

and unfortunately successful neoliberal discourse against state intervention and community-based action.

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Christopher J. Coyne. *After War: The Political Economy of Exporting Democracy*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008.

In the wake of recent American failures in rebuilding many disrupted societies, contrasting sentiments have emerged on the effectiveness of military interventions in failed states, following the emergence of what Professor John Mueller named *the Iraq syndrome*. Many are now ready to argue that foreign entanglements are less than desirable and cannot be carried out efficiently. In this context, the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the progressive collapse of other countries such as Somalia and Haiti, have raised extensive literature on international intervention.

The doctrine of Liberal Internationalism, with its roots in the Wilsonian approach to world politics and its modern formulation in the Clinton administration, is the centerpiece of this debate: should “liberal” states get involved in the internal matters of others, and are these intrusions capable of fostering a more peaceful international society? This clash has taken place within liberalism itself, forming two opposing currents from the mid-1990s on: those who believe that external enterprises do more harm than good, and those who argue for a strong presence of democratic states in the global arena, fighting for the harmony of international relations. In this context, Christopher Coyne’s book *After War* should not be underestimated, as it takes a firm stance that merits careful attention.

From a political and sociological viewpoint, this publication is worth reading regardless of final policy recommendations. The author raises excellent points on the reconstruction process in disrupted states, provides attentive case studies, and proposes controversial but rational solutions to the failures of the latest U.S.-led missions. However, for practitioners and students of peacebuilding, this volume is also important because it provides a rather rare perspective in this area of research. Coyne utilizes an economic take on post-war rebuilding that can certainly teach much, even to those who might disagree with the final considerations.

Thus, as the author states, in this approach “reconstruction efforts can be seen as an attempt to change the opportunities or constraints that individuals face (p. 30).”

The structure of the book is based on a set of initial assumptions and theoretical reflections laid throughout the first four chapters, where Coyne sets out to explain the factors that prevented, or contributed to, military occupations that aimed to achieve a significant change towards the democratization of the targeted societies. In doing so, he utilizes the data from the widely recognized Polity IV index, while integrating them with Freedom House’s *Freedom in the World* report. Furthermore, he also introduces a set of theorems, mostly grounded in the economic and behavioral traditions, such as the “nirvana fallacy” or the “folks theorem,” and most importantly, the Coase theorem, which he demonstrates as unverified in the reconstruction processes. In this context, the author shows how the success rate of the American interventions, measured against a minimum advancement that corresponds to the current Iranian situation, has been particularly low: 28 percent of the missions in a 5–10-year time frame, 39 percent in those where 15 years have passed, and 36 percent for the ones over 20 years.

The following three chapters take this analysis into a series of six case studies grouped in couples: Japan and West Germany as the pinnacle of American imperialism, Somalia and Haiti as modern fiascos, and Afghanistan and Iraq as contemporary entanglements. Through this empirical study Coyne deduces that, even in the best-case scenarios represented by post-World War II reconstructions, U.S. military operations have provided little contribution to the development of interested states. On the contrary, in an excellent observation, he maintains that there exists a considerable gap between the *know what* and the *know how* in the minds of the interventionists, up to the point where “policymakers lack the knowledge of how to establish credibility and legitimacy where it does not exist (p. 151).” To this extent, the author concludes that liberal internationalism cannot grant successful restorations in the majority of instances, thus making a case for alternative means. There are, in his view, three other methods: first “colonization and brute force” that can establish trusteeships, secondly “security keeping” and humanitarian approaches, or, thirdly, a “George Washington-style” free trade and non-intervention policy. Of the three, Coyne resolutely supports the third, presenting in his final chapter a sound assumption against “foreign interventions aimed at exporting democracy (p. 117).”

Overall, Coyne's survey has a number of valuable insights other than the ones described so far: he offers a solid critique of the liberal internationalist model, and offers a perspective on post-war dynamics that is often neglected by political and sociological scientists, reminding us how efficacy assessments are indeed needed in this field of studies. In addition, he outlines the crucial role that incentives have in shaping people's preferences, which he also ends up listing (p. 28). At this point, however, his analysis stumbles on a number of opinions that undermine part of his core assumptions. First, he limits his research to U.S.-led armed efforts without taking into consideration that other entities, such as the UN, the EU, and China, have provided some alternative rebuilding methods. Second, in his "Why can't they all get along?" chapter, he draws a quite problematic line between an ideal liberal West and *them*, or those who live in societies not prone to liberal changes. In these circumstances, the push for democratic institutions will only cause further contrast, because "when a society lacks the art of association, that allows for cross-group connectivity, social change will be more difficult and costly, and the diffusion of ideas will be limited (p. 63)." In this view, the author suggests that the constraints that rebuilders face in such societies "make reconstruction efforts more likely to fail than to succeed (p. 173)." However, as Professor William Maley pointed out on Afghanistan, there is a substantial difference between the collapse of the *state* and the disaggregation of the *society*, and the two instances should be treated differently. Third, while the author exhorts us not to read its incentives-based analysis as "neglecting the importance of values" (p. 32), he inevitably sacrifices attention to these, and social norms, for his focus on the more economic *reason of rules*. Finally, Coyne's initial aim, albeit partially achieved through this economic and rather neorealist perspective, is vested by an internal contradiction: the author explicitly claims that no moral assumption will be made on peacebuilding *per se*, but then he inevitably makes a normative suggestion when he calls for a non-interventionist position.

Perhaps, the main critique against Coyne's conclusions derives from his interpretation of viable alternatives to the American model: free trade policies can be coupled with humanitarian initiatives (or "peace-keeping" as the author calls it), while carrying out *reconstruction assistance* rather than democratization at the point of a gun. In other words, disrupted states can be helped by external actors to find their way towards the creation of open societies, while avoiding disastrous humanitarian emergencies as in present-day Iraq. This is the necessary

way forward in the contemporary scenario, where transnational forces make isolationism and non-interventionism impossible, since societies relate with each other regardless of their governments' stances, and what happens in our neighbors' garden also affects our home. Hence, an alternative to liberal internationalist failures might be the prudent and conscientious external endeavors of those states that can help, not aimed at creating liberal democracies, but at fostering a genuine openness from which other equally valuable forms of aggregation may emerge. Contrary to Coyne, I believe that disentangling is not an option; dialoguing and tucking one's sleeves is, on the other hand, the responsible answer in a globalized world.

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Glen Harold Stassen and Lawrence S. Wittner, eds. *Peace Action: Past, Present and Future*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2007.

Peace Action was published to recognize the 50th anniversary of one of the largest and longest-standing mass membership-based peace organization in the United States. Its editors and contributors draw from their personal biographies to recount Peace Action's history and its role in the larger U.S. peace movement. Contributions from former leaders of National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), such as the late Homer Jack, Sanford Gottlieb, David Cortright, Marcus Raskin, and Randy Kehler and Patricia McCullough of the Freeze Campaign, provide rich detail about the histories of these organizations, their responses to major events such as the Vietnam War and the end of the Cold War, their decision to merge in 1987, and their contribution to more peaceful U.S. foreign policies.

In addition to these historical reflections, the editors have included chapters that engage questions about how different sectors—such as faith-based groups (in a chapter by Wallis and Rice) and women (in a chapter by Green)—have been engaged in the U.S. peace movement in general, and the campaigns of SANE and Freeze in particular. Green's chapter offers a particularly helpful overview of some of the key women and women's organizations that have made major contributions to the peace movement, including the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), Women's Strike for Peace, and Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament (WAND—now Women's Action for New Directions).