



**From Hypocrisy to Ambiguity:
The Post-Liberal Paradigm in State- and
Peacebuilding**

Jan Pospisil, PSRP, Edinburgh Law School

.....
www.politicalsettlements.org

State- and Peacebuilding: A Post-Liberal Paradigm?



- End of **'liberal peacebuilding'**?
 - 'institution building' not successful
 - global norms, global governance... retreat?
 - transformation of statebuilding relationships (g7+)
- **Transformation of international interventionism?**
If so, in what direction, and with what consequences?



'Era of Disillusionment'



- 'Era of Disillusionment' (Bell):
result of hypocrisy of '**compromised peacebuilding**'
(Barnett/Zuercher)
- '**local turn**' (Richmond, Mac Ginty) or **post-liberal turn**
(Chandler) with conceptual innovations:
 - Resilience (US, OECD, Humanitarian Relief)
 - political settlements (UK)
- Concepts used in policy design, strategy, and analysis –
broad range of (potential) applications.
Interventionist concepts? Political concepts?



‘Resilience’ in State- and Peacebuilding



- ‘fourth generation’ (Pospisil/Kuehn), focusing on **‘state-society relations’**
- Incorporates the **local level** (‘local turn’)
- ‘transforming and channeling radical change and challenges’ (OECD)
- Chandler: **‘post-interventionist paradigm’?**
Governing of effects, post-sovereign idea



'Resilience': The Counter-Vision



- 'resilient nations' (UNDP slogan) – de-politicized focus on effects
- **g7+ definition** goes one step further:
'Resilience refers to the **ability of social institutions to absorb and adapt to the internal and external shocks** and setbacks they are likely to face. Fragility thus implies that the **consolidation of nationhood**, and the safety, security and well being of the citizens are at risk of a relapse into crisis or violent conflict.'



'Political Settlements'



- **Donor creation** in 'era of disillusionment'
- Informed by NIE's **critique of traditional institutionalism** (institutional transformability)
- **elite-focused** concept
- **social configurations** and **power structures** beyond the formal state structures
- Incorporates **informal institutions**



‘Political Settlements’: A Variety of Approaches



- **Various types** of political settlement approaches:
 - ‘resilient political settlement’
 - ‘growth-enhancing political settlement’
 - ‘inclusive political settlement’ ... ‘peace settlement’
- Highly **contested concept**, means different things to different people
- liberal and post-liberal elements, **ambiguous**



Incorporating Ambiguity



Liberalism / Interventionism	Transplanting Institutions	Transforming Institutions	Contextualised Institutions
Interventionist	'inclusive political settlements'		'resilience vs fragility'
Post-Interventionist		'growth-enhancing political settlements'	'resilient nations'
Anti-Interventionist	'resilient political settlements'		



Concluding Thoughts: Common Language



- Resilience and political settlements produce common language (broad **common denominator**)
- From hypocrisy ('compromised peacebuilding') to ambiguity
- **Enablement of joint efforts** under post-liberal conditions



Concluding Thoughts: Contradictions



- Resilience and political settlements handle **two interrelated contradictions**:
 - political interventionism vs governing of effects
 - global norms vs post-liberal contextualism
- These contradictions are not solved by the concepts, but incorporated



Concluding Thoughts: Implications



- Resilience and political settlements flag the **end of liberal internationalism**
- **Consequences are challenging** for development, and state- and peacebuilding as common international efforts:
 - broadening of common denominators: scope for pooled action shrinks
 - increasing problems with joint interventionism, compacts, funding pools, joint strategies
 - more political interventions may result in rapidly shifting coalitions

