

Emancipation through the Inclusion of Civil Society in Contemporary Peacebuilding: A Case Study of Peacebuilding Efforts in Colombia

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Abstract : Research on peacebuilding has taken a critical turn into examining the neoliberal and hegemonic conception of peace operations. Alternative peacebuilding models have been analyzed, but the scholarly discussion fails to bring them together or form connections between them. The objective of this paper is to rethink peacebuilding by extracting the positive aspects of the various peacebuilding models, connecting them with the local context, and therefore promote emancipation in contemporary peacebuilding efforts. Moreover, local ownership has been widely labelled as one, if not the core principle necessary for a successful peacebuilding project. Yet, definitions of what constitutes the 'local' remain debated. Through a qualitative review of literature, this paper unpacks the contemporary conception of peacebuilding in nexus with 'local ownership' as manifested through civil society. Using Colombia as a case study, this paper argues that a new peacebuilding framework, one that reconsiders the terms of engagement between international and national actors, is needed in order to foster effective peacebuilding efforts in contested transitional states.

Keywords : civil society, Colombia, emancipation, peacebuilding

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