

Post-liberal Peace as Intercultural Philosophy

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Abstract

A core problem with contemporary post-liberal peace argument is its failure to address asymmetric relations between the West and the non-West. Two challenges – Eurocentrism and epistemic injustice – need to be addressed. Eurocentrism is the belief in the West’s socio-political, economic, and cultural distinctiveness in framing the overall picture of global structure. In epistemic injustice, the West has enjoyed privileged status to produce theories and knowledge of peace, while the non-West has been marginalized. To address these two, intercultural philosophy is proposed. Recognizing every civilization is connected to another and forms part of a larger whole of human intellectual enterprise, intercultural philosophy urges us to reflect critically our own philosophical tradition from the point of view of another. Mindful of histories of interaction between distinct civilizations, intercultural philosophy seeks to overcome the asymmetry between the West and non-West for dialogue to realize more sustainable post-liberal peace. As an exemplar, critical analysis of what the West can learn from Buddhist philosophy is made. First, the analysis shows the necessity for the development of human inner aspect of peace. Second, Buddhist philosophy, by revealing the fundamental interdependence of prima facie opposing philosophical frameworks and the ultimate untenability of their absolute status, proposes that only when both liberal peace advocates and Western critics of liberal peace acknowledge their relativity and open to nondualistic approach to liberal peace Enlightenment thought and postmodern and post-structuralist post-liberal peace thought, a truly dialogical relationship beyond the West and the non-West boundaries becomes possible.

Keywords: Post-liberal peace, Eurocentrism, Epistemic Injustice, Intercultural Philosophy, Buddhism

Introduction

One of the core problems with contemporary post-liberal peace argument that aims to create a hybrid form of peace that connects Western liberal peace and culturally oriented one is its failure to address asymmetric relations between the West and the non-West. This research will examine how the main challenges – Eurocentrism and epistemic injustice that underpin the asymmetric relations between the West and the non-West – can be addressed to realize more humane and sustainable peace. To this end, intercultural philosophy will be proposed as it allows us to analyze how the Western approaches to peace can be critically examined and reformulated from the perspectives of non-Western philosophies. Especially, the research will examine what the West can learn from Buddhist philosophy for self-critique and transformation for post-liberal peace thesis.

The first section will present the basic features of liberal peace and contemporary post-liberal peace. The second part will analyze how Eurocentrism and epistemic injustice undergird the asymmetric relations between the West and the non-West. Based on that, the third section will propose intercultural philosophy that helps us overcome Eurocentrism and epistemic injustice. The upshot of the proposal of intercultural philosophy is to allow the non-Western philosophies to unfold critical appraisal of the Western approaches to peace. As an exemplar of intercultural philosophy approach, Buddhist critical appraisal of the Western approaches will be made. First, the analysis discusses the lack of the development of human internal aspects of peace in the Western approaches to peace. Second, how far liberal peace thesis and Buddhist peace thesis can be compatible and complementary will be examined. Third, Buddhist philosophy, by revealing the fundamental interdependence of opposing or *prima facie* antithetical philosophical frameworks and the ultimate untenability of their absolute status, proposes that only when both liberal peace advocates and Western critics of liberal peace acknowledge their relativity and open to nondualistic approach to liberal peace

Enlightenment thought and postmodern and post-structuralist post-liberal peace thought, a truly dialogical relationship beyond the West and the non-West boundaries becomes possible.

1. Liberal peace

Liberal peacebuilding founded upon liberal peace thesis has assumed the core role in global peacebuilding since 1990s.¹ Liberal peace posits that democracy and free-trade economic interdependence consolidate both national and international stability.² International community managed mainly by liberal states has connected peace and security with market-oriented development, democracy, rule of law, human rights, and a vigorous civil society in a modern state framework.³ The liberal peace has come to be a standardized peacebuilding template applicable in every country or region regardless of the specific local conditions, the ultimate objective of which is to create one world founded upon democracy, freedom, and capitalism.

However, liberal peace has invited criticism as an interventionary approach designed to take non-Western socio-economic and political systems in a liberal direction.⁴ External actors such as the United Nations, other international organizations, International NGOs, and donor countries in which liberal peace thesis is deeply embedded have played the key role in peacebuilding.⁵

Liberal peace thesis has also been criticized for its view that local actors and cultures are inferior to liberal ones and impede the liberal

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

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

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

⁴ See Richmond, O. P. *Peace in International Relations (2nd edition)*. London: Routledge, 2020.

⁵ Richmond, 2014.

and rational governance.⁶ The application of liberal peace is critiqued 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 and colonialism.⁷

2. Rise of post-liberal peace thesis

Following the critiques, post-liberal peace has been proposed. Peacebuilding is considered as a cultural phenomenon in which a culturally shared set of values and beliefs are reflected in the perception of conflict and its resolution.⁸ Stable peace relies on local community initiatives and commitment to local institutions and norms that reflect local voices and needs.⁹

However, post-liberal peace does not deny the involvement of liberal peace actors. Post-liberal peace seeks to incorporate both internal and external liberal commitments based on the assumption that international actors and local ones cannot operate effectively without each other.¹⁰ Post-liberal peace indicates to build contextually-oriented hybridity from socio-political, economic, and cultural experiences of peace in local and international terms.¹¹

3. Problems with post-liberal peace

However, what remains underdeveloped in existing post-liberal peace argument is how the asymmetric relationship between the liberal West and non-West is overcome for their dialogical and cooperative relationship. In global socio-political and economic injustice, the Western liberal framework informs what peace means

⁶ See Newman, E. "Liberal' Peacebuilding Debates" in *New Perspectives on Liberal Peacebuilding*, Newman, E., Paris, R., and Richmond, O. P. (eds), 2009, pp. 26-54, Tokyo: United Nations University Press.

⁷ See Richmond, O. P. *A Post-Liberal Peace*. London: Routledge, 2011.

⁸ 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.

⁹ Newman, 2009.

¹⁰ Richmond, 2011.

¹¹ Richmond, 2020.

must be transformed. There are two issues that should be critiqued to make post-liberal peace truly dialogical to achieve more humane and sustainable peace. They are Eurocentrism and epistemic injustice.

a. Eurocentrism

Eurocentrism is the belief that there exists an unbridgeable cultural-historical divide between the West and non-West.¹² In Eurocentric view, the West has been historically, economically, culturally, and politically distinctive in ways that determine the overall character of global political and economic structure.¹³ The West is assumed to be the principal subject of World History as it is imbued with progressive and exceptional properties including liberalism, democracy, individualism, capitalism, scientific rationality, etc., which portrays the rise of Europe to the top of the world as inevitable for human flourishing.¹⁴

Eurocentrism is informed by the dualistic thought in approaching the globe. Due to dichotomous thought, the West tends to judge that its own moral tradition is superior by default and non-western moral values are inferior because of their primitive cultural traditions and consequently there is nothing to learn from them.¹⁵ The West categorizes the world with itself at the geographical center and sociohistorical apex and justifies its presumed right to order the world on the grounds that its modern conceptions of reason, order, and justice are the most progressive.¹⁶

Sedimented ways of understanding the dynamic reality with fixed perspectives restrict the West's patterns of awareness and limits range for meaningful commitments to the non-West. This underpins a paradox of liberal peace: Western liberal peace is seen as a source of the problem but also implicitly assumed as the only source of

¹² See Sabaratnam, M. "Avatars of Eurocentrism in the Critique of the Liberal Peace," in *Security Dialogue*, vol. 44 no. 3, 2013, pp. 259-278.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ See Tan, Kok-Chor "Globalizing Cosmopolitanism," in *Journal of World Philosophies*, vol. 6, 2021, pp. 99-104.

¹⁶ See Coutinho, S. "Mutual Openness and Global Justice: Learning from Ancient Chinese Philosophy," in *Journal of World Philosophies*, vol. 6, 2021, pp. 105-117.

emancipation of people in conflict.¹⁷ Though the proposal of post-liberal hybrid peace approach reflects the limits of liberal peace, it is still within the purview of the Eurocentrism, dualism and hierarchies inherent to the relationship between the West and non-West.¹⁸

b. Epistemic Injustice

Global socio-political and economic injustice is closely connected to epistemic injustice.¹⁹ Epistemic injustice refers to situation in which certain groups are epistemically disadvantaged and participate unequally in the generation of social meanings and understandings of the problems that need to be addressed.²⁰ In epistemic injustice, the powerful have an unfair advantage in constructing collective understanding of global and social problems and disciplining the disadvantaged to understand the powerful group's knowledge or theories as a reference point for seeing and approaching the problems.²¹

In the academic discipline in general, Western epistemologies are dominant. The hegemony of Western ideas and theories has taken root, silencing the non-Western epistemologies.²² The monopoly has been sustained through intellectual practices that are averse to alternative theories and philosophical frameworks in peer review practices deciding who and what will get published and acknowledged as valid knowledge.²³

In International Relations and Peace and Conflict Studies, the Western epistemic predominance cannot be denied. International Relations and Peace and Conflict Studies' general historiography has

¹⁷ Sabaratnam, 2013.

¹⁸ See Nadarajah, S., R., D. "The limits of hybridity and the crisis of liberal peace," in *Review of International Studies*, vol. 41 no. 1, 2015, pp. 49-72.

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

²⁰ See Fricker, M. *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

²¹ See Schepens, 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.

²² Mungwini, 2018.

²³ Ibid.

elevated the Westerners to the status of global politics and peace progressive subject while relegating the non-West to its regressive object.²⁴ Both the Western liberals and the Western critiques of liberals enjoy an unfair advantage in constructing theories and knowledge that come to be accepted as a reference point everyone is supposed to rely on for research, education and policy making.²⁵

Some liberal advocates accuse the critiques of liberal peace for failing to offer alternatives. However, such problem emerges 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 global dynamics and peace.²⁶ It should also be noted that even the critique of liberal peace has also failed to break through the epistemic injustice by the West. Though postmodernism and post-structuralism have served to critique liberal peace thesis and promoted post-liberal peace, neither of them has actively engaged in dialogue with the non-Western religions and philosophies including Islam, Buddhism, and other African, Latin American, Asian knowledge and wisdom to steer epistemic justice. Both the Western liberals and their critiques are responsible for the sustenance of epistemic injustice in International Relations and Peace and Conflict Studies.

Facing Eurocentrism and epistemic injustice, the challenge confronting post-liberal peace is how we can move away from the hegemonic Western centrism and create an intellectual enterprise that incorporates multiple voices and celebrates alternative ways of understanding and knowing.²⁷

²⁴ See Hobson, J. M. and Sajed, A. "Navigating Beyond the Eurofetishist Frontier of Critical IR Theory: Exploring the Complex Landscapes of Non-Western Agency," in *International Studies Review*, vol. 19, 2017, pp. 547-572.

²⁵ Schepen and Graness, 2019.

²⁶ Sabaratnam, 2013.

²⁷ Mungwini, 2018.

4. Analysis of Intercultural philosophy and dialogue for post-liberal peace based on dialogue and equality

a. What is intercultural philosophy?

Intercultural philosophy is a philosophical attitude that no one philosophy represents the philosophy for the whole humanity.²⁸ It rejects any absolutistic and exclusive claim of philosophical tradition – whether West or non-West – to be in sole possession of the one truth.²⁹ It is a process of emancipation from all kinds of centrisms to reflect critically and empathically our own philosophical tradition from the point of view of another and vice versa.³⁰ Intercultural philosophy is the recognition that every civilization is connected to another and constitutes part of a larger whole of human intellectual and civilizational enterprise as a cross-cultural phenomenon.

For instance, within the European context, the mediaeval period can be characterized by the influence of the works of Aristotle, which were transmitted by the Arab world and brought to Europe.³¹ This illustrates the mixture of European civilization and culture with those of the Middle East and ancient Greece for human flourishing and the power of intercultural philosophy and the ability of different cultures to construct something new. Revealing no civilization is monolithic and monadic in nature, intercultural philosophy critiques that any attempt to enact cultures as closed systems is philosophically and methodologically unsound and untenable and socio-politically dangerous since it could lead to the cultural centrisms, which treats others as a means to an end.³²

By practicing mindfulness of respective historical and cultural differences as well as histories of interaction between different

²⁸ See Mall, R. A. *Intercultural Philosophy*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ See Ozolins, J. "What in the world is intercultural philosophy? A reflection," in *Journal of World Philosophies*, vol. 6, 2021, pp. 19-37.

³² Mall, 2000.

civilizations,³³ intercultural philosophy seeks to overcome the asymmetry between the West and non-West to build conditions for dialogue of humanity beyond the narrow limits of the East-West dichotomy. It is the dynamic activity of being different in the world founded upon a nonreductive, open, creative, and transformative process.

b. Intercultural philosophy for epistemic justice for post liberal peace

Despite human philosophical, religious, and cultural diversity, the West has appeared universalistic and imperialistic, presenting themselves as the harbingers of a true, trans-cultural universality to bring about prosperity to the globe.³⁴ Intercultural philosophy approach requires us to interrogate the Eurocentric limits of liberal peace that has failed to open up counter-hegemonic modes of thinking peace and global dynamics³⁵

Approaching inter-culturally requires an analysis of the dialogical interconnections and mutual co-constitutive relations between West and non-West which assumes not merely the presence of Western agency but also that of non-Western agency in the making of the global political economy and peace. Every cultural, religious and philosophical wisdom is equally entitled to introduce ideas, concepts and theories to contribute to expanding the purview of the understanding of global issues.³⁶ By introducing a relationalist approach that aims to replace Eurocentric either/or approach with a both/and logic, intercultural philosophy creates a space in which non-Western cultural, religious, and philosophical wisdom plays contributory roles in International Relations and Peace and Conflict Studies fields without losing Western agency. Only when the philosophical contributions of all the world's cultures and traditions are given equal attention, we can take a step forward to epistemic justice to explore more sustainable peace and global justice. Global justice and the meaning of sustainability cannot just be determined by

³³ See Dallmayr, F. *Mindfulness and Letting Be: On Engaged Thinking and Acting*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014.

³⁴ Mall, 2000.

³⁵ Sabaratnam, 2013.

³⁶ Schepen and Graness, 2019.

Washington or the West but require incorporating the vasty patrimony of humankind demonstrated in the diversity of cultures, philosophies, religions, and aspirations.³⁷

Dialogue seeking to promote mutual learning must entail the improvement of the existing knowledge that both the West and the non-West have produced in the dialogue as mutual learning is complementary reciprocity.³⁸ The internal transformation of all groups in a process of deliberation and mutual learning with no closure needs to be practiced between the West and the non-West.³⁹

5. Buddhist critique of liberal peace thesis

a. What is missing in liberal peace thesis: Human inner aspect of peace

From a Buddhist perspective, what is missing in liberal peace thesis is human internal peace. As represented by human rights principles, liberal democracy, market-oriented economy, and state system, liberal peace focuses on socio-political and economic aspects of peace. Though external structures and systems are important, human internal dimension of peace has remained underdeveloped.

Human mind has been consistently the core topics in Buddhism.⁴⁰ Buddhism teaches that nothing exists apart from human mind.⁴¹ Though objects exist outside human mind, as Lai argues, “qualities of the things come into existence after the mind, are dependent upon mind and made up of mind.”⁴² Our understanding of reality is

³⁷ See Dallmayr, F. *Achieving Our World: Toward a Global and Plural Democracy*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001.

³⁸ See Eun, Yong-Soo. “Beyond ‘the West/non-West Divide’ in IR: How to Ensure Dialogue as Mutual Learning,” in *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, vol. 11 no. 4, 2018, pp. 435-449.

³⁹ See Delanty, G. (2009) *The Cosmopolitan Imagination: The Renewal of Critical Social Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

⁴⁰ See Jan, Y. “The mind as the buddha-nature: The concept of the Absolute in Ch’an Buddhism,” in *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 31 no. 4, 1981, pp. 467-477.

⁴¹ See Chung, B. “Appearance and reality in Chinese Buddhism: Metaphysics from a European philosophical point of view,” in *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 20, 1993, pp. 57-72.

⁴² See Lai, W. “The Meaning of “Mind-Only” (Wei-Hsin): An Analysis of a Sinitic Mahayana Phenomenon,” in *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 27 no. 1, 1977, pp. 65-83.

invariably mediated by the knowing mind and its perceptual and conceptual apparatus.⁴³ On Buddhist view, any form of approach to establish knowledge is “more about our own mind than about the (objectively existing) world.”⁴⁴ The object of investigation is consistently human beings, the aim of which is to realize the mind-base for knowledge and construction of knowledge.⁴⁵

The first aspect of Buddhist inner peace is reflective self-awareness. It is the practice of stepping back from current frame of reference to critically examine our pattern of thought, values and logics shaping our experience.⁴⁶ We become dogmatic when we claim the universality of our own thought or value, which causes violence and discrimination.

Reflective self-awareness helps us to realize that all ways of thinking and knowing are constructed and contingent. The development of reflective self-critique generates flexibility with thoughts, empowering us to be open to others’ views, values and norms to explore more inclusive ones.⁴⁷ The practice of reflective self-awareness stimulates worldview transformation since it can bring us back to square one, from which revision of our model of the world becomes possible.⁴⁸

The second aspect of Buddhist inner peace is compassion. Compassion is an acknowledgement of shared humanity and the commonalities in both suffering and aspiration among those having

⁴³ See Burton, D. “Knowledge and Liberation: Philosophical Ruminations on a Buddhist Conundrum,” in *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 52 no. 3, 2002, pp. 326-345.

⁴⁴ See Sutton, F. G. *Existence and Enlightenment in the Lankavatara-Sutra: A Study in the Ontology and Epistemology of the Yogacara School of Mahayana Buddhism*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991.

⁴⁵ See Matsuo, H. *The Logic of Unity: The Discovery of Zero and Emptiness in Prajnaparamita Thought*. (Translated by Inada Kenneth). Tokyo: Hokuju Shuppan, 1981.

⁴⁶ See Park, J. Y. *Buddhism and Postmodernity: Zen, Huayan, and the Possibility of Buddhist Postmodern Ethics*. Plymouth, United Kingdom: Lexington Books, 2008.

⁴⁷ See Schlitz, M., M., Vieten, C., and Miller, E. M. “Worldview Transformation and the Development of Social Consciousness,” in *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, vol. 17, 2010, pp. 18-36.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

different identities.⁴⁹ It is to feel others' pain, sorrow, or suffering as our own as well as to have clear awareness of interdependent origination of phenomenon of any kind.⁵⁰ Compassionate mind inspires the development of a quality of loving kindness, a universal and unselfish love that extends to friends and family, and ultimately to all people.⁵¹

The practice of compassion hones the consciousness of the oneness of humanity⁵² or a conscious transition from self-centeredness and dichotomous tensions of in-group and out-group process to an all-inclusive state of awareness of human fundamental interconnection in achieving peace. The awareness of fundamental interdependence of humanity does not deny the individuality of each person or group. It is a qualitative transformation of viewing the nature of identity. Instead of seeing identity as independent and fixed entity with firm boundary, it is to understand it as an open and dynamic living system within a larger inter-relational web of life.⁵³

As represented by reflective self-awareness and compassion, the essence of Buddhist inner peace is the development and practice of multiple functions of mind with a holistic view of reality. At the core of conflict resolution and peacebuilding lies the practice of self-critique and transformation to approach conflict as an interdependent and interpenetrating phenomenon.

b. Critical appraisal of the core elements of liberal peace thesis: Human rights

Human rights is the fundamental rights everyone beyond ethnic, religious, cultural and racial boundaries has on the ground that she/he

⁴⁹ See Pruitt, I. T., and McCollum, E. E. "Voices of Experienced Meditators: The Impact of Meditation Practice on Intimate Relationships," in *Contemporary Family Therapy*, vol. 31, 2010, pp. 135- 154.

⁵⁰ See Hoyt, M. "Engaging Bodhisattva Compassion in Pedagogical Aporias," in *Paideusis*, vol. 21 no. 2, 2014, pp. 24-31.

⁵¹ Pruitt and McCollum, 2010.

⁵² See Danesh, H. B. "Towards an Integrative Theory of Peace Education," in *Journal of Peace Education*, vol. 3 no. 1, 2006, pp. 55-78.

⁵³ See Loy, D. "Indra's Postmodern Net," in *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 43 no. 3, 1993, pp. 481-510.

is a human being.⁵⁴ To promote human rights is to enhance the human dignity and worth that inheres in human beings and develop favorable social environment for human flourishing.⁵⁵

Though Buddhist teachings do not directly mention human rights, Buddhism shows its compatibility. The doctrine of the Buddha-nature preaches that all human beings irrespective of social categories contain the Buddhahood or the potential to realize what the Buddha, Gautama, taught to the humanity to be liberated from sufferings and bring about harmony to the globe.⁵⁶ The doctrine demonstrates not only the human intellectual and spiritual potential but existential equality and preciousness. The Buddha criticized the social discrimination and caste system of his age,⁵⁷ which is stated in Suttanipata: "People are not born base. Nor are they born Brahmins. By their actions they become base, and by their actions they become Brahmins." Being born free and equal on the fundamental level, all human beings have potential for self-realization even though the way self-actualization is manifested will not necessarily be identical.⁵⁸

Buddhist compatibility with human rights can be underpinned in practical terms. According to Keown, human rights can be categorized mainly into five areas to secure wide range of rights and freedoms: rights of the person (life, liberty, and freedom of religion); rights before the law (equality before the law); political rights (freedom of assembly and the right to vote); economic and social rights (social security and employment rights); and the community and groups rights (protection against genocide and discrimination and violence of any form).⁵⁹ Persistence of unequal socio-political and economic conditions would impede inner peace. Under the favorable social

⁵⁴ See Donnelly, J. *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013.

⁵⁵ See Jeong, H. W. *Peace and Conflict Studies: An Introduction*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000.

⁵⁶ See Tanabe, J. "Post-liberal Peacebuilding as Intercultural Philosophy: A Buddhist Critical Appraisal of Liberal Peace for Holistic Peace Model," in *Social Ethics Society Journal of Applied Philosophy*, vol. 7, 2021, pp. 58-94.

⁵⁷ See Shiotsu, T. "Mahayana Buddhism and Human Rights: Focusing on Methods for Interpretation," in *Journal of Oriental Studies*, vol. 11, 2001, pp. 141-155.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ See Keown, D. "Human Rights" in *The Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Ethics*, Cozort D. and Shields J. (eds), 2018, pp. 1-35, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

conditions that consolidate human rights, we will be empowered to feel empathy for the others' sufferings and to feel joy in helping them.⁶⁰

Conflicts in Sri Lanka and Myanmar involved the violence by Buddhists – both monks and laypeople – towards non-Buddhists and even moderate Buddhists who are critical of violence by Buddhists. In those situations, Buddhists must respect human rights for non-Buddhists to take a step towards a lasting peace. Only when Buddhists enact basic human rights for both Buddhists and non-Buddhists to build a favorable social environment for dialogue, can the path toward sustainable peace be opened. In both philosophical and empirical terms, human rights principles can be acknowledged in Buddhism.

c. Critical appraisal of the core elements of liberal peace thesis: Democracy

The principles of democracy are the dignity and liberty of the citizens, the equality before the law, and pluralism⁶¹ and Buddhism appreciates these principles. The early Buddhist community was open to all people beyond caste, class, ethnicity, culture and gender as its compassionate philosophy excluded none of them and emphasized equal participation in decision making.⁶²

However, Buddhism critiques liberal democracy. Though the development of liberal democracy in Western world liberated human beings from external constraints and enhanced human freedom and liberty,⁶³ Buddhism criticizes liberal democracy's tendency to emphasize competitive elections and majoritarianism and supports deliberative democracy. Deliberative democracy emphasizes public reasoning and inter-human communication.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ See Crick, B. *Democracy: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

⁶² See Hershock, P. D. *Valuing Diversity: Buddhist Reflection on Realizing a More Equitable Global Future*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012.

⁶³ See Dallmayr, F. *Post-Liberalism: Recovering a Shared World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.

⁶⁴ See Curato, N., Hammond, M., and Min, J. B. *Power in Deliberative Democracy*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.

Buddhism welcomes deliberative democracy that helps the participants to be liberated from narrow self-interest in favor of an openness towards others.⁶⁵ However, on Buddhist view, what is underdeveloped in Western deliberative democracy is the critique of traditional Western sense of self and human internal dynamics. Traditionally, in the West, the individual is the basic unit of political analysis and the autonomy of the individual is sacrosanct and the primary responsibility of the liberal state is to create conditions in which all individuals can create life plans according to values and interests that they have freely chosen.⁶⁶ However, a prominent concern seen in many liberal states is its degeneration into atomist individualism and self-centeredness.⁶⁷ As witnessed in many liberal countries, division among civilians with differing or opposing values and views, politics' failure to resolve those divisions and the rise of populism have become a serious concern. Such situation is attributed to the strong belief in autonomous and independent self, which drives them to solidify the fixed sense of self through supposedly fixing boundaries with others.⁶⁸

Buddhism proposes relational self. The Buddhist teaching of interdependence undergirds the horizontal relationships between people with different social and cultural identities.⁶⁹ Equally important is that the interdependent self has no fixed trait of self. This does not deny the existence of self itself. Rather, it means that our attributes projected upon self are fluid, contingent and interdependent upon the attributes that we are opposed to since they are conceptual constructs.⁷⁰

Pertinent to Buddhist non-fixed self is the correlation between human internal enrichment and intersubjective deliberative process. What must be avoided in dialogue is the attachment to any extreme position as absolute. Free and sincere public dialogue requires its

⁶⁵ See Dallmayr, F. *The Promise of Democracy*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2010.

⁶⁶ Hershock, 2012.

⁶⁷ Dallmayr, 2019.

⁶⁸ See Ward, E. "Human Suffering and the quest for cosmopolitan solidarity: A Buddhist perspective," in *Journal of International Political Theory*, vol. 9 no. 2, 2013, pp. 136-154.

⁶⁹ Hershock, 2012.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

participants to be capable of transcending their positional confinement.⁷¹ Political efficacy in democracy, that is, the capacity to engage in critical political action, is dependent upon the cognitive, ethical and self-reflective capacities of citizens.⁷² Internally empowered citizens with reflective and compassionate mind facilitates perception of wider scope of the systemic and dynamic inter-relationship of diversity of values, and interests. By liberating ourselves from fixed view of self and recognizing the contingent and fluid nature of value, view, and interest, we can engage dialogical interaction as an open-ended process to keeping creating new values and visions with those having different or opposing visions and goals.

d. Critical appraisal of the core elements of liberal peace thesis: Economy

Buddhism does not reject economy itself as we need a proper socio-economic condition to realize spiritual development.⁷³ However, Buddhism takes a cautionary stance towards the market-oriented economy promoted in liberal peace. Though the Western model of capitalistic economy creates profit and boosts the macro economy, it can cause the clash of multiple interests among people and lead to harsh competition and exacerbate the gap between the have and the have-not. The Buddha critiqued and sought to reform the unjust social order and structure based on loving-kindness, equality, and solidarity.⁷⁴ The purpose of Buddhist practice in economy is to realize joy, harmony, and equanimity not only for the self but for all people.⁷⁵

⁷¹ See Reardon, B. A., and Dale S. 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.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ See Mosler, C. "Can Buddhism Inform the Contemporary Western Liberal Debate on the Distribution of Wealth?," in *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, vol. 18, 2011, pp. 321-355.

⁷⁴ See Badge, U. "Essential elements of human rights in Buddhism," in *Journal of Law and Conflict Resolution*, vol. 6 no. 2, 2014, pp. 32-38.

⁷⁵ See Shi, J. "Buddhist Economics: A Cultural Alternative," in *The Kyoto Manifesto for Global Economics: The Platform of Community, Humanity, and Spirituality*, Yamashita, S., and Yagi, T., and Hill, S. (eds), 2018, pp. 417-436, Switzerland: Springer.

In critiquing the capitalistic economy, Buddhism shows the differences of the view of human beings and the aim of economic activity between the West and Buddhism. In the Western discourse, human beings are assumed to be rational and self-interested beings or *homo economicus* who are prepared to act justly but who are also limited in their social and altruistic motivations.⁷⁶ Human beings are an atomistic individuals who are instrumentally-oriented rational being, calculate choices of comparable values or profits.⁷⁷ They are motivated to achieve material well-being for their own sake by evaluating the benefits and costs of their prospective actions.⁷⁸ Though social and global justice and equality are discussed in the West, mainstream economic discourse emphasizes self-regard as opposed to regard for others and places little value on relational virtues with others. In Buddhism, human beings are understood as potentially compassionate individuals enacting mutual interdependence in human relationships to exercise restraint on excessive self-centered views of profit and interest. The aim of Buddhist economic activity is to embody human spiritual potential and contribute to people's overall well-being—mental well-being, inner freedom, as well as basic material security for all people beyond racial, ethnic, cultural and even religious boundaries.

On Buddhist view, it is imperative to differentiate between needs and wants. While the former is essential to holistic human development, the latter leads to greed and lust. The provisioning of basic needs—food, shelter, clothing, and medicine—is essential for spiritual advancement.⁷⁹ However, excessive aspiration for redundant material profit, self-interest, or luxury would end up with cycle of unending greed, lust and even hatred towards others. The true value of economy is determined by an individual behavior, which in turn is governed by the mind.⁸⁰ Indulgence in economic activity to satisfy material desires without considering their possible harmful effects

⁷⁶ Mosler, 2011.

⁷⁷ See Essen, J. "Sufficiency Economy and Santi Asoke: Buddhist Economic Ethics for a Just and Sustainable World," in *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, vol. 17, 2010, pp. 70-99.

⁷⁸ See Tomer, J. F. "Why Buddhist economics is needed: Overcoming large scale biophysical and socio-economic dysfunctions," in *Real-World Economics Review*, vol. 82, 2017, pp. 143-158.

⁷⁹ Essen, 2010.

⁸⁰ Shi, 2018.

will not contribute to our authentic well-being.⁸¹ Being controlled by cravings, greed and attachment to material gains will create negative consequences for the whole society.⁸² By orienting economy to the well-being of whole society and citizen's intellectual and spiritual growth based on the exercise of self-restraint, we can avoid overconsumption and unending desires to maximize material satisfaction.

Members of the Bor Kul sub-district community in Songkla province in southern Thailand, who make a living by fishing and enjoy supplementary income from palm trees is an example of a sustainable economy. In cooperation with a local NGO, the Bor Kul community built the Bor Kul Social Investment Fund and lent money not only to their community members, but to other communities with no interest⁸³. The fund also provides advice to help any community to create and run their own businesses.⁸⁴ A fundamental value for the fund is that they cannot achieve quintessential happiness and well-being if their neighbors and other communities remain in difficult situations.⁸⁵ Their economic enterprise revolves around the Buddhist thought that people need to take efforts to achieve quality of life and consider society's needs beyond narrow self-interests, as well as work with contentment rather than seeking unlimited material gains.⁸⁶

Though the Bor Kul case might be a small community economic enterprise, its implication should be taken into serious account. Participation in economic activity according to the teaching of interdependence of all living beings will enhance participant's recognition that seeking self-centered material gains at the expense of others will eventually harm both others and him/herself. Engagement in economic activity based on the teaching of interdependence will help participants understand that the ultimate goal of economic

⁸¹ Tomer, 2017.

⁸² See Konecki, K. T. "Contemplation For Economists: Towards A Social Economy Based On Empathy and Compassion," in *Economics and Sociology*, vol. 10 no. 3, 2017, pp. 11-24.

⁸³ See Prayukvong, W. "A Buddhist Economic Approach to the Development of Community Enterprises: A Case Study from Southern Thailand," in *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, vol. 29, 2005, pp. 1171-1185.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

enterprise is the achievement of a holistic human development in physiological, mental, intellectual and spiritual terms. The increase of citizens practicing economy as a holistic human development will have a positive impact not only on social and community levels but even on global ones. Since its agreement in 2015, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have raised its profile in global arena. Buddhist view of holistic understanding of human development founded upon the doctrine of interdependence and ultimate illusion of atomistic human individual would be of great help in promoting SDGs.

6. What the West/liberal West can learn from Buddhist philosophy to engage in authentically dialogical and mutually learning post-liberal peace

The previous part presented what is missing in liberal peace and critical appraisal of the core components of liberal peace. Analysis must be extended to what the West can learn from the non-West to embody post-liberal peace as intercultural philosophy for truly dialogical enterprise. This part will examine what Buddhist philosophy can offer to the West to sharpen self-critical and transformative abilities.

a. A Buddhist critique of West/liberal West and Western critique of liberal peace: Buddhist critique of knowledge construction in intellectual and practical enterprises

What the West can learn from Buddhist philosophy would be the Buddhist critique of knowledge construction in engaging in intellectual and practical peace enterprise. It is the analysis of how human conceptual thought to make sense of reality can turn into the cause of conflict and impede constructive dialogue among people having different philosophical frameworks.

We understand the phenomenal world according to certain theoretical perspectives, which are undergirded by epistemological foundations.⁸⁷ Epistemology is a foundation that makes any theoretical viewpoint coherent and logical.⁸⁸ Any form of knowledge

⁸⁷ See Gray, David E. *Doing Research in the Real World*. London: SAGE, 2004.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

to resolve problems facing humanity is essentially a state in which we engage in cognitive contact with reality. Though Buddhist philosophy does not deny the construction of knowledge, it critiques the potential danger of knowledge construction as the cause of trouble.

The root of trouble lies in our propensity to absolutize any viewpoint as the universal and independent truth.⁸⁹ When we indulge in our standpoint as absolute, we are disposed to project some fixed attribute upon phenomena and objects and feel their existence is assured and secured. When we build or choose some view or thought, we tend to “claim completeness for the aspects that we have selected,”⁹⁰ which causes us to become imprisoned in our own world with extremely narrow-minded viewpoint.

Liberal peace is founded upon Western Enlightenment framework,⁹¹ which stresses the power of reason, especially the instrumental reason to discover the absolute forms of truth as the source of progress in society.⁹² Relying on instrumental reason, those advocating liberal peace thesis have sought to uncover the universal structure for peace. Buddhist philosophy does not deny liberal peace thesis founded upon Western Enlightenment thought itself. Rather, the core problem is Western liberals’ belief in its universal and absolute status. The belief in the absolute nature led to the hierarchical and asymmetric relations between the West and the non-West.

As the critique of liberal peace, postmodernism and post-structuralism have been produced. They emphasise multiplicity of situation-dependent ways of life.⁹³ They also indicated the critical attitude towards power and knowledge. It is insisted constructions of our world are tied up with power relations as they affect what it is acceptable for people to do and how they may treat others.⁹⁴ Discourse prevalent in our world is mediated by power relations:

⁸⁹ See Gomez, L. “Proto-Madhyamika in the Pali Canon,” in *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 25 no. 2, 1976, pp. 137-165.

⁹⁰ See Ramanan, V. *Nagarjuna’s Philosophy As Presented in the Mahaprajnaparamita-Sastra*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978.

⁹¹ Richmond, 2011.

⁹² See Crotty, M. *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. London: SAGE, 1998.

⁹³ See Burr, V. *Social constructionism*. London: Routledge, 2003.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

through socially constructed truths and knowledge, certain groups are privileged over other groups and exercise some oppression force on them.⁹⁵

To break through the power and knowledge relationship, post-structuralism seeks to reveal the binary thinking that has traditionally affected Western philosophy and culture. The dichotomous thinking – for instance, subject/object, appearance/reality, God/human beings, man/woman, universal/relative, reason/emotion, to name a few – to construct discourses has served to build asymmetric hierarchy of values and devalue diversity of thoughts.⁹⁶ Post-structuralism contributed to showing that there is no stability in any form of binary thought and that the hierarchies derived from the binary thought is made reversible or overturned.⁹⁷

However, on Buddhist view, many post-structuralists engaged in post-liberal peace thesis seem to show a strong attachment to post-structuralist approach itself, which caused the failure to elaborate new philosophical frameworks that can underpin integrative, organic and more holistic peace theses. Despite its deconstructive approach, post-structuralism itself has failed to break itself from dualistic thinking toward the non-West and the Western other philosophies. Though post-structuralism should not be the end-point of philosophical foundation for human intellectual enterprise and practical approach to post-liberal peace thesis, it has failed to engage in more creative and innovative analysis of how it can be connected to the non-West.

While the history of Western thought has developed variety of the epistemic, ethical, and ontological frameworks for the development of International Relations, and Peace and Conflict Studies enterprises, the evolution has occurred under the mutually dichotomous relationship, which hampers those having different epistemological frameworks within the West as well as between the West and the non-West from co-constructing innovative epistemic frameworks and jointly offering the resources required for shared responses to address

⁹⁵ Gray, 2004.

⁹⁶ See Best, S. and Kellner, D. *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations*. London: Macmillan, 1991.

⁹⁷ See Gutting, G. "Post-structuralism," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. 7, Craig, E. (ed), 1998, pp. 596-600, London: Routledge.

global challenges including post-liberal peace. The situation can be understood as predicament.⁹⁸ Predicament emerges when we face the gap between reality and our abiding patterns of philosophical and ethical frameworks, intentions and actions and the consequent outcomes.⁹⁹ Predicament in the context of post-liberal peace means that as both liberal peace advocates and Western critics of liberal peace represented by post-structuralism and postmodernism try to solve the problems within their own philosophical purviews in 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.¹⁰⁰

b. Buddhist view of knowledge/epistemology and liberation from the attachment to any view and its advantages

The aim of Buddhist critique of knowledge construction underpinning approaches to global challenges including peace is not to abandon thought or standpoint. The main target is human tendency to become enmeshed in a specific conceptual position or pattern of thought as absolute. When we gain an insight into the nature of conceptual thought that constricts the purview of our thought, we can attain mind-state that overcomes the adherence to certain conceptual thought pattern that hampers constructive dialogue between those having distinct philosophical frameworks.

To address dogmatic and exclusive thoughts, Buddhist dialectical contemplation is proposed. It is a self-conscious spiritual movement that involves a critique of conceptual thought.¹⁰¹ Its aim is to free ourselves from an extreme attachment to certain conceptual thought.¹⁰² On Buddhist view, “no concepts are immune from the dynamics process of interdependence in the sense that they refer to an

⁹⁸ Hershock, 2012.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ See Hershock, Peter D. *Buddhism and Intelligence Technology: Toward a more Humane Future*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021.

¹⁰¹ See Murti, T. R. V. *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of Madhyamika System*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1955.

¹⁰² See Cheng, Hsueh-li. “The Roots of Zen Buddhism,” in *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 8 no. 4, 1981, pp. 451-478.

absolute stratum of reality presupposed by all other concepts.”¹⁰³ Kakol also maintains that “all views, when analyzed, imply their own negation, which means that they are logically dependent on opposing views that contradict them.”¹⁰⁴

Nagarjuna, in his *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness*, 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 sign of inherent existence.”¹⁰⁵ In his other work called *Catustava or Four Hymns to Absolute Reality*, he 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.”¹⁰⁶ These statements demonstrate inherent interdependent nature of opposing and contradictory concepts to make sense and unreality of their independent existence.

The central approach of the Buddhist dialectical contemplation to reveal the unreality to build any form of conceptual thought as the independent view is to expose all views or systems of thought to “bi-negation.”¹⁰⁷ The bi-negation implies the fundamental contradiction or inconsistency of any form of conceptualization: while one concept needs the other that opposes it, the latter needs the former to make sense. However, the former itself requires the latter and eventually infinite regress continues without end, which leads us to realize the ultimate unreality of conceptual thought of any form including nihilism to exist. Buddhist dialectical contemplation leads our minds beyond attachment to any form of discourse, or philosophical view including both Enlightenment thought and post-structuralism as complete.

¹⁰³ See Waldo, I. “Nagarjuna and Analytic Philosophy (1),” in *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 25, no. 3, 1975, 281-290.

¹⁰⁴ 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.

¹⁰⁵ See Komito, D. R. *Nagarjuna’s “Seventy Stanzas”: A Buddhist Psychology of Emptiness*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1987.

¹⁰⁶ See Tola, F. and Dragonetti, C. *On Voidness: A Study on Buddhist Nihilism*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995.

¹⁰⁷ Kakol, 2002.

Human beings need a solid epistemological framework to live a meaningful life and engage in intellectual enterprise. While Buddhism acknowledges this conventional understanding of epistemology, the goal of Buddhist philosophy is “not to eliminate concepts but to liberate them”¹⁰⁸ as the thrust of Buddhist philosophy is an awareness of the false nature of every philosophical framework that pretends to give a complete and exclusive picture of phenomena, which curbs the dogmatic disposition of knowledge.¹⁰⁹

The pinnacle of Buddhist philosophy is to achieve the freedom from attachment to pattern of thought of any form even when we are engaged in it.¹¹⁰ By being transcendent of an attachment to any view or pattern of thought while perceiving its practical value in certain situation, our conceptualizing faculty, rather than being wiped out, functions more flexibly and creatively than before as it no longer has to operate in a rigid and constricted mode in approaching reality including peace and conflict.

The transformation presented by dialectical contemplation is a shift from the dualistic stance to the nondualistic stance,¹¹¹ wherein prima facie opposing, or antithetical views are not seen as fixed pair of opposites, but as inter-relational constructs. The embodiment of the relinquishing of all fixed perspectives enables us to overcome our limited horizon of attitude and open up the infinite network of meanings that are not tied to any specific egocentric standpoint.

Realizing non-oppositional engagement or the practice of non-reliance and the relinquishing of all fixed perspectives empowers us to engage in constant critique of our assumptions and engage creative production of new theories and knowledge that have not yet emerged by combining different philosophical frameworks that are normally considered as incompatible and mutually opposing. From a Buddhist philosophical perspective, for instance, integrative approach between

¹⁰⁸ See Loy, D. “Language against Its Own Mystifications: Deconstructions in Nagarjuna and Dogen,” in *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 49, no. 3, 1999, pp. 245-260.

¹⁰⁹ Murti, 1955.

¹¹⁰ See Loy, D. “Mu and Its Implications,” in *Zen Buddhism Today*, vol. 3, 1985, pp. 108-124.

¹¹¹ See Nagatomo, S. “The Logic of the *Diamond Sutra*: A is not A, therefore it is A,” in *Asian Philosophy*, vol. 10, no. 3, 2000, pp. 213-244.

liberal peace and Enlightenment thought underpinning it and post-structuralism and postmodernism would not be an illogical or irrational approach. Besides, the mixture of Buddhist inner peace thesis and post-structuralist deconstructive peace would be one of the normal intellectual and practical enterprises founded upon their nondualistic relationship. Freeing themselves from any western philosophical standpoints is what both the advocates of liberal peace and the Western critiques of liberal peace must develop and enact as their foundation for post-liberal peace.

c. A vision for cosmopolitan peace for post-liberal globe

What does Buddhist offer to post-liberal global dynamics? What needs to be acknowledged about global socio-political and economic structures is that they are epistemological.¹¹² Though the globe has different or prima facie antithetical ideologies and socio-political and economic systems, they are epistemological and ontologically unstable and never immutable. Since multiple crises facing humanity are human epistemological caused, enacting contingent and non-fixated understanding of reality is needed.

Global problems including conflict and violence and failure to resolve them become unavoidable whenever we divide the world up in terms of conceptual opposites.¹¹³ 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 or liberal and illiberal or non-liberal that emerge with 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 'either-or' dualistic principle.¹¹⁴ Contemporary global politics and political alliances that demarcate the West and the non-West must open and redraw those boundaries and transcend the polarity of us and them to tackle common global challenges. Divisive and antagonistic discourses between states including big ones including US, China, Russia, and others cannot lead us anywhere positive and sustainable.

¹¹² Park, 2008.

¹¹³ Hershock, 2012.

¹¹⁴ Hershock, 2021.

From a Buddhist nondualistic perspective, either universalism or relativism is a dead-end debate in approaching global challenges.¹¹⁵ The universalist seeks convergence on the basis of foundational forms of rationality, knowledge or values which are assumed to be universally valid for all human beings.¹¹⁶ The universalism becomes a tool for political and cultural hegemony, delegitimizing others having different political thoughts or cultural values.¹¹⁷

Relativism critiques the universalist claim of its universal applicability or uniformity and China, Russia or other non-Western states or cultures have promoted relativism, which springs from an impulse to acknowledge and respect the difference of others and relativity of all forms of rationality, values, and ethics.¹¹⁸ However, if relativism is practiced as complete value, it flips over into an incommensurability of values, visions, and goals and becomes a basis of ethnocentrism.¹¹⁹ Both Western universalism and non-Western relativism contain its contradiction and limits when enacted as complete.

The challenge is to move away from the hegemonic centrism and incommensurability and to engage dialogical dynamics in which multiple thoughts, values and alternative ways of knowing are celebrated. Practicing diversity of values and ideologies in nondualistic way means that difference or opposition is the expression of reciprocal contribution to solve common problems. As we are in a world of contingent and interpenetrating world in which we must develop shared responses to unpredictable challenges, conventional politics of power needs to be transformed into a politics of strength – a politics of mutual contribution rather than ideologically driven exercises of control.¹²⁰ Non-dualistic global politics is a relational transformation in the direction of unprecedented and appreciative

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ See Evanoff, R. J. "Universalist, Relativist, and Constructivist Approaches to Intercultural Ethics" in *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol. 28 no. 5, 2004, pp. 439-458.

¹¹⁷ See Garcia-Gonzalez, D. E. "Reflections on Peace from Interculturality," in *Peace and Conflict Studies*, vol. 23 no. 1, 2016.

¹¹⁸ Evanoff, 2004.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Hershock, 2012.

coordination without imposing a value created by any specific group or state to articulate new, shared aims and interests.¹²¹

It might be ridiculed as a utopian wishful thinking that the US, China, Russia or other emerging powerful states or the West and the non-West engage non-dualistic global politics to resolve conflict peacefully and creatively. However, from a Buddhist viewpoint, no single political ideology can lead to an absolute solution. Conventional use of order tends to be toward spatially and temporally regulative structures and relationships.¹²² However, order is not something predetermined or eternally fixated but a process of creative articulation or transforming different elements into novel and mutually contributory relationship.¹²³ Drawing on the infinite wisdom and values developed in the West and the non-West for mutual contribution to co-create shared interests and sustainable globe has become urgent.

Conclusion and research implications

This paper has examined how post-liberal peace as intercultural philosophy can be unfolded. What this research has presented is just one of the examples of critical appraisals of liberal peace and the examinations of how the spirits of liberal peace and non-Western approaches to peace can learn from each other to co-contribute to a sustainable peace. More critical appraisals of liberal peace by variety of non-Western cultures and philosophies should be promoted. Though it might not be an easy task, critical analysis of liberal peace by Islam, African cultures and philosophies, Asian cultures and philosophies must be promoted in intellectual and practical realms.

The challenge facing humanity is to acknowledge and practice itself as a multicultural and multipolar civilization with an interconnected fabric wherein individuality of different spheres of culture and civilization is flourished not through isolation but through interaction.¹²⁴ Unfortunately, the world seems to be witnessing self-enclosure that entails the erection of boundaries along “us-versus-

¹²¹ Park, 2008.

¹²² Hershock, 2012.

¹²³ Hershock, 2021.

¹²⁴ Dallmayr, 2001.

them” or “friend-enemy” lines,¹²⁵ which the current Ukraine crises, the rising tensions between the US and China, the US and Iran, to name a few, illustrate. Nevertheless, the world requires self-critical, reflectively engaged and transformative individuals in both practical socio-political and economic and intellectual fields.¹²⁶ The question of peace and sustainability guided by mutual learning without closure has become global concern for all of us. The defining challenge of the present globe and the foreseeable future would be to an open-mindedness and readiness to recognize the limits and weakness of each thought system and engage in a transition to sharing of different wisdom and philosophies around the globe to co-create new wisdom, values, and ways of thinking and knowing.

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¹²⁵ Dallmayr, 2014.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

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