Envisioning Post-liberal Holistic Peace Thesis Founded upon Intercultural Philosophy and Critical Cosmopolitanism

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Abstract

This paper will develop a post-liberal peace thesis beyond the purview of liberal peace. A challenge is to build a dialogical relationship between the West and the non-West as the research examines intercultural philosophy and critical cosmopolitanism as the foundations for dialogue, mutual learning, and transformative relations. Founded upon intercultural philosophy and critical cosmopolitanism, the research offers a post-liberal holistic peace thesis that includes the West's practice of self-critique and self-transformation as part of peace. First, a critique of liberal peace and an overview of post-liberal peace will be presented. Second, intercultural philosophy and critical cosmopolitanism will be examined. Then, a post-liberal holistic peace thesis will be discussed. Two forms of a holistic peace thesis, which are mutually interconnected will be analyzed. First, a holistic peace thesis that interconnects human internal enrichment and outer aspects of peace will be examined. Second, a holistic peace thesis that entails the practice of self-critique and transformation of the West will be analyzed. Here, it will be argued that incorporating non-Western religious and philosophical wisdom into Western-oriented International Relations fields empowers the West to hone self-critical and transformative abilities to engage in dialogue with the non-West. Transformative global politics characterized as a relational transformation in the direction of unprecedented coordination among actors having different or opposing values, norms, or interests will also be proposed. Though the research focuses on the theoretical development of a post-liberal peace thesis, it would contribute to expanding the purview of how peace can be researched and practiced in the long run.

Key words: Liberal peace, post-liberal peace, intercultural philosophy, critical cosmopolitanism, holistic peace

Introduction

As widely acknowledged, liberal peace has been the center of peace both in intellectual and practical terms since the end of the Cold War. However, as shown in Iraq and/or Afghanistan, liberal peace failed to bring lasting peace and invited criticism. This research, while respecting and appreciating liberal peace for its contribution to the development of the post-Cold War peace thesis, will examine how a post-liberal peace thesis can be unfolded beyond the purview of liberal peace. One of the critical challenges for a post-liberal peace thesis is to build a dialogical and equal relationship between the West and the non-West in researching and practicing peace. We need certain philosophical and ethical foundations for such dialogical and mutual learning as well as transformative relations. The research examines intercultural philosophy and critical cosmopolitanism as the foundations for dialogical, mutual learning and transformative processes. By proposing intercultural philosophy as an epistemological and ethical foundation, and critical cosmopolitanism as an ontological foundation, the research offers a post-liberal holistic peace thesis that extends the purview of peace to include the argument of how the West, which has predominated the peace thesis enterprise both in intellectual and practical terms, should practice self-critique and engage transformative process through encountering the non-West.

The first section will present an overview of liberal peace. Following the presentation, the second section will show the features of a post-liberal peace thesis as enacting the co-existence of multiple types of peace without any form of peace being universalized. The third section will analyze intercultural philosophy and critical cosmopolitanism. By proposing intercultural philosophy as an epistemological and ethical foundation, and critical cosmopolitanism as an ontological foundation, the fourth section will offer two forms of post-liberal holistic peace thesis. First, a holistic peace thesis that interconnects human internal enrichment and outer socio-political and economic aspects of peace will be proposed. Second, a holistic peace thesis that entails the practice of self-critique and

transformation of the West in terms of expanding its cognitive, epistemological, and behavioral purview will be examined. Incorporating the non-Western religious, philosophical, and cultural wisdom into existing Western-oriented International Relations fields empowers the West to hone self-critical and transformative attitudes and abilities to engage dialogue with the non-West as well as within the West to become more flexible and empathic in developing peace. In line with that, the need for considering and taking efforts to promote transformative global politics characterized as a relational transformation in the direction of unprecedented and appreciative coordination among states and other actors having different or prima facie opposing values, norms, visions, or interests by knowing the limits of politics of power will be proposed.

Methodological considerations

This research focuses on the theoretical development of a post-liberal peace thesis, which is based on critical literature reviews of liberal peace, intercultural philosophy, critical cosmopolitanism, and Buddhist philosophy. Peacebuilding is a practical enterprise. However, peacebuilding as a practical enterprise is informed by a theoretical framework. Critical analysis of a theoretical framework will allow us to develop new practical methods in the long run. As will be discussed, liberal peacebuilding has been founded upon the liberal peace thesis and so developing a critical appraisal of liberal peace thesis by incorporating non-Western philosophical and religious perspectives will empower us to expand the purview of what it means by peace different from but respecting liberal peace and that will lead us to develop new practical methods for peacebuilding. Thus, theoretical analysis is not just the engagement in theoretical research but it also paves the way for building new approaches to peacebuilding research and creating newly informed practical methods for peacebuilding in the future.

As mentioned, the research embraces intercultural philosophy and critical cosmopolitanism as epistemological, ethical, and ontological foundations for a post-liberal peace thesis. As will be shown, a critical problem with liberal peace is its universalistic pretention with a strong belief in the superiority of rationalistic epistemology and essentialist ontology as it was believed that any part of the globe should follow liberal peace. Stated otherwise, respect for

the diversity of knowledge of peace and process-oriented ontology need to be the foundations for a post-liberal peace thesis argument; and as an intercultural philosophy that claims the history of the interconnection of different civilizations for human cultural and intellectual flourishing and equality of all philosophies beyond the West and the non-West boundaries in producing ideas of peace and critical cosmopolitanism that emphasizes anti-essentialist view of ontology and promotion of dialogue of humanity for self-critique and transformation can contribute to addressing the above raised problem of liberal peace and become foundations for a post-liberal peace thesis.

1. Problems with a Liberal Peace Thesis

Liberal peacebuilding founded upon a liberal peace thesis has been the core of the peacebuilding enterprise since the 1990s.[1] The thesis claims that liberal democracy and the promotion of a global free trade will consolidate both national and international stability.[2] The international community managed mainly by liberal States has connected peace and security with the development of a capitalistic economy, liberal democracy, the rule of law, and human rights in a modern state framework.[3] Proponents of the liberal peace thesis, believing in its universality, have sought to build liberal democracy, promote human rights principles, and develop a market-oriented capitalistic economy across the globe.

However, the liberal peace thesis faced various criticisms. One of them is that since it has been implemented as the universal framework such that the thesis has failed to engage with cultural and religious diversity.[4] The belief has been deeply embedded in the international framework of peace in many states' constitutions, international law, the UN, International Nongovernmental

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[1] See Newman, E., Paris, R. and Richmond, P. O. "Introduction" in *New Perspectives on Liberal Peacebuilding*, Newman, E., Paris, R. and Richmond, P. O. (eds), 2009, pp. 3-25, Tokyo: United Nations University Press.

[2] See Richmond, P. O. *Peace: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

[3] See Richmond, P. O. *The Transformation of Peace*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

[4] See Selby, J. "The Myth of Liberal Peacebuilding" in *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 13 no. 1, 2013, pp. 57-86.

Organizations (INGOs), and International Financial Institutions (IFIs).[5] Liberal peacebuilding has been seen as the imposition of an external, hegemonic agenda that integrates peripheral areas into global norms of politics and economics, which provides powerful international actors with self-righteousness of direct or subtle forms of interventions.[6]

The end of the Cold War made proponents of liberalism believe that a liberal agenda is the destiny of humanity and the liberal values including capitalism and democracy became universally accepted systems.[7] Though it reflects a specific Western framework, liberal peace has been promoted as the universal endpoint of humanity. Modern liberalism has carried with it two legacies: peace and war.[8] Liberal states show distrust in non-liberal states and the invasion of Iraq in 2003 would be a good instance.[9] Though the invasion was initiated as a 'war on terror,' it sought to turn post-Hussein Iraq into a liberal state. As shown in Afghanistan and Iraq, though the 'war on terror' had sought to eradicate global terrorist groups, it also aimed to transform non-liberal states into liberal peace ones so that the US and its allies could discipline them.

A fundamental problem with the liberal peace thesis is that, as the result of being practiced as a universal thesis, a monolithic view of peace has been imposed upon different cultural and religious contexts. The monolithically teleological view of peace and restricted epistemology was demonstrated when liberal peace was carried out beyond the purview of Western contexts.

2. Core Features of a Post-liberal Peace Thesis

Following the critiques of liberal peacebuilding, post-liberal peacebuilding has been proposed. In the view of post-liberal peacebuilding, peace is a cultural phenomenon in which culturally and religiously nurtured and shared values and wisdom are reflected in the

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[5] Richmond, 2014.

[6] See Richmond, P. O. *A Post-Liberal Peace*. London: Routledge, 2011.

[7] See Richmond, P.O. *Peace in International Relations*. London: Routledge, 2008.

[8] See Doyle, W. M. *Liberal Peace Selected Essays*. London: Routledge, 2012.

[9] Ibid.

perception of peace and peacebuilding.[10]

However, post-liberal peace does not reject the values of liberal peace and the involvement of liberal peace actors as culturally and religiously oriented peacebuilding is not a panacea to build sustainable peace since cultures and religions are not necessarily free from exclusionary or oppressive realities. For instance, sectarian acts of violence in Iraq or repeated failures of cooperation among different Afghan groups would be good examples. An exclusive emphasis on indigenous institutions and local ownership leads to wrong results since they are a contested arena wherein certain voices and interests of specific actors are reflected at the expense of others.[11]

The core of post-liberal peace is to respect diversity beyond the West and the non-West lines to enact a co-existence of multiple kinds of peace without any form of peace being absolutized. Acknowledgment of the co-existence of multiple kinds of peace needs to be sharpened both in intellectual and practical terms. The challenge for a post-liberal peace thesis is to embody unity in diversity. It means that while acknowledging value differences, we also need to accept and practice mutual learning to pave the way for a transformative process in the middle of post-liberal peace the diversity of peace views. We need philosophical and ethical foundations that can underpin such an argument on post-liberal peace, and the research offers intercultural philosophy and critical cosmopolitanism.

3. Analysis of Intercultural Philosophy and Critical Cosmopolitanism as Foundations for a Post-liberal Peace Thesis Argument

3.1. Intercultural Philosophy

Intercultural philosophy is a philosophical conviction that no single philosophy represents the philosophy of the whole of humanity.[12] Any philosophy, when it claims its absolute status, will

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[10] See Fry, D. P. and Fry, B. C. "Culture and Conflict Resolution Models: Exploring Alternatives to Violence," in *Conflict Resolution: Alternatives to Violence*, Fry, D. P. and Bjorkqvist, K. (eds), 1997, pp. 9-23, Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

[11] Newman et al, 2009.

[12] See Mall, R. A. *Intercultural Philosophy*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000.

turn into the cause of conflict or violence. Intercultural philosophy is a process of emancipation from all kinds of centrism to reflect critically our own philosophical tradition from the point of view of another and vice versa.[13] Centrism is politically dangerous since it could undergird the absolutism of specific socio-political and cultural values that treat other people as inferior.

In the intercultural view, any culture – whether it be Chinese, European, Indian, or any other – is not monolithic in its development.[14] For instance, within the European context, the medieval period can be characterized by the influence of the works of Aristotle, which were transmitted by the Arab world and brought to Europe.[15] This demonstrates the mixture of European civilization and culture with those of the Middle East and ancient Greece for the development of human flourishing. Intercultural philosophy claims the recognition that every civilization is connected to another and constitutes part of a larger whole of human intellectual and civilizational enterprise. Though humanity has experienced wars, conflicts, and violence, different civilizations have also been interdependent in their developments.

Being mindful of respective historical and cultural differences as well as histories of interaction between different civilizations,[16] intercultural philosophy seeks to sharpen philosophical insight into the epistemological, methodological, and ethical modesty of one's own approach to social and global problems to build conditions for dialogue beyond the East-West dichotomy.[17]

The upshot of intercultural philosophy is not just to claim the emancipation of humanity from any form of centrism. It also promotes epistemic justice. Though intercultural philosophy shows humanity's interdependent relationship, it also critiques the West's predominance in knowledge production in intellectual enterprise. Epistemic injustice is a situation in which certain groups are epistemically disadvantaged in the generation of social meanings and understandings of the

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[13] Ibid.

[14] Mall, 2000.

[15] See Ozolins, J. "What in the world is intercultural philosophy? A reflection," in *Journal of World Philosophies*, vol. 6, 2021, pp. 19-37.

[16] See Dallmayr, F. *Mindfulness and Letting Be: On Engaged Thinking and Acting*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014.

[17] Mall, 2000.

problems facing humanity.[18] The powerful discipline the disadvantaged to understand the powerful group's knowledge or theories as a reference point for seeing and approaching the problems.[19] Epistemic injustice is underpinning the global asymmetric relations between the West and the non-West.[20]

The West has been represented as the subject of global politics while the non-West has been viewed as its passive object.[21] The non-West's knowledge has been rarely recognized as a contributor to the academic enterprise and to policy-making in dealing with global problems.[22] Since the 1990s, political elites in the West began to think of certain states in Africa including Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo as failed states that required external intervention.[23] Many Western scholars and policy-makers argued that it was African incapacity that had led to States failing, ignoring colonial legacies responsible for the chaotic situations in Africa.[24] The language of failed States has been enacted as a legitimizing tool for the Western civilizing mission in the Global South even though the West should have taken responsibility for the havoc facing the Global South.[25]

In both intellectual and policy-making terms, the post-Cold War era has witnessed the ascendancy of West-led engagement in the non-West through humanitarian, developmental, peacebuilding, and securitized frameworks.[26] The aim of the engagement has been to contain and transform the non-Western states into the ones that conform or at least do not threaten global capitalistic markets, liberal

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[18] See Fricker, M. *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

[19] See Schepen, R. and Graness, A. "Heinz Kimmerle's intercultural philosophy and the quest for epistemic justice," in *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa*, vol. 15 no. 1, 2019.

[20] See Mungwini, P. "The Question of Epistemic Justice: Polemics, Contestations and Dialogue," in *Phronimon*, vol. 19, 2018, pp. 1-13.

[21] Hobson, J.M. "Is critical theory always for the white West and for Western imperialism? Beyond Westphalian towards a post-racist critical IR," in *Review of International Studies*, vol. 33, 2007, pp. 91-116.

[22] Schepen and Graness, 2019.

[23] Sabaratnam, M. "Postcolonial and decolonial approaches" in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Baylis, J., Smith, S., and Owens, P. (eds), 2020, pp. page check, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Nadarajah, S. and Rampton, D. "The limits of hybridity and the crisis of liberal peace," in *Review of International Studies*, vol. 41 no. 1, 2015, pp. 49-72.

democracy, and the rule of law.[27] Some liberal advocates accuse the critiques of liberal peace for failing to offer alternatives. However, problems emerge not because there is nothing better than liberalism, but because of the deeper framework of epistemic Western predominance that denies inviting non-Western epistemologies to contribute to theory and conceptual expansion to broaden our understanding of peace.[28] Intercultural philosophy claims that not only the history of the interdependence of humanity but also the equal opportunity for knowledge creation must be practiced in both intellectual and practical terms.

3.2. Critical Cosmopolitanism

Cosmopolitanism is the belief that humanity has a common dignity beyond ethnic, religious, and cultural particularities as well as mutual moral responsibility. In the cosmopolitan view, geographical and political borders are not fixated but are morally contingent.[29] By transcending human-created boundaries, cosmopolitanism shows an interest in universal humanity and justice as the basic scheme of world society.[30]

What has driven the rise of cosmopolitanism in recent years is the emergence of global risks including armed conflicts, civil wars, and climate change, to name a few, which impinge on our everyday lives beyond borders.[31] The increase of great catastrophes has become a key experience for the whole of humanity in which both the interdependence of and threat to human existence affect everyday life without geographical boundaries and socio-political and economic differences.[32] The global complexity has sharpened the ethical consciousness that humanity must redefine reality beyond State

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[27] Ibid.

[28] Sabaratnam, M. "Avatars of Eurocentrism in the Critique of the Liberal Peace," in *Security Dialogue*, vol. 44 no. 3, 2013, pp. 259-278.

[29] See Appiah, K. A. *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a world of strangers*. London: Penguin Books, 2007.

[30] See Beck, U. *The Cosmopolitan Vision*. Cambridge: Polity, 2006.

[31] See Beck, U. and Sznaider, N. "Unpacking cosmopolitanism for the social sciences: a research agenda," in *British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 61, 2010, pp. 381-403.

[32] See Beck, U. "Critical Theory of World Risk Society: A Cosmopolitan Vision," in *Constellations*, vol. 16 no. 1, 2009, pp. 3-22.

boundaries and socio-cultural and religious constraints.[33]

However, conventional cosmopolitanism has been critiqued as the imposition of a Western standard upon the world as classical cosmopolitanism has been developed from antiquity to the Enlightenment with Western orientation.[34] The socio-political and cultural values of the Enlightenment brought cosmopolitanism in the direction of Western universalism. Though universalism obliges us to respect others as equals in principle, it tends to ignore the regard for diversity.[35] The universalist solution to global problems has sought to apply Western rationality, knowledge, or values to all humanity.[36] As shown, the application of a liberal peace thesis to non-Western regions would be a good example.

The challenge is to avoid an over-emphasis both on Westernization and on global polarization that stresses relativism.[37] While relativism emphasizing respect for cultural differences can serve as an antidote to universalist hubris, excessive attachment to relativism can put one particular difference in an absolute position.[38] When it is clung to as absolute, relativism confines us to cultural boundaries as if they were fixed and constricts the purview of human interaction.

Critical cosmopolitanism emphasizes the critical self-understanding through dialogue.[39] Critical cosmopolitanism assumes that it is beneficial to us to experience the clash of cultures, values, and norms within each of us through encounters with others as such experience empowers us to expand the purview of our thinking and knowing. Experiencing and knowing the immanent possibilities for self-transformation through dialogue with others is the core of critical cosmopolitanism.

Dialogue is the interface between people having different

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[33] See Delanty, G. *The Cosmopolitan Imagination: The Renewal of Critical Social Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

[34] Delanty, 2009.

[35] Beck, 2006.

[36] See Evanoff, R. J. "Universalist, Relativist, and Constructivist Approaches to Intercultural Ethics," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol. 28 no. 5, 2004, pp. 439-458.

[37] Delanty, 2009.

[38] Evanoff, 2004.

[39] Delanty, 2009.

values, norms, and goals.[40] Dialogue offers us a mode of experimental inquiry and a mutual learning process.[41] The aim of dialogue and mutual learning is to experience an unlimited openness to horizons, which empowers us to engage self-transformative process with no closure.[42] The experience of the clash of values and perspectives and self-criticism in dialogue helps us to be aware of the possibility of the co-existence of multiple values, norms, and worldviews within ourselves and of an opportunity for a creative combination of differences according to distinct contexts.

Critical cosmopolitanism places an anti-essentialist perspective of public place whether it be communal, social, or global – at the core.[43] The public is never appropriated or controlled by anyone.[44] The public place should be enacted as an empty place. Emptiness here does not mean a vacuum but infinite potential as a generative power producing new values, visions, and ideas.[45] An emptied public place is a generative, transformative, and mutual learning process with no endpoint.[46] Knowing and practicing the public place as a generative process helps us to realize that human agency can transform the present in the image of an imagined future through dialogue.[47]

4. Post-liberal Peace Thesis founded upon Intercultural Philosophy and Critical Cosmopolitanism

4.1. Intercultural Philosophy and Critical Cosmopolitanism as Epistemological, Ethical, and Ontological Foundations for a Post-liberal Peace Thesis

The analysis of intercultural philosophy and critical

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[40] See Dallmayr, F. *Horizons of Difference: Engaging with Others*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] See Beck, U. "The Cosmopolitan Society and its Enemies," in *Theory, Culture & Society*, vol. 19 no. 1-2, 2002, pp. 17-44.

[44] See Dallmayr, F. *Post-Liberalism: Recovering a Shared World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.

[47] See Delanty, G. "The cosmopolitan imagination: critical cosmopolitanism and social theory," in *The British Journal of Sociology,* vol. 57 issue. 1, 2006, pp. 25-47.

cosmopolitanism allows the research to argue that intercultural philosophy contributes to the epistemological and ethical foundation while critical cosmopolitanism contributes to the ontological foundation for a post-liberal peace thesis.

Intercultural philosophy as an epistemological and ethical foundation means the practice of intellectual humility, appreciation of multiple epistemologies, and equality of whole humanity in knowledge and value production in peace thesis. Acknowledging multiple sources of knowledge of peace helps everyone to enact equal opportunity to produce knowledge of peace and to be open to transforming one's own knowledge through encountering others.

Critical cosmopolitanism as an ontological foundation means to enact process-oriented reality as a foundation for peace. Any form of socio-political and socio-economic system and structure both on national and global levels are impermanent. Rather, they are contingent and open to constant revision.

4.2. Post-liberal Holistic Peace Thesis Founded upon Intercultural Philosophy and Critical Cosmopolitanism

Founded upon intercultural philosophy and critical cosmopolitanism, how can a post-liberal peace thesis be developed? The research proposes two forms of post-liberal holistic peace thesis: Holistic inner-outer peace thesis and holistic peace thesis that interconnects the self-critique and transformation of the West, global dynamics, and the dialogical relations with the non-West. Liberal peace thesis tends to focus on socio-political, economic, and institutional aspects of peace. The problem is the gaze of internal aspects of human beings has been underdeveloped. In a post-liberal peace thesis, state system or governance, socio-political and economic dynamics and empowerment of human beings should be understood as interdependent and non-dualistic.

Conventional liberal peace thesis both in intellectual and practical terms has left the argument of how the West or external actors should practice self-critique and transformation and step towards the change of global dynamics underdeveloped. However, a post-liberal peace thesis incorporates that aspect into the peace thesis since without self-critique and transformation of the West and transformative global dynamics, we cannot expect sustainable peace.

4.2.1. Holistic Inner-outer Peace Thesis

The first holistic peace thesis is what interconnects the internal aspects of peace of human beings and the outer socio-political and economic aspects of peace that they are embedded in. For instance, Islam and Buddhism have developed inner peace. Sustainable peace requires critical and transformative human beings and intersubjective solidarity in public places. Holistic human empowerment and its impact on socio-political and economic aspects of peace need to be developed.

4.2.1.1. Holistic Human Empowerment

Holistic human empowerment refers to the achievement of a citizen's physiological aspects, intellectual or philosophical, and spiritual maturity.

Physiological empowerment

The physiological aspect of peace means the satisfaction of basic human needs such as food, water, shelter, medical and social welfare services, and basic education.[48] The gratification of basic human needs builds a social environment that allows citizens to enjoy a stable and self-determined life.[49] Conventionally, in International Relations, the central actor has been the state. However, the well-being, quality of public health, social welfare, and dignity of citizens all need to become the goal of the governing systems as their legitimacy relies upon citizens.[50]

The manner of operations of the national and international levels of organization ultimately depends on the participation or consent of the individuals whose aggregate behavior forms organized

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[48] See Maslow, A. Motivation and Personality. New York: Harper and Low, 1970.

[49] See Tadjbakhsh, S. and Chenoy, A.M. Human Security: Concepts and implications. London: Routledge, 2007.

[50] See Rosati, A. J., Carroll, J. D. and Coate, A. R. "A Critical Assessment of the Power of Human Needs in World Society" in Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution, Burton, J. and Dukes, F. (eds), 1990, pp. 156-179, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

actions.[51] Only the gratification of basic human needs helps citizens to become the active agent that gives legitimacy to the governing institution. Promoting a sustainable society requires the satisfaction of basic human needs that can undergird a stable social life for human beings.

Intellectual/Philosophical and Spiritual Maturity

Though intellectual and spiritual empowerment of human beings would take time and might not bear fruit in the short term, empowerment of individuals and social and even global transformation are interconnected since our ideas, visions, and feelings shape how we relate with others, and how we frame our socio-political and economic realities.[52] The fundamental resource for building a culture of peace is the people themselves. As for intellectual and spiritual empowerment, reflective self-awareness, compassion, and holistic thinking will be proposed.

Reflective Self-awareness

Reflective self-awareness is to practice stepping back from the current frame of reference to critically examine our pattern of thought, values, and logic shaping our experience.[53] We become dogmatic when we claim the universality of our own thoughts or values, causing violence and discrimination and hampering constructive dialogue with others having different socio-cultural, political, and religious backgrounds. Reflective self-awareness involves many things including simple awareness of an object, event, or state, awareness of a perception, thought, feeling, disposition, action, or our habits of doing those things.[54]

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[51] See Wedge, B. "The Individual, the Group and War" in Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution, Burton, J. and Dukes, F. (eds), 1990, pp. 101-116, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

[52] See Navarro-Castro, L. and Nario-Galace, J. *Peace Education: A Pathway to a Culture of Peace*. Quezon City, Philippines: Center for Peace Education, Miriam College, 2008.

[53] See Park, J. Y. *Buddhism and Postmodernity: Zen, Huayan, and the Possibility of Buddhist Postmodern Ethics*. Plymouth, United Kingdom: Lexington Books, 2008.

[54] See Mezirow, J. "On Critical Reflection," in *Adult Education Quarterly*, vol. 48 no. 3, 1998, pp. 185-198.

The aim of reflective self-awareness is to recognize that our existing beliefs, values, and norms are conditioned by our own socio-political, economic, and cultural environments.[55] By honing reflective self-awareness, we come to know the socio-political, cultural, and religious contextual and constructed nature of human thinking and knowing, which empowers us to generate flexibility with thoughts and to be open to other's views and values without rushing into judgment. By deepening our understanding of the constructed nature of values and norms, we can be brought back to square one in encountering others and exploring new visions, goals, and values together.

Compassion

Compassion is the exercise of sensitivity to the sufferings of other people and showing deep empathy toward those who are marginalized from society.[56] It is to acknowledge shared humanity and to enact our courage to transcend the dualistic view of human relationships to the one that is interdependent and interconnected.[57] However, transcending the division between self and others does not deny the individuality of an identity. Rather, it is to transform the way we view the nature of identity. Instead of seeing identity as an independent and fixed existence, we understand it as the interdependent web of life with no fixed nature.[58]

Enacting identity as the larger interdependent web of systems beyond but including respective social identities is interconnected to promoting social justice. Justice means to act with a sense of fairness towards others, uphold the principle of equality in terms of dignity and rights, and reject all forms of exploitation and oppression.[59] Social and global justice requires the power of imagination and the courage to go beyond the existing patterns of human boundaries.[60] Exercising compassion inspires us to acknowledge shared humanity and feel

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[55] Ibid.

[56] Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace, 2008.

[57] Park, 2008.

[58] See Loy, D. "Indra's Postmodern Net," in *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 43 no. 3, 1993, pp. 481-510.

[59] Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace, 2008.

[60] Adarkar, A. and Lee Keiser, D. "The Buddha in the Classroom: Toward a Critical Spiritual Pedagogy," in *Journal of Transformative Education*, vol. 5 no. 3, 2007, pp. 246-261.

others' sufferings as our own beyond contingent boundaries.

With compassion, we become aware that our own well-being and that of others are inseparable: without considering and acting to promote peace for others, our own peace would be impossible.[61] It is the awareness of our fundamental interdependence for survival. Social and global justice is a political or policy-making agenda. However, compassion is a spiritual foundation that inspires people to think and act outside the existing socio-political and economic framework. With a compassionate mind, people can be motivated to critique liberal and neoliberal frameworks shaping global structures.

Holistic thinking

Here, holistic thinking means to recognize that prima facie opposing ideas and values are not fixed opposites but are complementary and enact synthetic ideas and values.[62] It means to acknowledge the limits of dualistic thinking. Though it functions well in some cases, in dualistic thinking, we believe in the absolutes of right or wrong, good or bad, and cling to only one way to think and act.[63] Binary thinking views humanity into categories as fixed and tends to underpin asymmetric and confrontational relations between categorized groups of people. Colonialism, the Cold War, and the rising tensions between big states in the post-Cold War era to name but a few would demonstrate the point.

Holistic thinking is the acknowledgement of the ultimate interminable conflict in any view claiming its complete status. Normally, people tend to believe that different views shaping reality are just different or opposing. However, any viewpoint, while claiming its own absolute or complete validity, inherently possesses a contradictory nature. Different or opposing views and values are fundamentally interdependent and interpenetrating to make sense.

The transcendence of dualistic thought empowers us to hold multiplex and complementary both/and thinking in approaching

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[61] See Vaughan, F. "What is Spiritual Intelligence?" in *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, vol. 42 no. 2, 2002, pp. 16-33.

[62] See Max-Neef, M. A. "Foundations of Transdisciplinarity," in *Ecological Economics*, vol. 53, 2005, pp. 5-16.

[63] See Olafson, L. "Good" Americans and "Bad" Americans: Personal Epistemology, Moral Reasoning, and Citizenship," in *In Factis Pax Journal of Peace Education and Social Justice*, vol. 4 no. 1, 2010, pp. 11-39.

problems facing us. Developing holistic thinking is the enhancement of the capacity for synthetic thinking and for appreciating the diversity of values and perspectives for an unending innovation process. Sharpening holistic thinking abilities would empower us to know that it is impossible to draw a complete line that judges who is the absolute right or wrong one in the middle of the diversity of values, norms, and interests.

Interconnection between Internally Enriched Citizens and Outer Peace

What needs to be understood in discussing outer socio-political and socio-economic aspects of peace is its interdependence with holistically empowered citizens. How people behave and live their lives are shaped by larger socio-political and economic circumstances in which they find themselves.[64] As a moral consideration, recognition (recognition of all citizens as moral equals in the midst of difference), fairness (impartial treatment and respect for all persons), and inclusion (all persons possess equal standing in the moral and political community) constitute social justice.[65] The process of social justice begins with a critical inquiry into the existing socio-political and economic system. The critical inquiry into existing socio-political structures allows the development of good governance and political participation for sustainable societies.

Governing institutions of any kind – whether it be communal, social, or State – are dependent upon people. No form of governing institution is totally an independently existing entity. It needs to be built and get its governing quality sharpened by internally enriched citizens. It means to place internally empowered citizens at the center of governance and dialogue as the method for governance. The regular and continuous intersubjective dialogue, reflective self-awareness, and exploration of new thoughts and approaches to socio-political and socio-economic problems are critical. The endured practice would

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[64] See Dukes, E. F. "Structural Forces in Conflict and Conflict Resolution in Democratic Society" in *Conflict Resolution: Dynamics, Process and Structure*, Jeong, H. W. (ed), 1999, pp. 155-171, Aldershot: Ashgate.

[65] See Reardon, B. A. and Snauwaert, D. T. "Reflective Pedagogy, Cosmopolitanism, and Critical Peace Education for Political Efficacy: A Discussion of Betty A. Reardon's Assessment of the Field" in *Journal of Peace Education and Social Justice*, vol. 5 no. 1, 2011, pp. 1-14

keep sharpening internally empowered citizens in terms of developing multiple ways of thinking and knowing and co-creating new ideas, and visions with those having different ones. Such continuous honing of internal enrichments would help citizens enhance solidarity beyond differences and empower them to control those in power.

While the enrichment of citizens with holistic development is an internal dynamic, outer peace is practiced in intersubjective spheres as norms of interdependence, mutual trust, and civil networks. They complement and strengthen each other to bring about the desirable ends and changes in society. Internal empowerment is not a static state. Rather, it should be understood as a dynamic process that keeps sharpening itself by interacting with other people in public spheres. The public sphere needs to be enacted as a creative and transformative process in which something new is produced from among multiple discourses. Qualitatively sharpening the empowerment of citizens will make them aware that they are responsible for developing reform-minded public officers and political and community leaders so that they can build mutual trust and positive reciprocal relationships as a foundation for a sustainable society.

4.2.2. Peace as Interconnection and Nonduality between Internal Actors, and External Actors, and Global Dynamics

Self-critique and Transformation of the West to Expand the Cognitive, Epistemological, and Behavioral Purviews

While a holistic peace thesis that interconnects the internal enrichment of citizens and outer aspects of peace has been proposed, as claimed, another holistic peace thesis needs to be developed. That is a peace thesis that develops interdependent relations between global dynamics, the West, and the non-West. In the liberal peace thesis, many have tended to differentiate the liberal West from the non-West as if they were ontologically separated and the former were epistemologically superior to the latter. However, mutual learning, self-critical, and gradual transformative relations between the West and the non-West need to be discussed.

How can the West promote self-critique and transformation in cognitive, epistemological, and behavioral terms in post-liberal peace? One of the approaches would be to develop intercultural-philosophy-

oriented International Relations (IR). In existing International Relations, the theoretical literature has failed to show significant regard for theoretical insights from non-Western backgrounds.[66] Inter-paradigmatic debates within the existing IR including those between neo-liberals and neo-realists, rationalists and constructivists, and between positivists and post-positivists have been developed; however, one critical problem with those debates is that the willingness to appreciate the contribution of the non-West in the debates has been missing.[67] The purview of the debates is confined to the Western epistemological, ontological, and cognitive boundaries. To break through this, non-Western philosophical and religious wisdom needs to be incorporated into International Relations as that would help the West to broaden its cognitive, epistemological, and ontological purviews.

Acharya claims that the help of non-Western philosophies can empower the West to broaden the epistemology of Western-oriented International Relations theories.[68] For instance, Buddhist philosophical analysis of International Relations would make a very necessary contribution. The core of Buddhist philosophy is the critique of knowledge construction in engaging in intellectual enterprises. We understand the phenomenal world according to certain theoretical perspectives, which are underpinned by epistemological foundations.[69] Though it does not deny knowledge construction, Buddhist philosophy critiques its potential danger as the cause of trouble.

In the Buddhist view, the root of trouble lies in our propensity to absolutize any viewpoint as the universal and independent truth.[70] When we build some view or thought, we tend to claim completeness for the aspect,[71] which causes us to become imprisoned in extremely

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[66] See Acharya, A. "Ethnocentrism and Emancipatory IR Theory" in *Disciplining Security*, Arnold, S. and Bier, J. M. (eds.), 2000, pp. 1-18, Toronto: Centre for International and Security Studies, York University.

[67] Ibid.

[68] See Acharya, A. "Dialogue and Discovery: In Search of International Relations Theories Beyond the West," in *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, vol. 39 no. 3, 2011, pp. 619-637.

[69] See Gray, David E. *Doing Research in the Real World.* London: SAGE, 2004.

[70] See Gomez, L. "Proto-Madhyamika in the Pali Canon," in *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 25 no. 2, 1976, pp. 137-165.

[71] See Ramanan, V. *Nagarjuna's Philosophy as Presented in the Maha-Prajnaparamita-Sastra*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978.

narrow-minded viewpoints. Liberal peace is founded upon a Western Enlightenment framework,[72] which stresses the power of reason to discover the absolute forms of truth as the source of progress in society.[73] In a Buddhist view, the core problem is Western liberals' belief in its absolute status.

As the critique of liberal peace, post-structuralism has been proposed. It emphasizes the multiplicity of situation-dependent ways of life.[74] Post-structuralism seeks to reveal the binary thinking that has traditionally affected Western philosophy and culture. The dichotomous thinking to construct discourses has served to build an asymmetric hierarchy of values, devaluing the diversity of thoughts.[75] Post-structuralism contributed to showing that there is no stability in any form of binary thought.[76]

However, in the Buddhist view, many post-structuralists engaged in a post-liberal peace thesis seem to show a strong attachment to the post-structuralist approach itself, which caused the failure to elaborate new philosophical frameworks that promote an integrative, organic view of peace. Despite its deconstructive approach, post-structuralism has failed to break itself from dualistic thinking toward the non-West as well as the other Western philosophies. While the history of Western thought has developed a variety of epistemic and ontological frameworks for the development of International Relations, distinct theories stick to their own boundary and have failed to develop more integrative and creative perspectives in approaching global challenges.

In a Buddhist view, the situation is understood as a predicament.[77] Predicament emerges when we face the gap between reality and our abiding patterns of philosophical and ethical frameworks, intentions, and the consequent outcomes.[78] The predicament in the context of post-liberal peace means that as both

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[72] Richmond, 2011.

[73] See Crotty, M. *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and perspective in the research process.* London: SAGE, 1998.

[74] See Burr, V. *Social constructionism*. London: Routledge, 2003.

[75] See Best, S. and Kellner, D. *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations*. London: Macmillan, 1991.

[76] See Gutting, G. "Post-structuralism," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy, vol. 7*, Craig, E. (ed), 1998, pp. 596-600, London: Routledge.

[77] See Hershock, P. D. Valuing Diversity: Buddhist Reflection on Realizing a More Equitable Global Future. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012.

[78] Ibid.

liberal peace advocates and Western critics of liberal peace represented by post-structuralism try to solve the problems within their own philosophical purviews in a dualistic manner, they cannot get out of the cycle of the failure to provide creative and integrative approaches to peace. Predicament resolution requires a critical reconfiguration of philosophical values.[79]

To address such a situation, Buddhism offers its insight into conceptual thoughts. That is the inherent interdependent nature of different views and theories. In Buddhist insight, all views imply their own negation, which means that they are logically dependent on opposing views that contradict them.[80] Nagarjuna states, "Without one there cannot be many, and without many it is not possible to refer to one. Therefore, one and many arise dependently, and such phenomena do not have a sign of inherent existence."[81] He also states, "If there is existence, there is non-existence; if there is something long, similarly (there is) something short; and if there is non-existence, (there is) existence; therefore, both (existence and non-existence) are not existent."[82]

The central approach of the Buddhist revelation of the unreality to build any form of conceptual thought as the independent view is to expose all views to "bi-negation."[83] While one concept needs the other that opposes it, the latter needs the former to make sense. However, the former requires the latter, and eventually infinite regress continues without end, which leads to the recognition of the ultimate unreality of conceptual thought of any form including nihilism. Buddhist dialectical contemplation leads us beyond attachment to any form of philosophical view including Enlightenment thought, post-structuralism, or any other as complete.

The pinnacle of Buddhist philosophy is, rather than denying view or theory, to achieve the freedom from attachment to any pattern

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[79] See Hershock, Peter D. *Buddhism and Intelligence Technology: Toward a more Humane Future*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021.

[80] See Kakol, P. P. "A general theory of worldviews based on Madhyamika and process philosophies," in *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 52, no. 2, 2002, pp. 207-223.

[81] See Komito, D. R. *Nagarjuna's "Seventy Stanzas": A Buddhist Psychology of Emptiness*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1987.

[82] See Tola, F. and Dragonetti, C. *On Voidness: A Study on Buddhist Nihilism*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995.

[83] Kakol, 2002.

of thought as complete even when we are engaged in it.[84] By being transcendent of an attachment to a pattern of thought while perceiving its practical value in certain situations, our conceptualizing faculty functions more flexibly and creatively than before as it no longer has to operate in a rigid mode in approaching peace.

Realizing and practicing non-reliance and the relinquishment of all fixed perspectives would empower the West to engage in a constant critique of their assumptions and enact the creative production of new theories and new knowledge of peace, which have not yet emerged, by combining different philosophical frameworks that are normally considered as mutually opposing in both the Western and the non-Western contexts. From a Buddhist philosophical perspective, for instance, an integrative approach between liberal peace and post-structuralism would not be illogical or irrational. Besides, the mixture of the non-Western views of peace and global dynamics and the variety of Western theories of International Relations would be one of the normal intellectual and practical enterprises founded upon their non-dualistic relationship.

The Buddhist approach to International Relations is just one of many valuable non-Western approaches. Other non-Western philosophies and religions would offer insightful views to help the West sharpen self-critical and transformative abilities in terms of expanding the purview of how they research and understand International Relations and global dynamics. Incorporating non-Western religious and philosophical wisdom into existing Western-oriented International Relations would not bear fruit in the short term. However, continuous practice of intercultural-philosophy-oriented International Relations would empower the West to expand the purview of how they understand peace and global dynamics and enhance truly dialogical relations with the non-West as well as within the West filled with different theories and values in approaching global challenges.

Transformative Global Politics as Part of Holistic Peace

What we need to recognize is that the global politics is

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[84] See Loy, D. "Mu and Its Implications," in *Zen Buddhism Today*, vol. 3, 1985, pp. 108-124.

epistemological in nature.[85] Global risks cannot be construed as external environmental risks but must be understood as insecurities and uncertainties produced by States and people having different socio-political and economic values, norms, ideologies, and interests.[86]

However, as proposed by critical cosmopolitanism, we must enact a public place of any kind including the global one as an emptied and transformative place, where no values, norms, or interests can predominate. No state – whether it be Western or non-Western – can control the global public place. Though we need to admit that public spheres exist, their conditions are the reflections of values, norms, ideologies, and interests constructed by States or other actors. The negative and confrontational global dynamics are to be attributed to the confrontation of different or opposing values, ideologies, and interests that seek to dominate the global arena. Many wars and conflicts or other global problems including Syria, Yemen, Ukraine, and others show the situation. They are not merely physically visible problems. Rather, different or opposing values, norms, and visions are undergirding them. Physically visible problems need to be understood as a clash of opposing values, norms, and visions as if they were fixated and immutable.

However, in intercultural philosophy and critical cosmopolitan views, unless those fundamental levels are approached, humanity will keep repeating similar problems with no end. Though it might not be easy to recognize given the rising tensions, those different or *prima facie* antithetical values including those of the US, China, and Russia, are ontologically unstable and non-fixated. Conventional global politics has been practiced in a dichotomous way as if it were natural. This has affected the divisive relationship between the liberal and non-liberal and illiberal states. However, from intercultural philosophy and critical cosmopolitan perspectives, its limits must be acknowledged. The conventional differentiation between the West and the non-West, or liberal or illiberal or non-liberal has come to lose its conceptual and practical efficacy for human survival. The practical interdependence and interpenetration between the West and the non-West that emerge with the globalization of common problems cannot be engaged adequately so long as they remain wedded to the belief in ontological divide and epistemological incompatibility founded upon the 'either-

[85] Park, 2008.
[86] See Beck and Sznaider, 2010.

or' dualistic principle.[87]

The challenge is to move away from incommensurability and to engage in dialogical dynamics in which multiple thoughts, values and alternative ways of knowing are celebrated. As we are in a contingent and interpenetrating world in which we must develop shared responses to unpredictable challenges, conventional politics of power need to be transformed into a politics of strength – a politics of mutual contribution rather than ideologically driven exercises of control.[88] Non-dualistic global politics is a relational transformation in the direction of unprecedented and appreciative coordination without imposing a value created by any specific group to articulate new, shared aims and interests.[89]

It might be ridiculed as utopian thinking that the US, China, Russia, or other emerging powerful States engaged in non-dualistic global politics to resolve conflict peacefully and creatively. However, no single political ideology can lead to an absolute solution. Global politics needs to be enacted as a process of creative articulation or transforming different elements into novel and mutually contributory relationships.[90] Drawing on the wisdom and values developed in the West and the non-West for mutual contribution to co-create shared interests and a sustainable globe has become urgent. We can start with agonistic dialogue with radical disagreements. However, clinging to its own purview can lead us nowhere and so the gradual transformative process needs to be taken into serious account for the whole of humanity.

Transformative global politics means *not* to practice a finite game played in accordance with the assumption of each State or actor's beliefs of absolute but to engage in an infinite game that sustains and enhances the quality of ongoing play for all involved.[91] It is rather to value creativity from within the clash of different values, norms, and visions to embody continuous relational transformation in the direction of unprecedented and yet meaningful commitments to appreciative coordination among those having different or opposing views.[92] Transformative global political coordination is a process of

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[87] Hershock, 2021.
[88] Hershock, 2012.
[89] Park, 2008.
[90] Hershock, 2021.
[91] Hershock, 2012.
[92] Ibid.

initiating new and gradually transformative relational dynamics, bringing significantly differing people and their values, aims, and practices into new and systematic relationships without appealing to any fixed views and principles.[93]

Though it is not easy to realize at the current moment given the increasing complexity of the Ukraine war that needs to be resolved in line with a transformative global political perspective if humanity aspires to prevent further tragedies and the rise of similar catastrophes in the future. For short-term peace, a ceasefire agreement is the highest agenda and humanitarian assistance needs to be secured. For transitional mid-term to long-term peace, reconstructing infrastructure, and repatriation of refugees and internally displaced people, holistic assistance to the citizens of Ukraine would be of great importance. Russian citizens who have raised their voices against their government to end the war need to be protected on national and international levels. There would be a variety of approaches to mid-term and long-term peace.

However, in transformative global politics views, the predicament of the clash of values, norms, and ideologies of those involved in the war – Ukraine, Russia, the US, and the EU – can be resolved if they must be included in the peace process. So far, they seem to believe that their security discourses are fixed and incompatible. This is understandable from the conventional politics of power perspective. However, they need to consider how they can break their fixated and constrained purview. They can start with minor compromises in some security fields. Then they can gradually learn their different values and norms of security and peace without rushing into judgment of superiority and inferiority. Gradual and patient mutual learning, dialogue including agonistic one at the initial stage, and transformative relationships would help them to avoid similar conflicts.

Such a process sounds too utopian. However, as a global public place is an emptied and transformative place, we have no ultimate warrant to claim any situation in which we find ourselves to be eternally intractable.[94] Changing values, norms, and narrow self-interests make it possible to embody gradual but continuous relational expansion and interdependence-enhancing improvisation to address

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[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.

global challenges including war and peace.[95] When a global public place is enacted as a transformative place, it would contribute to paving the way for establishing a dialogical and mutually learning and continuously transformative relationship beyond the West and the non-West boundaries.

Conclusion

Based on intercultural philosophy and critical cosmopolitanism, this research has developed a post-liberal holistic peace thesis that interconnects inner and outer aspects of peace and the dialogical and transformative relations between the West, the non-West, and global dynamics. The core of a post-liberal holistic peace thesis founded upon intercultural philosophy and critical cosmopolitanism is that peace means the gradual self-transformation of any actor. Both the West and the non-West need to understand peace as a process of transformation with no endpoint. Overcoming conventional asymmetric relations between the West and the non-West is critical. To that end, self-critique, and transformation of the West as part of post-liberal holistic peace is essential.

Though the research has proposed a post-liberal holistic peace thesis, it must be emphatically noted that the proposed holistic peace thesis is not a fixed thesis. It means that the peace thesis needs to be critically examined and experimented with within distinct contexts and keep being refined according to different environments. For instance, how a holistic inner and outer peace thesis can be developed would differ according to distinct national or communal contexts. Though the research has presented a model of holistic empowerment of human beings, what constitutes holistic empowerment might diverge in different cultural, religious, or social environments. The proposed post-liberal holistic peace thesis should be understood and practiced as a process with no closure and for refinement and improvement.

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[95] Ibid.

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