allied political systems alike. Even further, the main group that is said to drive liberal internationalism behind the scene of US politics are so-called multi national corporations (MNCs). Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt (2000) even describe a radical shift in concepts that form the philosophical basis of modern politics, concepts such as sovereignty, nation, and people. They also show how the power of transnational corporations and the increasing predominance of post-industrial forms of labour and production help to define the new imperial global order as no longer bound to territory or a state. Following their line of argument the decisions over the future of nation states are increasingly less made by politicians in the houses of parliament but by managers in the boardrooms of their MNC.

In addition, the nature of the relationship between insiders and outsiders has also become more difficult to define. Shaw (2002) for example points out that far from being uniquely powerful, 'the West' is actually less able to determine events in the non-Western world than in earlier periods. According to him, Western powers have hardly been able to contain

relatively modest enemies like Saddam's Iraq and Milosevic's Serbia. Even further, Western power has frequently been humiliated by minor local players -Serbian generals at Srebrenica, *génocidaires* in Rwanda, and militia in Mogadishu and Dili- at serious cost to its own credibility as well as the lives of local people.

In sum, it seems that in the post-Cold War era the concepts of domination and power has become more complex and diffused. Some authors still hold on to the to the concept of state power, others point to the de-territorialisation and the ever growing role of MNC. And whilst some talk about an internationalisation and democratisation of Western power others talk about the American empire as a vanguard of global capitalism. Some authors like Tandon (2000b) hold the opinion that the concept of imperialism is still a useful one to understand the relationship between richer and poorer countries, whereas others like Shaw would disagree and argue that *“the ‘new imperialism’ is a profoundly misleading, indeed ideological concept that obscures the realities of power and especially of empire in the twenty-first century. This notion is an obstacle to understanding the significance, extent and limits of contemporary Western power”* (Shaw 2002).

What is certain though is, that the nature of the relationship between the internationals and the locals is one of the key issues in peacebuilding. As Champagne (2005) points out: *“The political aspects of ‘peacebuilding’ lie at the core of the crisis regarding the legitimacy of international actors. There is constant tension between the strengthening of political institutions in failed states and the respect of the principle of local ownership, the key to long-term self- sustained peace.”* (Champagne 2005:8).

The Moral Evaluation Of Imperial Peacebuilding

As we have seen earlier, the language in mainstream peacebuilding discourse in the beginning of the 1990 would have liked us to belief in a new humanitarian era in which so-called peace operations are undertaken with good intentions and driven by altruistic motivation. But nowadays even supporters of the US Empire like Ignatieff would admit that America gets involved in the international enterprise of nation-building for mainly imperial reasons i.e. to consolidate its global hegemony, to assert and maintain its leadership and to ensure stability. Though in his article, which was very tellingly named *“The Burden”* (2003c), Ignatieff

emphasises that the US has only with great reluctance assumed the imperial responsibilities that have been thrust onto them.

Critiques of the liberal peace and especially the American empire accuse Ignatieff and other 'empire's apologists' of inventing such a benign, reluctant emperor and in doing so obscure the material motives (Rothschild 2003). According Michael Pugh and William Robinson, for example, modern peacebuilding still involves subtle forms of economic exploitation. Pugh, for example claims that international peacebuilding efforts in the Balkans were motivated, in part, by a desire to integrate 'south-east Europe into the sphere of Western capitalism' while Robinson asserts that the peacebuilding mission in Nicaragua served the interests of 'transnational capital' by opening the Nicaraguan economy to foreign investment and by limiting the power of anti-capitalist forces within Nicaragua itself (in Paris 2002).

Others, like Roland Paris, would consent that contemporary peacebuilding is not a purely altruistic enterprise and that *"the decision to deploy international peacebuilding operations cannot be separated from the national security interests of the world's most powerful states, particularly the permanent members of the UN Security Council, who have the power to veto the creation of new UN-sanctioned missions"* (Paris 2002:652). Yet Paris strongly disagrees with the specific suggestion that peacebuilding has advanced the economic interests of wealthy states, or 'transnational capital', or the peacebuilding agencies themselves. *"Peacebuilding missions have taken place in some of the poorest and most economically stagnant parts of the world -including Cambodia, Rwanda, Nicaragua and Angola- countries that, to put it bluntly, have little to offer international capitalists"*(ibid). According to Paris neither Robinson nor Pugh offer proof that an expectation of, or desire for, economic gain motivated the decision to launch peacebuilding operations in these countries. *"The mission in Cambodia, for example, cost approximately \$3 bn and generated few discernible economic benefits for the intervening agencies or their backers - which seems more like international charity than economic exploitation. The balance sheet of peacebuilding simply does not sustain the economic exploitation thesis."* (Paris 2002:653).

In sum one can say that peacebuilding can be regarded as neither entirely altruistic nor driven by purely economic interests. The concept of Western states, and the US in particular, acting to serve its own interests i.e. the exploitation of the wealth of the periphery seems too narrowly defined. Especially in the 'New World Order' established by the events of 9/11 and

subsequent developments, one cannot underestimate the centrality of stability, denying safe haven, etc. to US interests. In other words, what may be the strongest motivation of international actors getting involved in civil wars is their interest in international security. In the 'new world disorder' it is in the national self-interest of the main global and regional stakeholders to create international order and for example stop the flow of refugees that are threatening to de-stabilise whole regions.

Winners And Losers Of Peacebuilding

Closely linked to the speculation around on the motivations behind peacebuilding interventions is the question of who in the end is going to benefit most. Again the opinions differ to what the short and long-term impacts of peacebuilding actually are.

Let us briefly recall the rationale behind 'the liberal peace'. The violent manifestation of conflict in the periphery is mainly linked to internal factors such as failed states and politicised ethnicity. The solution to this is to re-built the state and to politically and economically liberalise post-conflict societies and to integrate them into the global capitalist system. The benefits of a market economy will eventually¹⁹ trickle down and increase the quality of life of all stakeholders.

In contrast to that stands the point of view that it is precisely the statist structure and neo-liberal value system that foster the kind of political and social instability that requires policing, protection or exclusion. With the words of Michael Pugh: *"The limits of the current forms of peacekeeping and humanitarianism lie in the inherent contradictions of a capitalist hegemony trying to keep the lid on instability. Peace support operations and humanitarianism deal with the manifestations of that instability, marking the extent to which the system fails to benefit large parts of the world. The issue certainly reflects a concern about the abuse of people by state and sub-state elites, and many war-torn societies have benefited from relief aid and military protection. But they pay a price for that assistance in their dependency on the wealthy parts of the world and their subjection to the demands of an economic globalization"*

¹⁹ As discussed earlier, recent years have brought the recognition that liberalisation in countries coming out of civil war tends to increase the gap between rich and poor and in doing so help to divide societies even more. To soften these 'short-term impacts', reformers of the liberal internationalism suggest the strategic liberalisation within a conflict resolution framework.

that may benefit the minority of entrepreneurs but undermines the self-sufficiency of the majority.” (Pugh 2004:54)

So while some would argue that in the end liberal internationalism will bring wealth and stability to all, others agree that it is still only a minority that will really benefit. Whilst these are basically the main positions we have already encountered in the ‘Development Discourse’, it seems though that the lines are not as clear-cut as they used to be. In a globalised world the impacts (intended or un-intended) of any kind of action are increasingly harder to establish. Too many factors are coming into play; the winners of today may easily be the losers of tomorrow. Which is why it is even more important to critically monitor the various trends and developments allowing for a multiplicity of viewpoints. Interestingly, there is now empirical evidence that there has been a substantial decrease in violent conflicts and their potency over the last ten years. The first *Human Security Report* (2005) provides a comprehensive assessment of the incidence, severity, and consequences of political violence around the world and documents a dramatic decline in the number of wars, genocides and human rights abuse over the past decade. The authors ascribe this reduction to the increased international activism, spearheaded by the UN, which supports the argument that peacebuilding is benefiting more than a small minority.

Summing Up: Peacebuilding Or The Radicalisation Of Development

With the appearance of peacebuilders the level of international influence in countries coming out of civil war has once again increased. The nature of external influence has changed in various ways: by rebuilding states it has once again become more direct and formal. At the same time the level of informal control that was already identified in the ‘Age of Development’, for example in form of conditionalities, has also grown. Important to notice is that while political alliance with states will continue to remain important, the aim is also to modulate and change the behaviour of the populations within them. Within this framework, control is not exerted directly or territorially as in the colonial projects of the past. It exists in the management of processes and the encouragement of capacities and potentialities (Duffield 2002b).

Other changes to be observed are found in the New Global Order that developed after the end of the Cold War. In that order the US, as the new leading actor, has increasingly dominated

the stage of international relations. Having lost its former enemy the military has also found itself in a different role. Subsequently a new civilian/military interface has emerged and broadened.

This is, in short, the new face of imperialism. After mercantilism, colonialism and neo-colonialism, the relationship between the powerful and the powerless seems to have reached yet another stage with different terms and dichotomies. From a coloniser-colonised dichotomy, the liberation of colonies saw a shift in approach, from 'domination' to 'development', in the 1960's. Now, it is the international community helping the countries coming out of civil war in various parts of the world. 'Development' has been integrated into the much bigger paradigm of 'Peacebuilding'. Some would even say that 'Peacebuilding' is but a reinvention of 'Development'. Duffield, for example, sees in the new willingness to countenance a level of intrusion and degree of social engineering hitherto frowned upon by the international community a major radicalization of Development. As he points out, *"Development agencies and networks use the new wars as a way of re-positioning themselves as a defence against the borderland forces of chaos and anarchy. This has required the depiction of the new wars in terms of economic pathology and the cynical motivations of their perpetrators (Collier 1999). At the same time, the new wars have been depicted in such ways that their dynamics appear responsive to the rationality of development assistance ... As a consequence, development actors have found a new voice in countering isolationist tendencies in metropolitan areas, arguing against the short-sightedness of aid parsimony and championing the rights of the world's poor"* (Duffield 2002a:1064).

In this latest phase of the relationship between the core and the periphery of the international system, with *"the core continuing to define the standards of acceptable behaviour, and international peacebuilding agencies serving as 'transmission belts' that convey these standards to the periphery"* (Paris 2002:653f), the debate between Modernisers and their critics has once again been invigorated.

Its supporters see peacebuilding as a modern 'mission civilisatrice' that has been considerably more charitable and consensual than the behaviour of many colonial powers in the past. They argue that the spread of 'modern' Western values such as democracy and market economies, if done in a strategic manner will eventually lead to more sustainable peace and development

for all. In other words, the new wars have provided an opportunity to rediscover Development as a second chance to make modernity work (Duffield 2002a:1064).

From a less optimistic perspective, peacebuilding missions are regarded either as a tool of riot control by providing minimalist international welfare to the global poor (Duffield 2002a/b) or even as an attempt to re-colonise the countries of South by integrating their markets into foreign investment in ways that benefit outsiders more than the locals. Behind the altruistic sounding motives of the 'Humanitarian Empire' critics suspect realpolitik "*guiding the onward global march of Western neo-liberal capitalism and its deliberate polarisation of the world in have and have-nots*" (Slim 1999:6).

Summing Up: Peacebuilding – The Latest Stage Of Imperialism?

In their assessment of peacebuilding various authors have associated the new internationalism in the name of peace with imperialism. What has become apparent though is that this comparison is informed by different, though at times also overlapping, understandings of the concept of imperialism. Let me briefly summarise the main positions again:

At the one extreme we find people in strong support for what they describe as benign and somewhat reluctant imperialism that seems to be the only way to stop the world from going into global disorder. According to these authors, contemporary peace support operations, unlike old colonialism, have generally not sought to extract human or material resources from the peripheral states that have hosted these operations. In further contrast, today's neo-trusteeships are usually deployed for limited periods, at the request of local parties, with the approval of international organisations, and with the goal of establishing conditions for war-shattered states to govern themselves (Paris 2002).

At the other extreme we find academics and practitioners who insist that liberal peace is but a vanguard of global capitalism designed to maintain the status quo and to further exclude and exploit the countries in the periphery. After the period of neo-colonialism in form of 'Development' has come to an end, the advent of peacebuilding presents but a reinvention, if not a radicalisation, of Development.

The first one, whilst accepting the necessity and value of liberal internationalism, focuses on the 'micro' level meaning on the design, conduct and outcome of specific operations and mainly addresses issues of efficacy. It is therefore also referred to as 'Problem-Solving Theory'. The second type, also known as 'Critical Theory' puts peacebuilding more in the context of the international system and questions the basic validity and legitimacy of the peacebuilding enterprise (Lund 2003).

The main differences in their assessment of peacebuilding are summarised in the table below:

	Problem Solving Approach	Critical Theory
Focus	Micro	Macro
Position:	Peacebuilding as a modern version of mission civilisatrice aimed at ensuring sustainable and 'positive' peace.	Peacebuilding aimed at <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Containment (from Development to minimalist international welfare) ○ Neo-colonialism (effective re-colonisation through global business empires and 'Good Governance') ○ Maintenance and reproduction of a particular, liberal type of international order
Interpretation of causes of conflict	Focus on domestic causes of so-called 'new wars' i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Politicised Ethnicity ○ Failed states 	Focus on external reasons i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Global structures i.e. unfair trade relations ○ Late effects of colonisation and de-colonisation ○ Culture of violence
Global context	New global order characterised by more multilateralism	Continuation of status quo dominated by the West/North/certain elites
Motivation for Peace Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Humanitarian values ○ 'Responsibility to protect' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National self-interest of the West/US
Interpretation of outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implementation not correct ○ Strategy not quite right yet ○ Not enough resources/coordination ○ Peace takes time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Theory is wrong: democracy + liberal market ≠ peace ○ Peacebuilding as fig leave to hide true intentions of colonial interests ○ No interest/political will of main actors in positive peace
Proposed way forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The general strategy, namely the political and economic liberalisation, should be maintained but needs to be reformed i.e. by using a conflict resolution framework ○ 'Institutionalisation before liberalisation' ○ More resources and better coordination ○ Professionalisation and best practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Injustice of global structures needs to be addressed ○ Partial de-linking ○ Developmental state/stronger welfare states ○ Strengthening grassroots initiatives (bottom-up peacebuilding) ○ Post-hegemonic peacebuilding

Looking at the design of peacebuilding missions, it seems like the main assumption of 'Modernisation Theory', which presupposes a global system, divided into centres of modern progress and peripheries of traditional backwardness, with the centre showing the periphery its future, has managed to survive through the rise and fall of Development to now be reinvented under a new paradigm half a century later. Not surprisingly we also find great similarities in the debates around 'Development' and 'Peacebuilding' at the core of which lies the question if the neo-liberal ideology is the motor for, or destruction of development.

The new Modernisers appear more aware of the dangers that come with liberalising too fast and too soon. They are working in a more direct and 'holistic' manner with the aim of transforming societies as a whole: more intrusive than in the 'Age of Development' but at the same time more consensual, multilateral and participatory than in their colonial past.

Their critics are still highlighting the importance of past and present global structures in causing the dire situation in the periphery, but seeing that the experiments with total autarky have failed, are now more moderate about the extent to which they are proposing to de-link. What has also changed is the growing awareness of the danger of replacing one ideological bias with another. Hence the emphasis on localised knowledge and grassroots' empowerment.

Conclusion

Is peacebuilding a new form of imperialism? My intention in posing this question was not to, at this point of my thesis, come up with a simple 'yes' or 'no'. Instead the aim was to highlight and better understand some of the main issues and implications that are underlying this unfolding debate in peacebuilding literature.

What has become clear is that the advent of peacebuilding seems to mark a new stage in the relationship between the core and the periphery. At least, in the sense that the influence of outsiders into the domestic affairs of countries in the global South has once again increased: directly, through interim administrations and military presence and indirectly, through the greater dependence on international aid. In addition, the quality of influence has also changed. Peacebuilders are concerned not only with rebuilding infrastructure or redistributing material resources, but they are now attempting to transform societies as a whole by changing

behaviour and attitudes of the people living within them. As some say they are now “*getting inside the head to govern the hand*” (Duffield 2002a:1067).

Though what is not so clear is

- if the motivation behind the new will to intervene is driven by humanitarian or mainly self interests
- if the outsider is a multilateral agent or a nation that itself is dominated by great business monopolies
- if the reason for underdevelopment and peacelessness in societies in the periphery are because of the lack of integration into global capitalist economy or because of the way they have been integrated so far
- if the aim of external intervention is to build positive and sustainable peace for the majority of people or if the objective is to maintain a status quo that continues to benefit only a small part of the global society
- if the actual impact will be as intended

These questions, however, are not new. Some of them have occupied humanity for more than a century now. What is particularly notable are the similarities between the current debate and the one between Modernisers and their critique in the 1960's. These continuities bring to light that despite the outer appearance of something 'new', Peacebuilding is at a very fundamental level based on the same underlying assumption of 'Modernisation Theory' which already presented the rationale for 'Development'. This is the very 'Development' that was declared dead and buried, once it became obvious that it did not seem to have the intended outcomes of alleviating poverty and underdevelopment in the Third World.

From a critical perspective the symbolic line that has been drawn between the past and the present is therefore only an artificial one. Development only died a virtual death; the neo-liberal ideology -though is now more contested- still does not question its core assumptions (Pugh 2005).

The declaration of a 'new global order' is part of a greater narrative that has allowed the reinvention of development by giving it a new strategic role. At the core of this narrative is the distinction of the irrationality and excess of 'them' from the civility and reason of 'us' and the depiction of the 'new wars' in such way that their dynamics appear responsive to the

rationality of development assistance. As Duffield (2002b) points out, the new wars have provided an opportunity to rediscover Development as a second chance to make modernity work.

The majority of peacebuilding literature, by focusing on the micro level and by being non-reflexive, is seen as helping to legitimise the dominant ideology. By seeing themselves as removed from the social world they inhabit 'objectivist' scholars tend to overlook their own biases and impartialities and are therefore unable to evaluate the extent to which dominant peacekeeping and peacebuilding practices may actually help to reproduce the social structures that cause violent conflict. In other words, whilst institutions and policy-making elites continually shift and adjust to reduce the vulnerabilities of the 'liberal peace', they do not address its complicity in the structural dysfunctions that make peace operations necessary. Liberal internationalist and realist/neo-realist orthodoxies therefore legitimise the structure of the current international system and the ideology of the states that benefit from them (Pugh 2004).

Therefore it is now time to 'think anew' and to call into question existing institutions and social relations by enquiring into their origins and how and whether they might be in the process of changing. In showing the linkages and how the whole fits together, critical research becomes a moral force that can play a vital role in radically reforming the institutions and networks of global governance (Duffield 2002b). For a start, research on peacebuilding has to more self-consciously acknowledge that proposed alternatives are shaped by the perceptions, identities and interests by those that articulate them. Instead of looking for managerial solutions, future studies on peace operations should focus on uncovering ideological preferences of dominant theories and practices and seek more radical alternatives.

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University of Cape Town