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Bringing the Leviathan Back In: Classical Versus Contemporary Studies of the Liberal Peace[1]

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There are crucial differences between classical and contemporary conceptions of the liberal peace thesis, or the proposition that liberally constituted states tend to be more peaceful in domestic affairs, in their relations with other states, or both. Classical liberals such as Locke and Kant believed that peace depended not only on liberal political and economic arrangements but also on a functioning state apparatus, capable of upholding the rule of law and containing societal competition within peaceful bounds. By contrast, modern liberal peace scholars have tended to treat functioning state institutions as a given, focusing instead on the relationship between violent conflict and different types of (already constituted) regimes. As a result, findings from modern scholarship do not necessarily apply to states just emerging from civil wars with damaged, dysfunctional, or nonexistent governmental institutions. Given the abundance of post-conflict peacebuilding operations and failed or failing states in the world today, liberal peace scholars would do well to revisit classical liberalism's dual emphasis on building liberal *and* effective states as a foundation for peace.

Over the past two decades, academic research into the relationship between liberalism and peace has produced impressive results. We now know that democracies—defined as states with periodic competitive elections and universal adult suffrage—rarely go to war with each other (Russett and Starr 2000; Bennett 2006). Some researchers have also found that economic interdependence and memberships in international organizations reinforce peaceful relations among democratic states (Russett and Oneal 2001; Souva and Prins 2006), although the pacifying effects of economic interdependence are contested (Kim and Rousseau 2005). At the domestic level, other scholars have concluded that well-established democracies are less prone to civil unrest, political assassinations, and other forms of intrastate violence than are nondemocracies (Rummel 1997; Hegre et al. 2001). Together, these works represent the results of an ongoing, multi-dimensional exploration of the "liberal peace thesis."

Scholars in this field sometimes invoke the names of Enlightenment-era liberal philosophers such as John Locke and Immanuel Kant as intellectual forebears—and with good reason. The classical liberals of the eighteenth century were

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among the first to propose a link between constitutional limits on governmental power, respect for individual freedoms in the political and economic spheres, and peace. These thinkers maintained that protecting individual liberties and limiting the powers of the state would attenuate or even eliminate violent conflict. Most classical liberals focused on the conditions for justice and peace in domestic politics, but some (including Kant) also extended the liberal peace argument to the realm of international relations.

Yet, there are crucial differences between classical and contemporary studies of the liberal peace, including one that is frequently overlooked today: the starting point for classical liberals was typically some kind of "state of nature" in which common government did not exist. The theoretical challenge for these philosophers was to describe the requirements for establishing peaceful and just societies out of conditions of *non*government. By contrast, contemporary studies of the liberal peace tend to take state governments as a given and focus instead on differences across states, such as regime type (democracy, autocracy, or variants of each), economic openness, and memberships in international organizations. This methodology is powerful, because it allows scholars to examine empirical relationships between different types of states and other variables including violence. But this approach also comes with a cost. Unlike their classical predecessors, contemporary students of the liberal peace offer little insight into the challenges of state-*making*.

Since 1989, postwar statemaking has become a principal activity of the United Nations and other international agencies, which have deployed multifaceted "peacebuilding" operations in order to stabilize and rehabilitate war-torn states from Mozambique to El Salvador, Cambodia, East Timor, Kosovo, and Sudan. In all these cases, international statebuilders have promoted democratization and marketization as a recipe for achieving a durable peace in countries that are just emerging from civil conflict (Paris 2004). In Afghanistan and Iraq, too, where the United States and its allies have sought to rebuild governments after overthrowing the regimes of both countries, democratization and marketization are perceived as central to any prospect for lasting democratic peace. To explain and justify such peace-through-liberalization strategies, key officials in international organizations and national governments have cited recent scholarship on the liberal peace. In the words of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan (2000), "there are many good reasons for promoting democracy, not the least—in the eyes of the United Nations—is that, when sustained over time, it is a highly effective means of preventing conflict, both within and between states." Annan (1999) and others have also directly referred to "a number of studies [that] show that democracies have very low levels of internal violence compared to non-democracies." As former US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott (1997:12) put it, "democracy contributes to safety and prosperity—both in national life and in international life—it's that simple."

But it is not that simple, because the contemporary liberal peace literature has devoted little attention to the question of whether functioning state institutions exist in the states under study. As a result, many findings about the peaceful character of democracy do not necessarily apply to the circumstances of states that are emerging from civil wars with damaged, dysfunctional, or nonexistent governmental institutions.

Classical liberals were more conscious of the institutional underpinnings of the liberal peace. They believed that justice and peace required limited government and individual freedom, but they also recognized that domestic peace presupposed the existence of governmental institutions capable of upholding the rule of law and defending societies against internal and external threats. Many of these thinkers, including Locke, were responding to Thomas Hobbes's argument that the only solution to the anarchic state of nature was to create an all-powerful central authority, which Hobbes called the "Leviathan." Classical liberals rejected the notion that the central authority should have unlimited powers, but they appreciated the

need for effective governmental institutions as a necessary condition for domestic stability. Government needed to be both limited in its powers *and* effective at protecting the rule of law. The classical liberals, in other words, did not dispense with the Leviathan. They tamed it.

By contrast, in the contemporary scholarship on the liberal peace, the Leviathan is almost invisible. The presence or absence of functioning state institutions is a factor that does not figure prominently. To make this literature more relevant to the circumstances of war-torn states, scholars would be well advised to revisit classical liberalism's insights into the preconditions for lifting societies out of the state of nature, including the requirement for effective governmental institutions, or "state capacity," as the foundation for a peaceful market democracy.

This essay is divided into four sections. The first section explores classical liberal approaches to the liberal peace, which emphasize the need for both limited and effective government. The second section reviews recent literature on the liberal peace, focusing on the treatment of functioning governmental institutions as a given. The third section argues that reviving classical liberal perspectives would improve our understanding, and potentially also the practice, of postconflict peacebuilding. The fourth section offers recommendations for future research.

The Dual Imperatives of Classical Liberalism

The idea that limiting the powers of government is a recipe for domestic (and international) peace dates back at least to the classical liberal philosophers of the eighteenth century—as contemporary students of the liberal peace often point out. Locke, Kant, Baron de Montesquieu, Adam Smith, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and other Enlightenment thinkers abandoned the medieval faith in divine revelation and embraced the instrument of human reason to discern universal rules governing social life. Reason demanded, in particular, that individuals be afforded the freedom to pursue their own self-defined goals and interests, which, in turn, required limitations on the power of states to interfere in the lives of their citizens. A society based on respect for individual freedom would not only comply with the principles of natural justice, it would also facilitate the rational resolution of differences through peaceable discussion rather than violent conflict.

To arrive at these conclusions, many early liberals used Hobbes' technique of arguing from a "state of nature," a hypothetical condition in which there are no laws or government to regulate human actions. According to Hobbes (1968:168), life in the state of nature would be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short" because the "continual fear . . . of violent death" would make peaceful social life virtually impossible. The solution to this problem could be found in human reason. People would rationally conclude that their mutual interest lay in conferring sovereign authority upon one individual (or group of individuals) to guarantee their safety. Thus, the creation of an effective state—personified in the Leviathan—was an indispensable foundation for peace and progress.

Locke and other classical liberals rejected Hobbes' contention that the Leviathan should be endowed with absolute powers, believing instead that an all-powerful state would endanger individual liberties. But they recognized that the state of nature was intolerably insecure, that creating a central authority was the only rational response to this condition, and that the central authority itself needed to be endowed with the powers necessary to uphold the rule of law and to defend society against internal and external threats. Thus, for classical liberals the formula for peaceful and just societies was *both* to constitute effective governments *and* to ensure that these governments did not use their powers unduly to restrict individual liberties. Although each philosopher approached this issue in a different way, the dual demand for effective and limited government was a central theme—and an important tension—in early liberal thought.

John Locke

This tension is clearly visible in Locke's (1963) *Two Treatises of Government*. Like Hobbes, Locke (1963:395) constructed a thought experiment involving the state of nature, which was less horrific than that of Hobbes but was nevertheless "full of fears and continual dangers" due to the absence of central authority. Locke maintained that the only means by which human beings could fully enjoy their freedom was to "join in society with others" and create a common government. But unlike Hobbes, Locke did not believe that the state should have unlimited powers.[2] Rather, the sovereign should be bound by "established and promulgated laws" that prohibit governmental infringement of citizens' rights to "life, liberty, and property" (Locke 1963:406). If the state violates these rules and behaves arbitrarily or tyrannically, popular rebellion should be expected; indeed, Locke (1963:463–464) asserted that citizens have a natural right to revolt against their rulers under such circumstances. Conversely, people would have no reason or right to rebel against a government that respected their liberties (Locke 1963:449).

For Locke, however, limited government was not synonymous with weak government. On the contrary, maintaining a free and peaceful society required an effective and functioning state. In particular, he argued that rulers should be given sufficient "prerogative" or freedom of action to respond quickly and forcefully to emergencies (Locke 1963:422). The "good of the society" requires "that several things should be left to the discretion" of the executive, "since in some governments the law-making power is not always in being, and is usually too numerous, and so too slow, for the dispatch requisite to execution; and because it is impossible to foresee, and so by laws to provide for all accidents and necessities, that may concern the public" (Locke 1963:421–422). Locke even declared that government should be permitted to act above the law in cases of emergency, provided the actions taken are for the "public good" rather than for private gain. How he reconciled these extraordinary powers with his conception of law-governed rule remains unclear; he seemed to believe, paradoxically, that the last line of defense for constitutional government was to permit leaders to behave as Hobbesian Leviathans—outside constitutional constraints—in order to preserve the lives, liberty, and property of the governed. "In this sense," writes one commentator, "Hobbes makes his presence felt" in Locke's work (McClelland 1996:239).

Immanuel Kant

For Kant, as for Hobbes, the central problem of politics was transforming the insecurity of the state of nature into a just and stable polity. Kant (1991:46) argued that human beings are "rational creatures" who can be misled by "self-seeking animal inclinations." Therefore, humans require a "master" to prevent them from abusing the freedom of others and to "force [them] to obey a universally valid will under which everyone can be free" (Kant 1991:46). But Kant contended that this "master" or central authority should govern by the same "universal principle of right" as everyone else, and that individual freedom should be constrained only to the extent that is absolutely necessary to prevent one person's freedom from infringing on another's. All aspects of government—its institutional design, its policy goals, and system of laws—must be evaluated against the standard of whether

[2]Locke directed his criticisms at the writings of Sir Robert Filmer rather than at Hobbes himself. In *Patriarcha: or The Natural Power of Kings* (1680), Filmer agreed with Hobbes that the power of the sovereign should be unlimited, although he contended that this power derived from divine right rather than a rational decision to endow the sovereign with authority. In *Two Treatises of Government*, Locke criticized Filmer's divine right argument on theological grounds (in the First Treatise) and then went on to argue on more pragmatic grounds (in the Second Treatise) that an unconstrained sovereign would be a recipe for instability and injustice. Locke's temporal arguments about the dangers of unlimited power applied just as readily to Hobbes' Leviathan.

individual liberty is maximized. Thus, "a constitution allowing the greatest possible human freedom in accordance with laws which ensure that the freedom of each can co-exist with the freedom of all the others . . . is at all events a necessary idea which must be made the basis not only of the first outline of a political constitution but of all laws as well" (Kant 1991:191).

Kant used the term *Rechtstaat*—or law-based state that respects individual freedoms—to describe a polity in which human beings can find both justice and security. Undue restrictions on personal liberty are not only morally wrong but may also provoke violence. If individuals are not "treated as their rights demand," Kant (1991:86) explained, "the people may themselves resort to force and thus make every legal constitution insecure." Respect for individual freedoms thus becomes a formula for domestic peace and "a means of ending all wars," in part because rational people will accept the authority of governments that observe "universal laws" and will bridle against those that do not (Kant 1991:187).

The idea of a *Rechtstaat* itself contains the dual connotations of effective and limited government. The state must be properly limited, but it must also enforce the rule of law. Kant (1991:44–47) warned of the danger of completely unrestricted liberty, or "wild freedom," which would be tantamount to a "lawless state of savagery." His recommendation was to strike a careful balance between two imperatives: the need for a powerful sovereign capable of upholding the rule of law and preventing a slide into anarchy, and the requirement that the sovereign itself be constrained by the rule of law and prevented from abusing its powers.

Baron de Montesquieu

Montesquieu also believed that a limited but effective state was a precondition for peace. In *The Spirit of the Laws*, he recommended "moderate" systems of government, that is, governments that respect individual freedoms, balance the interests of different segments of society, and operate within a constitutional framework (Montesquieu 1949:26–28, 62, 75–79, 150–152). Whereas moderate governments tend to be peaceful in their domestic affairs, "despotic" governments—whose powers are not constitutionally constrained—tend to foster "commotions" and "disorders" within their populations because they engender fear and distrust. As a result, any appearance of domestic tranquility in a despotic system is fragile and temporary at best (Montesquieu 1949:55–56, 59).

However, Montesquieu did not believe that liberal societies could be self-organizing; he was not a libertarian. He asserted that "political liberty does not consist in unlimited freedom" and that domestic peace is impossible in the absence of "government," by which he meant a society "directed by laws" (Montesquieu 1949:150). Without government, human beings would exist in a "state of war." Among other things, laws need to be clearly drafted and enforced by an effective and fair court system; the executive branch of government should be capable of operating "expeditiously" and with "dispatch" in order to administer effectively; taxes need to be collected efficiently, equitably, and at moderate rates; and the ability to defend the nation against external attack and to quell "popular insurrection" needs to be assured, preferably through a mutual defense arrangement with other liberal states (Montesquieu 1949:126–127, 156, 207–220).

Adam Smith

Smith is remembered for having sought to limit the role of government in economic affairs, believing that the "invisible hand" of the market would promote prosperity and peace, and that allowing people to pursue their interests in relative freedom would foster the "harmonious interplay of different kinds of human beings living very different kinds of lives without the social whole dissolving into chaos" (McClelland 1996:433). But Smith (1976) also insisted that government had

an essential, if limited, role to play in a well-ordered society. First, it needed to protect against foreign invasion; second, government was necessary to enforce contracts; and third, it was needed to build and maintain public works (Smith 1976:687–688, 723). In particular, he believed that the state had a vital responsibility to establish and maintain the rule of law, without which the benefits of the free market would be lost. "Commerce and manufactures," Smith (1976:910) declared, "can seldom flourish long in any state which does not enjoy the regular administration of justice, in which people do not feel themselves secure in the possession of their property, in which the faith in contracts is not supported by law, and in which the authority of the state is not supposed to be regularly employed in enforcing the payment of debts from all those who are able to pay."

Smith (1976:342, 707) went on to discuss the importance of a "well-regulated standing army," which was essential not only for national defense but also for domestic order. Sovereigns who could not depend on a loyal and effective army, he asserted, would be more likely to suppress liberty than rulers backed by a steadfast military, because leaders with the support of the army would feel secure enough to permit expressions of public dissent. Consequently, the "degree of liberty which approaches to licentiousness can be tolerated only in countries where the sovereign is secured by a well-regulated standing army" (Smith 1976:707). Smith's views of a good society thus presupposed the existence of a limited, yet functioning state, ultimately backed by the presence of a military force. As Joseph Cropsey (1957:72) has written, "the freedom implicit in the Smithian principle is accompanied by restraint, and the authoritative restraint implicit in the Hobbesian formula is the necessary condition of freedom."

Alexander Hamilton and James Madison

A final example of the dual emphasis that the early liberals placed on limited and effective government comes from *The Federalist Papers*, the classic US statement of liberal political philosophy, principally written by Hamilton and Madison in the 1780s.[3] Both men railed against "tyranny," by which they meant the invasion of personal liberties by government, and believed that the combination of individual freedom, representative government, and institutional checks on the exercise of power would produce a just and peaceful society.

Yet, Hamilton also emphasized the need for government to maintain domestic and external security in moments of crisis. "A firm Union," he wrote, "will be of the utmost moment to the peace and liberty of the states, as a barrier against domestic faction and insurrection," and as a guarantor of "internal tranquility" (Hamilton, Madison, and Jay 1992:36, 38). Hamilton argued that a strong executive branch was especially important to public security and for the administration of law, including the protection of individual rights. Thus, "a feeble Executive is but another phrase for a bad execution; and a government ill executed, whatever it may be in theory, must be, in practice, a bad government" (Hamilton, Madison, and Jay 1992:360). Although Madison's contributions to *The Federalist Papers* focused more on constraining than on bolstering governmental power, he echoed Hamilton's view that effective government was needed as "a bulwark against foreign danger" and a "conservator of peace among ourselves" (Hamilton, Madison, and Jay 1992:62).

According to these and other classical liberal thinkers, successful state-building called for a careful balancing of two competing goals: (1) limiting the power of the state in order to preserve individual liberty, and (2) establishing governmental institutions with sufficient means to uphold the rule of law and to protect the constitutional order against foreign and domestic threats. These writers rejected Hobbes' argument that an all-powerful ruler was needed to maintain domestic

[3]For a discussion of the *differences* between the Federalists and other classical liberals, see Daniel Deudney (2004).

peace and social life, but they recognized that some form of effective, central authority was needed to lift human beings out of an insecure state of nature. Their prescription was not only to limit governmental power but also to establish a functioning apparatus of government. Thus, the classical liberals did not entirely dispense with the Leviathan. They domesticated it.

Contemporary Studies of the Liberal Peace

Modern students of the liberal peace have taken a different approach. As noted above, they have tended to bracket the question of whether functioning governments exist. Whereas classical liberal theorists recognized the vital role of effective state institutions as a necessary condition for domestic stability, this concern has largely disappeared from the contemporary liberal peace literature. Rather than starting from the hypothetical condition of nongovernment, contemporary students of the liberal peace have typically isolated specific characteristics of already constituted states and explored the relationship between these characteristics and the incidence of conflict.

The bulk of this literature focuses on the international dimension of the liberal peace thesis, that is, the relationship between democracy, market-oriented economic systems, and *inter*state violence. More than two decades ago, Michael Doyle (1983a, 1983b) published an influential pair of articles contending that democratic states had seldom engaged in wars with other democracies and had thereby created a "separate peace" (see also Babst 1964, 1972; Rummel 1979). Since then, a flurry of studies have scrutinized and elaborated the relationship between liberal democracy and international conflict.[4] Most of these works have reached conclusions that broadly support Doyle's hypothesis: countries with periodic competitive elections and universal adult suffrage very rarely, if ever, make war on each other. As Nils Petter Gleditsch (1995:297) puts it, a democratic dyad is a "near-perfect condition for peace." In recent years, scholars have extended this analysis in new directions to evaluate the effects of economic interdependence and membership in international organizations, both of which may also contribute to peaceful relations among democracies (Russett and Oneal 2001; Oneal, Russett, and Berbaum 2003).

To identify the "level" of democracy in a given state, most quantitative studies of the liberal peace assign numerical scores to individual countries that indicate the degree of democracy in the country for a specified period of time. Several such data sets exist, but the most widely used is the Polity data set (Marshall, Jaggers, and Gurr 2003). In this particular data set, the regime type of each country is examined annually (or semiannually) and rated on a democracy–autocracy scale that reflects the competitiveness of its elections, the independence of its chief executive, the openness of executive recruitment, the existence of structures providing for free political expression, and other procedural characteristics of democracy. By focusing on dyads of states over time and controlling for such factors as geographical proximity, membership in alliances, and the relative power of each state, it is possible to assess the relationship between regime type and the incidence of violence between states—as scores of scholars have done over the past decade.

The literature on the *domestic* dimensions of the liberal peace—that is, the relationship between liberalism and intrastate violence—tends to use a similar methodology, correlating regime type to the frequency and severity of domestic disturbances. R. J. Rummel (1997) was one of the first to conduct such tests, using a composite indicator of procedural democracy (including the Polity data set) to determine which of five different types of regimes each state possessed. He then evaluated the relationship between regime type and the incidence of internal violence, finding that democracies are considerably less likely than nondemocracies

[4]For reviews of this literature, see Steve Chan (1997), James Lee Ray (1998), and Bruce Russett and Harvey Starr (2000).

to experience a wide range of domestic disorders, including "revolutions, bloody coups d'état, political assassinations, antigovernment terrorist bombings, guerrilla warfare, insurgencies, civil wars, mutinies, and rebellions" (Rummel 1997:85). Other scholars have focused more narrowly on the frequency of civil wars under different regime types. One of the most striking findings in this research is that "anocracies," or countries with a mixture of democratic and authoritarian characteristics, are more likely to experience civil war than either democracies or autocracies (Ellingsen 2000; Hegre et al. 2001; Sambanis 2001; Reynal-Querol 2002; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Gurr and Marshall 2005).

However, because these studies typically take the existence of functioning governments for granted, they offer little insight into the relationship between liberal state-*building* and peace. The closest that contemporary liberal peace scholars have come to investigating this relationship is in studies of democratization and war, which examine correlations between regime change and conflict (Thompson and Tucker 1997; Ward and Gleditsch 1998; Geddes 1999; Oneal, Russett, and Berbaum 2003). But regime change and the databases from which this variable is derived rarely include measures of institutional effectiveness (which, presumably, would be zero for a country lacking a government).[5] The independent variable in most of these studies is usually the change in democracy–autocracy ratings over time, which effectively treats institutional effectiveness as a constant.

Other investigators have measured the longevity of democracy, or the frequency of regime change, as a proxy variable for the "stability" of the political system—that is, the amount of time that has passed since the country in question gained independence or made the transition to democracy (Hegre et al. 2001; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Oneal, Russett, and Berbaum 2003). But these variables are, at best, oblique measures of institutional effectiveness. The existence of a coherent and enforced system of law, for example, may be only loosely related to the proximity to a country's independence. There are several examples of long-standing states, such as Liberia, that have weak or nonexistent governments.

The problem, in short, is twofold. First, although scholars such as Doyle and Sambanis (2000) have observed that strengthening state institutions can improve the prospects for peaceful governance, modern studies of the liberal peace have tended to treat state governments as a given. Second, the Polity data set—which underpins "most" of this research (Ray 1997:51)—offers little empirical basis to help us scrutinize the relationships between peace, liberalization, and "stateness." Nor do most of the other major databases used in the liberal peace literature. Tatu Vanhanen (2000), for example, rates countries as more or less democratic, but his database focuses (like Polity) on the procedural characteristics of democracy, not the absence or presence of effective institutions. Similarly, the Freedom House (2006) database ranks countries according to the degree of political and civil liberties that their citizens enjoy, but it ignores institutional effectiveness.

For these reasons, in contrast to the classical liberals who shared Hobbes' concern with establishing functioning governmental structures as a precondition for peace, the contemporary liberal peace literature tends to bracket institutional effectiveness, assuming away the problem of how to lift ungoverned or undergoverned societies out of the state of nature.

Reconstituting States after Civil War

This particular characteristic of the modern liberal peace literature is problematic, given that postwar statebuilding operations have become one of the principal

[5]For example, Barbara Geddes (1999) examines transitions from various types of authoritarian regimes using a data set that produces a typology of authoritarianism, but this data set (like the Polity data set) also brackets institutional effectiveness.

TABLE 1. Major Post-Conflict Peacebuilding Operations 1989–2005*

Location	Duration (military component)
Namibia	1989–1990
Nicaragua	1989–1992
Angola	1991–1997
Cambodia	1991–1993
El Salvador	1991–1995
Mozambique	1992–1994
Liberia	1993–1997
Rwanda	1993–1996
Bosnia	1995–present
Croatia (Eastern Slavonia)	1995–1998
Guatemala	1997
Congo (DRC)	1999–present
East Timor	1999–2002
Kosovo	1999–present
Sierra Leone	1999–2005
Ethiopia-Eritrea border	2000–present
Afghanistan	2002–present
Iraq	2003–present
Liberia	2003–present
Burundi	2004–present
Ivory Coast	2004–present
Sudan	2005–present

*Excludes missions with fewer than 200 military personnel and those not following an armed conflict.

activities of international organizations such as the United Nations since the end of the Cold War. Table 1 lists 22 major post-conflict peacebuilding missions deployed between 1989 and 2005. Most of these missions—with the notable exceptions of Afghanistan and Iraq—were deployed to oversee the implementation of peace agreements in civil, not interstate, conflicts.

All these missions promoted democratization and marketization as a means of creating the conditions for a durable peace. The standard ''package'' of reforms included free and fair elections; constitutional limitations on the exercise of power; guarantees of civil liberties including freedom of speech, assembly, and conscience; and movement toward a market-oriented economy (Paris 2003). As noted earlier, Annan (2000) has referred directly to the contemporary liberal peace scholarship to justify the strategy of promoting peace-through-liberalization in war-shattered states. His predecessor, Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1996:paras 17, 122), also characterized democratization as a general remedy for civil violence.

These statements echo the comments of a number of academics who, drawing questionable conclusions from the liberal peace scholarship, have portrayed democratization as something approaching an all-purpose formula for peace. For example, Rummel (1997:52) argues that ''just reforming regimes in the direction of greater civil rights and political liberties will promote less violence.'' Morton Halperin (1993:105) contends that ''the United State should take the lead in promoting the trend toward democracy'' because democratic governments ''are more peaceful and less given to provoking war or inciting violence.'' Joshua Muravchik (1996:576) maintains that spreading democracy is not only ''conducive to peace among states, but it can be the key to resolving bloody battles within them.'' And Larry Diamond (1995:6–7) supports the promotion of democracy because democratic governments ''do not ethnically 'cleanse' their own populations and they are much less likely to face ethnic insurgency.''

These statements gloss over important disagreements and lacunae in the literature on the liberal peace. The empirical relationship between liberalization and peace is by no means settled. Given the apparent war-proneness of countries at ''intermediate'' levels of democracy, it is unclear whether the democratization of a given state will foster domestic or international peace if this process results in a hybrid democratic–authoritarian regime. We know even less about the effects of democratization in countries that are just emerging from intrastate conflicts because prewar political institutions rarely survive civil wars intact (indeed, many such states lack not only a working administration, but even minimal capacities to uphold the rule of law) and because the contemporary liberal peace scholarship has tended to ignore the issue of institutional effectiveness, as argued above. These two facts—(1) the uncertain relationship between democratization and peace in general, and (2) the blind spot in the liberal peace scholarship with regard to institutional effectiveness—should make us doubly dubious of those who cite the liberal peace literature as justification for democratizing war-torn countries.

If anything, the record of peacebuilding to date suggests that political and economic liberalization programs do not necessarily foster peace in countries that are just emerging from civil wars. The experience of these missions is explored in depth elsewhere (Paris 2004), but even a brief glimpse of selected operations raises doubts about the strategy of ''superficial'' democratization and marketization, or a strategy of political and economic liberalization that is not accompanied by extensive institution-building. A robust framework of institutions may be needed to prevent political and economic actors in postwar states from defying the principles and practices of democratic politics or undermining the operation of the free market.

In Liberia, for example, a panoply of international organizations—including the United Nations and its specialized agencies, the European Union, and the Economic Community of West African States—oversaw the implementation of a 1996 peace agreement that brought an end to an 8-year-long civil war in that country. The peacebuilders organized elections in July 1997 that were scrutinized by approximately 500 international observers, who judged the elections to be generally free and fair. With the victory of Charles Taylor and his inauguration as president in August, the United Nations and other peacebuilders declared the mission a success and largely withdrew from Liberia. But shortly thereafter, President Taylor began to reverse the fragile and preliminary movement toward democracy and reverted to a paranoid form of autocratic rule that ''all but put an end to organized opposition'' to his government (Farah 2001). There was virtually nothing to stop him from doing so. The peacebuilders did not create institutional mechanisms, such as an effective court system and politically neutral security apparatus, to uphold the country's new democratic constitution and to check Taylor's power. He operated ''without accountability, independent of an effective judiciary and legislature that operated in fear of the executive'' (Human Rights Watch 2002). It did not take long for his political opponents to organize a new insurgency, leading to renewed civil war and Taylor's ouster in 2003.

Similarly, in Cambodia, international peacebuilders oversaw postwar elections in 1993 that resulted in a coalition government with two prime ministers: Hun Sen (the incumbent) and Norodom Ranariddh. Later that year, the United Nations congratulated itself for a job well done and withdrew its peacebuilding mission from the country. Hun Sen soon began maneuvering himself into a position as sole leader, exploiting his control of the police and military as well as the absence of a neutral, effective judiciary. In July 1997, he delivered the *coup de grace* to his political rivals, executing approximately 40 of Ranariddh's key supporters (Ranariddh, himself, had wisely decided to leave the country on a foreign trip). Since then, Hun Sen has continued to use a network of ''thuggish subordinates'' to suppress real and imagined political opposition (Roberts 2001:202). Cambodia's courts and police are powerless to stop him. Indeed, they are appendages of the ruling party.

Liberal economic reforms can also produce perverse results in the absence of effective institutions. Nowhere is this problem more apparent than in Bosnia, where marketization programs facilitated the growth of black markets and reinforced the power of mafia networks (Pugh 2000). Following the signing of the Dayton Accord in 1995, international peacebuilding agencies immediately launched economic reforms that included a far-reaching privatization program aimed at selling off inefficient government-owned enterprises. But in Bosnia's "especially acute institutional vacuum," there was little to prevent the dominant nationalist parties (who had waged the war) from manipulating the sale of these public enterprises "to themselves or to their allies through shady and non-transparent privatization deals" (Donais 2002:7, 11). This process had adverse effects both on the economic and the political reconstruction of the country. It reinforced the underlying corruption and cronyism of the Bosnian economy, which "remains controlled by a political elite at odds with the very reform policies that would lead to greater openness" (O'Driscoll, Holmes, and O'Grady 2001:121). And it strengthened the power of the very nationalist groups who were least interested in achieving interethnic reconciliation in Bosnia.

In these three cases, international peacebuilders seemingly paid insufficient attention to the need for institutional structures to reinforce and "lock in" liberalizing political and economic reforms. In fact, peacebuilding missions throughout the have generally operated on the assumption that holding elections and initiating market-oriented reforms will place war-torn states on the pathway to stable market democracy (Paris 2004). This assumption has reflected a widespread faith in the power of market democracy to foster peace both within and between states—a faith that may have been reinforced by misinterpretations of the contemporary liberal peace literature, whose findings generally do not apply to the particular conditions of countries just emerging from civil wars. Just as contemporary liberal peace scholars have tended to overlook the importance of effective institutions to uphold the rule of law in a stable market democracy, so too, it seems, have peacebuilding agencies.[6]

Bringing the Leviathan Back In

The divergence between contemporary and classical studies of the liberal peace could reflect the historical circumstances of each period. Thomas Hobbes, the foil of the early liberals, lived through the English Civil War of the 1640s, which "fired his determination to discover a path to peace" (Doyle 1997:112). Locke and other Enlightenment philosophers were less preoccupied than Hobbes by the dangers of civil war, but they nevertheless lived in an era in which the institutions of the modern state were still being consolidated, even in Western Europe. In contrast, by the time that latter-day scholars revived the liberal peace thesis in the late twentieth century, the focus of most political scientists and philosophers in the now consolidated Western democracies had moved beyond the problems of constituting effective states out of an anarchical state of nature because they inhabited states in which the Hobbesian problem of establishing domestic peace through a common authority had been largely resolved. As Theodore Lowi (1969) once observed, students of US politics in particular frequently discount the relevance of the state, overlooking the fact that democratic politics take place within a framework of controls and institutions that enforce rules, structure political and economic competition, and translate societal demands into public policy. Given this context, it may not be surprising that contemporary liberal peace scholars have tended to

[6]In its own retrospective examination of the record of the 1990s, the United Nations also began to emphasize the importance of "strengthening state institutions" as a key element of postconflict peacebuilding operations (see, for example, United Nations 2001).

ignore—or set aside as ''unproblematic''—the question of how market democracies are to be constituted from scratch, and the effects of political and economic liberalization in countries that lack a functioning central authority.

Today, the challenges of building peace in war-torn societies have returned to the forefront of policy consciousness, and scholars of the liberal peace need to question their prevailing approaches and data sources accordingly. What specific research strategies should they pursue in order to ''bring the Leviathan back in'' to the study of the liberal peace? Below are three suggestions.

Unpack Episodes of ''Interregnum''

The widely used Polity data set identifies periods of ''interregnum'' or ''complete collapse of central authority,'' but these periods are converted into a neutral score of zero on the Polity autocracy–democracy scale. As a result, such cases typically count as ''anocracies'' in studies of the liberal peace rather than as noninstitutionalized polities (Zinn 2004). Lumping together interregnum cases with cases of countries that display mixed democratic and authoritarian attributes blurs two variables that are each important in their own right: the strength of government institutions and regime type.

In fact, a growing number of databases on institutional effectiveness could be exploited by liberal peace scholars. At a minimum, however, the interregnum cases in the Polity data set should be examined in closer detail to determine what actually happened in these cases. This would help problematize the relationship between the collapse (and reconstitution) of state authority and the liberal peace phenomenon rather than merely bracketing this relationship or treating it as unproblematic.

Integrate Institutional Effectiveness Data

There are a growing number of data sets on institutional effectiveness that could be incorporated into studies of the liberal peace. Many of these data sets include ''governance'' indicators initially constructed for studies of international development policy (Van de Walle 2005). Within the World Bank, for example, Daniel Kaufman, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi (2005) have developed indicators that measure six dimensions of governance, each of which combines selected indicators from other data sets. These six governance measures include ''government effectiveness'' (for example, the state's ability to formulate and implement national policy initiatives), ''regulatory quality'' (for instance, efficiency of tax collection), and ''rule of law'' (for example, enforceability of court decisions).

In recent years, scholars of civil war have adopted these and other governance data sets to understand the onset and outcomes of civil conflicts. The State Failure Task Force (2000), for instance, created an ''index of state effectiveness'' based on surveys of country experts, focusing on such variables as the ability to set budgets and to collect taxes as well as the skill level of the civil service. This information was collected in order to shed greater light on the conditions that lead to state failure. Dylan Balch-Lindsay and Andrew Enterline (2000) use a simpler measure—namely, the number of military forces belonging to the state as a proportion of its total population—in order to investigate the relationship between ''governmental strength'' and the outcomes of civil wars. James Fearon and David Laitin (2003) also consider state capacity as an explanation for the patterns of civil war initiation, but they use per capita income as a proxy for institutional effectiveness. Yet other scholars—such as Karl DeRouen and David Sobek (2004), Magnus Öberg and Erik Melander (2005), and Margit Bussmann and Indra de Soysa (2006)—have developed composite indicators of state capacity (including measures of corruption, taxation, and bureaucratic quality) to study both the factors that predict civil war onset and the durability of civil war settlements. These measures have weaknesses. Per capita income, for instance, is an

imperfect proxy for institutional effectiveness, given that poor countries can have strong states, as North Korea illustrates (Zinn 2004). Nonetheless, work on conceptualizing state capacity continues to progress (Bussmann and de Soysa 2006).

The challenge for students of the liberal peace phenomenon, more broadly, is to include considerations of institutional effectiveness into their modeling of the larger relationship between liberalism and peace. The burgeoning work on civil war onset and termination is leading the way, but this work—and the data sets upon which it is based—needs to be incorporated more directly into the mainstream of the liberal peace literature. Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder (2005) offer one example of how this might be done. In analyzing the democratic peace at the international level, they consider the "strength of domestic institutions," focusing on administrative institutions such as a non-corrupt bureaucracy and a police force that follows the law as well as institutions that regulate political competition such as impartial election commissioners, well-organized political parties, competent legislatures, and professional news media.

Use Case Studies

Even as proxies for institutional effectiveness become more sophisticated, careful case studies will be essential for probing the complex causal relationships between institution-building, liberalization, and peace. Several scholars have suggested that the democratic peace at the international level is the result of reverse or simultaneous causation—in other words, that "peaceful neighborhoods" foster the growth of democracies, which, in turn, foster even more interstate peace (Layne 1994; Thompson 1996; Ray 1998; Rasler and Thompson 2004). At the domestic level, scholars from Alexis de Tocqueville onward have similarly argued that a peaceful "civil society" is one of the ingredients of a functioning democracy, which is itself a mechanism for peacefully resolving societal disputes. As Karen Rasler and William Thompson (2004:883) point out, "the history of world politics has been much more complicated than the democracy → dyadic peace relationship suggests." Understanding how institutional effectiveness fits within this complex picture is an analytically challenging but important task (Hartzell, Hoddie, and Rothchild 2001; Ohlson and Söderberg 2002). Democracy, institutional effectiveness, and peace (domestic and interstate) are most likely connected through ties of mutual causation, and careful case studies can be an effective method of disentangling these relationships (Aus 2005).

Given the importance of postconflict peacebuilding today, further study of the institutional foundations for successful democratization after conflict (that is, situations in which existing government institutions tend to be especially weak or nonexistent) is crucial to refining our understanding of the liberal peace phenomenon and its contemporary policy implications. A first generation of studies have found that creating a durable democratic peace within such countries requires a greater emphasis on *state*-building—or the construction of functioning governmental institutions, such as a working courts system, police and security services, and a bureaucracy capable of delivering at least basic public services and collecting revenues—in order to manage the potentially destabilizing effects of political and economic liberalization and "lock in" these reforms (Fukuyama 2004; Mueller 2004; Paris 2004). But many questions remain unanswered. Which government institutions are most important for postwar democratization and peace? How "effective" do these institutions need to be to create the conditions for a durable, liberal peace? At what point might institution-building efforts constrain rather than facilitate the development of democracy? Finally, what other tensions or dilemmas are likely to arise in the course of postconflict state-building?

Conclusion

Reconstituting war-shattered states as stable market democracies is a challenge for both practitioners and scholars of conflict resolution. For practitioners, including

the international agencies that conduct most of these missions, devising effective strategies for peacebuilding remains a difficult but essential task given the ongoing demand for new operations and the repercussions of renewed conflict in the states that host these missions. Practitioners could be aided in this task by liberal peace scholars, particularly if these scholars made greater efforts to incorporate the construction of effective institutions into their analyses. For peacebuilding agencies, the relevant question is not whether well-established or transitional market democracies are more peaceful than other states, but, rather, what can be done to help consolidate peace in countries that effectively lack governments and that have recently experienced civil violence.

In contrast to the prevailing methodology of contemporary scholarship, the more appropriate starting point for theorizing about peacebuilding may be closer to the "state of nature" of classical liberalism. The early liberals recognized that peace and freedom presupposed a working system of controls and rules to structure societal competition and contain it within peaceful bounds; they acknowledged that these rules needed to be upheld, *in extremis*, by the coercive powers of the state. Put another way, classical liberals endogenized the Leviathan in their analysis of the liberal peace and emphasized the need for both effective and limited government as preconditions for domestic peace. Now that reconstructing countries after civil conflict has emerged as a prominent international security challenge, it may be time for contemporary students of conflict resolution to revive this long-neglected element of the classical liberal peace scholarship.

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